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BLINDNESS

IN

MALAYA

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BLINDNESS IN MALAYA.

Recommendations prepared for the
Government of the Federation of Malaya
for

the prevention of blindness and for
the education, training, employment
and after-care of the incurably blind
in the Federation.

Blind Welfare Office,
Social Welfare Department,
Federation of Malaya.

Kuala Lumpur,
15 March, 1954.

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INTRODUCTION.

1. There is nothing new in blindness, and it must have been an affliction of the greatest significance to the pre-historic man. However, the blind have in some ways been more fortunate than those with other afflictions. There are recorded instances of aid being given to the blind as a community as long as two thousand years ago. Organised blind welfare as we know it to-day appears to have started with a school opened by Valentin Haüy in Paris in 1784, and gradually through these last 150 years the lot of blind communities has been improved out of all recognition. This improvement is a never ending process throughout the world, even in Malaya and in spite of the difficulties and troubles of the last five years.

2. What sort of picture is conjured up at the mention of the word "Blind"? Unfortunately as far as the blind themselves are concerned that picture usually has the hallmark of pity. Intensive efforts have been made since World War I to change this pity to sympathetic understanding. At least in the British Commonwealth World War I is a landmark as it was at this time that Sir Arthur Pearson, the publisher who was himself blind, started at St. Dunstons the organisation which was to be responsible for the training and resettlement of war blinded men and women. Several thousand blind service men were trained and placed in employment by St. Dunstons within a few years. Never before had such a large number of trained blind been found work in such a short space of time. This made it possible to focus the public eye on the blind community, after which it became possible to make steady progress in gaining the understanding which was needed.

3. In actual fact the war-blinded service men and women form a very small part of almost any blind community. Blindness is impartial and may strike anywhere without respect for race, religion or rank. Of course it strikes more frequently where there is poverty, dirt and ignorance, but it does not confine itself to these limits. It may strike bad people or good, lazy people or hard workers, dull people or intelligent ones, in short—just anyone. The causes of blindness are many and varied and each one may have a distinct effect on the blind individual's character,

but it is essential to remember that the blind community is made up of all types of persons from all walks of life and in all age groups.

4. The object of work for the blind is not only to assist in preventing blindness by whatever means possible, but to provide the services necessary to enable the blind to receive the education and training which they need in order that they may take their rightful places as full contributory members of society.

5. In the past a Milton or a John Rushton has been able to overcome his blindness and play a major part in the history of mankind, but for the most part begging has too often been the only means of livelihood for the blind. To-day in many parts of the world the blind have won places as business executives as well as stenographers, in industrial life as factory workers as well as craftsmen, in professional life as lawyers as well as physiotherapists, and as politicians as well as telephone operators. In fact they are normal people doing normal jobs, except that they cannot see. With the education and training given to the blind of today, blindness need no longer be an affliction. It can be turned into a handicap, a handicap which can be reduced to a very considerable nuisance to the individual but no longer even a nuisance to the community.

6. The Director of Medical Services, Federation of Malaya has confirmed that as far as he is concerned this Report presented a very eloquent picture of the position of the blind in Malaya, and a very realistic one from a practical point of view. He has further written that: "The training of the blind when they are young, and the up-bringing of infants who are blind are essentially welfare matters in which those who are concerned with the care of the eye must of necessity have a main interest. The tragedy is that there is so much preventable blindness."

7. This Report is divided into three main chapters. Chapter I outlines the fundamental principles and aims of blind welfare work. Chapter II summarises the present position in the Federation. Chapter III contains the recommendations which spring from a consideration of the facts and estimates dealt with in Chapters I and II. As far as possible material which can best be presented in statistical or tabular form has been

concentrated in the Appendices. Further detailed information relevant to the history and problems of the Blind Welfare Services in the Federation can be found in the following publications, all of which are available at the Blind Welfare Office, Government Offices, Batu Road, Kuala Lumpur.

Federation of Malaya White Paper, No. 9 of 1948.

Federation of Malaya White Paper, No. 17 of 1950.

Report on Blindness in Singapore and the Federation of Malaya made by the United Nations, Technical Aid Administration, dated .1.53.

(U.N. ref. ST/TAA//Malaya-Singapore/R.I.)

Report by the Provisional Council of the Malayan Association for the Blind for the period 21.11.51—28.6.53.

Malayan Association for the Blind's quarterly "Bulletin on Blindness".

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Kuala Lumpur, March 1954.

CHAPTER I.

GENERAL PRINCIPLES OF BLIND WELFARE WORK.

Education.

8. The term "Education" is here used in its widest sense to cover all aspects of the moral, mental and physical development of the blind child, and the social and psychological rehabilitation of the newly blinded child, up to the point where as an adolescent he starts training for his career. Academically this education should be similar to that in schools for the sighted, although the instructional aids and apparatus are tactile and not visual. There are the Braille System for reading and writing, the Taylor Frame for mathematics, relief maps and globes, and many ingenious forms of equipment at the disposal of the modern blind child at school.

9. *The Baby.* Blind babies naturally evoke much sympathy for they may never see the beauty of the world around them. They will never have any memory however vague of colour and light, and are condemned to live in darkness for the whole of their lives through no fault of their own. Nevertheless it is essential that a blind baby be given exactly the same and no more reasonable care than should be given to his sighted brothers and sisters. From the beginning he must be treated as any other baby and he should be encouraged and taught to sit, to crawl and to walk at the same age as the seeing baby. Sight is probably the most important factor in interpreting to most children the world around them and in developing their desire to explore. But sight is not the only sense. The sense of hearing is probably the most valuable to the blind, and a blind baby can be encouraged to explore by means of sounds which attract him. The sense of touch can also be developed to a very high degree. Sensitive fingers determine the shape of the object and can derive pleasure from its feel. The senses of taste and smell also play their part. There is yet another sense that the blind develop to a greater or lesser degree—the sense of object: they can sense the presence of an object sometimes ten or twenty feet away, such as a stationary car on the road or a wall in front of them, without any apparent means of knowing that it is there. There are many explanations to this sense of object, but it is probably developed from a

combination of the use of two or more senses. No attempt should be made to keep normal obstacles out of the way of a blind infant, as he will soon learn how to navigate stairs and other such hazards as he gains experience and self-confidence. It is through experience too, sometimes bitter, that he will learn to respect fire and other dangers. As he grows up he should be encouraged to find his amusements outside his home with sighted children, and should also be given responsibilities in the home. Although children can be unkind to their less fortunate fellows, experience elsewhere has shown that no lasting harm can come to a blind child through mixing with sighted children.

10. *Nursery Schools.* The preceding paragraphs dealt with the baby in good home surroundings. In many cases the home surroundings are not good. There may be other babies and young children in a large family which demand the attention of the harassed mother, and so the blind child is left to his own devices. Or the family may not want a blind baby and may deliberately ignore him. Or the family may be so poor that they cannot provide for any of their children properly. In such cases where the home is not suitable the blind baby should be placed in a special nursery school. These nursery schools give training to blind children up to the age of 6 or 7 and also help to develop their personality and self-reliance. They are normally residential and small, catering for 25 to 35 children, and every attempt is made to create a family atmosphere. The children should of course go back to their homes for the holidays if conditions at home are not too unsuitable so that they may keep in close touch with their families. In this way the mental and moral development of a blind child can be kept up so that at the age of 6 or 7 he is very little behind his sighted brother or friend.

11. To sum up, the blind baby or young child must be treated as far as possible in the same way as the normal human being. Blindness must never be allowed to become a barrier between him and his development, either in his home or in a nursery school.

12. *Schools for the Blind.* The formal education of blind children should be based as nearly as possible on the education given to sighted children. But it would be as well at this point

to reconsider how far such education should go. For the majority of sighted people in many other countries besides Malaya, formal education does not yet proceed in practice beyond the primary stage. One reason for this is that there are insufficient funds to build all the schools required and to train and pay all the staff needed to prolong a country's educational facilities beyond the primary stage. The second reason is that many families cannot afford to leave any child, let alone one who can work, at school for much after he is 12 or 13 years old. The first reason applies equally to the provision of blind schools. The second does not, for the blind child without adequate education and training is unlikely ever to be of any economic value to his family. As it is one of the fundamental aims of all work for the blind to make it possible for blind men and women to live a full and useful life within the community, it is essential that these blind men and women should normally have employment. Now the majority of sighted people earn their living in manual labour. This applies to the blind even more so and will continue to apply for a very long time, despite the wonderful openings created in recent years in other fields by modern developments in a few countries.

13. It follows therefore that as a rule the educational policy for schools for the blind must be based on the realisation that the majority of blind persons should, at present, go no further than the primary stage before being trained for socially desirable manual employment. For this reason the education given in schools for the blind must pay considerable attention to manual dexterity and must pay particular attention to the instillation of respect for the honourable status of all useful manual workers.

14. *Primary Schools.* Primary schools fall into two categories, boarding and day schools. In addition the education of the blind can be done by two methods, by the dilution of the blind pupils into schools for the sighted or by the segregation of blind pupils into their own separate schools. There is much argument about the rival merits of all four of the above, but the economic considerations are perhaps the most potent. It is financially possible to educate more blind children more adequately if they are concentrated than if they are dispersed throughout a

country in ones and twos, and moreover the education given can then be more easily kept up to a consistently good standard. Since the numbers of blind children are fortunately comparatively small it is not normally practicable to set up separate schools for each town. Hence most schools for the blind must primarily be residential, though not excluding the child who lives nearby from attending as a day pupil.

15. The size of a primary school for the blind should be dependent on the most suitable number which can be looked after. For financial reasons and at the same time in order to allow the maximum personal contact between teachers and pupils, the ideal figure is somewhere between 80 and 120 pupils. The Cottage System of buildings undoubtedly provides the best accommodation, but costs of construction often exclude that possibility. However it is possible to provide accommodation which, while not having the outward appearance of the Cottage System, will nevertheless permit the children to live in "family groups" with their own accommodation and with a resident house parent. The curriculum should follow as closely as possible the one laid down for ordinary schools.

16. In any primary school for blind children particular attention has to be paid to physical fitness and deportment. Right from the beginning the children should be taught to walk freely and erect. The natural tendency of a blind child to cling to people or explore people's clothes with their hands should be discouraged, as the advantages of finding out what a person looks like or is wearing are very doubtful when balanced against the harm done in inhibiting self-independence. In all other respects life in a primary school for the blind should be the same as in schools for the sighted, with regular lessons, plenty of organised games and sports, opportunities for developing hobbies, and holidays at home where the home is suitable.

17. *Secondary Schools.* Where the numbers of blind are not very large it is doubtful whether a full system of secondary modern and secondary grammar schools could be justified. An alternative is to provide a secondary section attached to one or more of the primary schools in order to cater for the academically brighter children.

18. *University Training.* Normally no special facilities or arrangements are needed in order to provide university training for the blind. Those whose academic capabilities qualify them for entrance to a university take their normal place with other students. All that is needed is to provide certain technical facilities such as readers to help the student in his work.

19. *The Multi-Purpose Institution.* Schools for the blind in the early 19th century could not find satisfactory employment for their pupils when they left, and it was decided to open up workshops attached to the schools. This was the start of what is known as the Multi-purpose Institution. Later more additions were made, including nursery schools, training shops, small printing workshops, social clubs and the like, all operating around the original school. There is no doubt that such an institution is more economical to run than a series of specialised units, and that the public's attention can be more easily attracted to it. But both these reasons are based on an administrator's views or needs, and are not based firmly on the needs of the blind. Why indeed should blind toddlers, school children, adolescents and adult workers be herded together into one large institution just because they are blind and because that suits administrative convenience? No one would dream of advocating this form of institution for the sighted population, for the effect is to segregate those in the institution from the community. A preferable alternative is the establishment of a series of separate self-contained units which will give the maximum opportunity to the blind child and to the blind adult to benefit from the instruction given, and at the same time keep them both from being completely segregated from the community and from spending too long in one institution and thus becoming entirely dependent upon that institution.

Employment of the Blind.

20. There are three basic ways in which the blind can be employed, although the actual occupations which they can follow are legion. A brief list of these occupations is given at the end of this report in Appendix A. The three basic ways of employment are in a Sheltered Workshop, through a Home Workers' Scheme, and on their own account.

21. *Sheltered Workshops.* From the earliest days of work for the blind in the west the object of blind schools was to train their students in a useful trade so that they could grow up to earn their own living. Unfortunately it was found that they could not support themselves at the trades they had been taught, for two principal reasons: their training was not of a high enough standard, and there was no after-care organisation to guide and assist them. They were little better off than if they had never been to school. Therefore, in order to find some form of employment the schools were obliged to open their own workshops wherein the adolescent or adult trainees could be employed full time at their trades in return for a wage.

22. Thus began the Sheltered Workshops which have been so valuable in providing employment for the blind up till now. They still provide about half the employment for blind workers in the west, but there is a very definite movement to break away from too great a dependence on this system. For one thing, Sheltered Workshops only employ blind men and women in a limited number of trades which are generally classified as "The Traditional Trades of the Blind" and include basketry, brush-making, coir mat making, shoe repairing, machine knitting, weaving, and chair caning. Moreover these Sheltered Workshops usually run at a loss and have therefore to be subsidised. Nevertheless, however many other fields of employment for the blind are opened there will always be a limited need for some Sheltered Workshops. They act as a buffer by providing temporary employment to those who though fully trained have not yet been placed with an employer, and they give employment to those blind who for one reason or another, e.g., temperamental difficulties or lack of capabilities, do not wish to or cannot work outside.

23. *Home Workers' Scheme.* Many of the blind who have been trained in the traditional trades have their own homes some distance from any Sheltered Workshop. It is usual for them to work in their own homes as members of a Home Workers' Scheme. This Scheme may help them in the purchase of raw materials, or in the sale of finished articles, or in arranging visits by professional instructors in order that the standard of work may be kept at the highest level. A Home Workers' Scheme usually has to be

subsidised, though not to the same extent as the Sheltered Workshops, and is especially advantageous in rural areas.

24. *Own Account.* Under the general heading of Own Account come such occupations as the work of masseurs, telephone operators, factory workers on assembly lines, lathe operators, inspectors of machine parts, certain professions, or even shopkeepers—in short any job in the outside world, other than those performed at home, in which the blind men or women have proved that they can compete on equal if not on better terms than a sighted person. Employment on Own Account is a field which has been very greatly extended in recent times and now provides immense possibilities for a great variety of careers to the complete satisfaction of the blind, because these careers are obtained and held in open competition with the sighted and at equal wages or salaries. The best results are found after the rehabilitation and training of newly blinded adults as it is then possible in a great number of cases, especially with an understanding employer, to place the man back in his old job, trained and in every way capable of continuing his work to the entire satisfaction of everyone concerned. This does not however mean that those who have been blind since birth cannot or do not also find employment on their own. From time immemorial they have been finding employment as musicians, or teachers, and for at least 50 years there have also been successful blind physiotherapists, stenographers and telephone operators, not to mention solicitors and lecturers at universities. It is in this field of employment on Own Account that there is the greatest need for an After Care Organisation which will be ready to help and advise the blind man who may be in need. It is this After Care which keeps the blind man up to date with techniques and trends, and thus enables him in turn to keep up with if not sometimes ahead of his sighted colleagues.

25. There should be considerable openings for blind men and women in farming on small holdings as is done in many other parts of the world. An experiment is already being carried out in Malaya in the keeping of poultry by the blind, and further experiments and investigations will be started in other forms of farming in 1954. The development of Co-operatives and Farmers' Clubs should enable the blind farmer to keep well abreast of new methods and simplify marketing of his produce. Farming might

prove to be one of the better fields of endeavour for the blind to undertake in Malaya. In addition there should also be openings in other rural industries including rubber, tin, fishing and rice.

26. The employment of women presents particular problems. It is generally conceded that the opportunities for blind women are not as wide or as varied as for men, though of course there are exceptional cases which only affect a very small proportion of blind women of any country. It may be said that the natural role for a women is to become a house-wife and mother—this is no less true in respect of blind women. There is much to be said for a policy of training every blind woman to be firstly a house-wife, and secondly in some other form of employment. There are already in Malaya blind women who are making a success of their careers as house-wives. In certain parts of Africa where blindness is commonplace, the price of blind able-bodied wives is exactly the same as that for the sighted ones. This should not however be taken as implying that this Report wishes to appear in any way to encourage the sale of wives!

The Untrainable or Unemployable Blind.

27. The untrainable and unemployable blind can be divided into two main groups. The first group consists of those who though not old have a second handicap in addition to blindness. This handicap may be either physical or mental. The physical handicap may be caused by disease or accident and may result in the individual being too weak to undergo training or too insensitive to become proficient. The mentally handicapped may be either certifiable, in which case they are normally the sole responsibility of the medical authorities, or sub-normal only to the extent of not being able to benefit from the training given in the school for the normal blind. The United Kingdom has developed a special type of institution for the mentally sub-normal blind at Condover, (in practice a limited number of blind who are mentally normal but who have an additional physical handicap are also admitted to the United Kingdom's Condover. But for all practical purposes the institution may be regarded primarily as one for the mentally sub-normal blind.) and for ease of reference in the remainder of this Report the mentally sub-normal blind will be referred to as Condovers.

28. The second group of unemployable or untrainable blind consists of the aged, who will in the fullness of time form by far the largest group of blind people in any country. (Already in the United Kingdom, 60% of the blind population is over 70 years old). Those aged blind men and women who have sufficient money and who are able to engage a servant, or those who can live with their families, present no problem other than the one of the supply of any special Braille or other amenities required. The aged men and women who have no families to look after them and no income of their own must have something done for them if they are not to exist in abject and servile misery until death releases them. As a general rule the members of this group could pass the rest of their lives in reasonable happiness if they had a small income sufficient to support them without their being any financial burden on anyone else. Often they have friends or relatives who could give them shelter so long as they would not be out of pocket themselves. Most blind men and women, even more than sighted ones, would rather spend their last days amongst people and in surroundings they know, than be moved to a strange institution. In their case the most satisfactory solution is to give them the financial assistance they need—a pension. A very strong case could be made out for the grant of a reasonable pension to indigent blind men and women over the age of 65 and, to anticipate a later recommendation in this Report, such cases could in Malaya be limited to those recommended on the authority of the Blind Welfare Officer and receive a pension (at present costs) of about \$15/- to \$20/- a month. It should be noted that food parcels are not normally a satisfactory substitute as they deny freedom of choice to the individual recipient, unless he sells them when half the object of granting any assistance is at once lost. It is difficult to imagine in any country, however elaborate a pension system there may be, that there will still not be some need for institutional provision for the aged and homeless blind. Ideally something along the lines of the Twilight Homes in the United Kingdom is required. This point is further considered in paragraph 70.

29. *Condovers.* Condovers, as defined above, are primarily for blind persons of all ages who though not mentally certifiable are unable to benefit adequately from a normal education. Much

can be done for these people through education and training of a rather specialised nature, though a Condover school must have a very much higher ratio of staff to pupil than an ordinary school for the blind. The object is to ensure that nothing is left undone to develop the student's mental character and his ability so that he may ultimately be fitted into a niche which, though rarely of positive economic gain to society, does ensure that he uses his abilities to maximum advantage and in so doing is living as full and useful a life as possible. It may perhaps be worth noting that in the United Kingdom although it is still too early to make any firm predictions, the number of Condover children appears to be increasing amongst prematurely born babies. It is unfortunate that as yet there have been no large scale or long term experiments in the post-educational treatment of Condovers. The general feeling in the United Kingdom appears to be that there will have to be some form of semi-sheltered colony for adult Condovers, and it will be worth trying to find out during the next few years what the results will be of experiments there.

CHAPTER II.

1953: THE SITUATION IN THE FEDERATION OF MALAYA.

The Incidence of Blindness in the Federation.

30. Before effective plans can be drawn up for combating blindness in Malaya, both by preventive measures and by training those who are incurably blind, it is essential to know the extent of blindness in the country. Many estimates have been made, from practically zero to 74,000. For a practical working definition of blindness it is as well to adopt the most generally accepted rough and ready test which is that a person is considered to be blind if he is unable to count the fingers of a hand held up at one yard's distance. When things are more advanced it is suggested that the English standard be adopted, viz.:

- (a) for children: insufficient sight to receive education through normal schools,
- (b) for adults: insufficient sight to enable them to do a job for which eyesight is essential.

31. Before the Japanese occupation it was generally believed that the number of blind in Malaya was to all intents and purposes negligible. This belief grew up because few blind people were to be seen in the streets or towns and even fewer were to be seen begging. It is now known that the blind were there, in the background. The excellent family system had enabled the less fortunate members of the family to be cared for. Under this system most blind received the necessities of life such as food, clothing and shelter, and were on the whole kindly treated. During and immediately after the war the family system was put to severe tests, especially when almost famine conditions prevailed. Since then, and in spite of the post-war boom, the legacy of the famine days and the difficulties arising out of the emergency have done little to counter the inability or unwillingness of many families to give full care and protection to all their dependent members.

32. Today the blind are a recognised part of the Malayan community, but still no one can say with certainty how many blind

there are in Malaya. In February 1947 Sir Clutha Mackenzie and the Director of Medical Services estimated the incidence of blindness for Malaya and Singapore as 1.25 per thousand, which gave a total of 7,500 blind. This would appear to have been a very conservative estimate, as the ratio was lower than the lowest other recorded in the Commonwealth, which was in New Zealand with 1.66 per thousand.

33. In the Blind Welfare Officer's 1948 Report (Government White Paper No. 9 of 1948) an estimate of 2.50 blind per thousand of the population was used, giving a total of 12,000 blind for the whole of the Federation. This total included one partially sighted person for every totally blind person as was based on a preliminary lay survey of the blind in Malaya.

34. In 1951 the British Empire Society for the Blind estimated the number of blind in Malaya to be as high as 74,000. It is not known from what figures this estimate was deduced.

35. In 1952 the Blind Welfare Office of the Federal Department of Social Welfare worked out a new scheme for the mass registration of all the blind in the Federation. The essence of this scheme was that there should first be a preliminary survey by professional social workers and that the results of that survey should be made up into a Soft Register. Persons whose names were on the Soft Register would then be examined by a doctor whose final findings would be used to compile a Hard Register. The whole burden of organising this work in the field had to be placed on the already understaffed and overworked State and Settlement Social Welfare Officers. It was therefore inevitable that results would be slow in coming in, and on the whole the response was very satisfactory. A particularly energetic drive was made in Kelantan where the Social Welfare Office, with the help of D.Os. and Penggawas, compiled its Soft Register by April 1953. It is also worth noting that no individual originally placed on Kelantan's Soft Register has failed to pass the doctor's screening for the compilation of the Hard Register.

36. The Kelantan figures are the ones which have been principally used in making the estimated calculations for the Federation. There is reason to think that this does not result in a very wide divergence from the truth. Kelantan's estimated

population at the end of 1952 was 487,635 and the number on the Register was 988. This gives an incidence of 2.03 per thousand. If, as should be, one partially blind person is added for every totally blind person the minimum incidence would rise to 4.06 per thousand, if one assumes that not a single blind person in Kelantan was missed in the course of the mass registration. Even at 4.06 the ratio would compare favourably with Indonesia at 11.00, India at 5.00 and China at 4.80.

37. There are other factors to be borne in mind. Malaya's population is increasing and may continue to increase. This would be likely to result in a natural increase in the total number of blind, even if the ratio was kept steady. Furthermore, any improvements in the standard of living will lead to an increase in the longevity of the people as a whole which will again tend to result in a natural increase in the number of aged blind and therefore also in the total blind population. Against this, however, there may be a continuing improvement in both nutrition and medical services which would reduce the incidence of blindness by inhibiting its occurrence and by the cure of greater numbers of cases.

38. On balance and taking into consideration such information as was gathered in 1947 for the whole Federation and in 1952 and 1953 from mass registrations initiated in other States and Settlements as well as in Kelantan, the ratio of 2.50 blind per thousand should be accepted as giving a reasonable minimum working figure. Table I in Appendix B shows the resulting estimated distribution of blind by States and Settlements. It will be noted that the figures given for the number registered in 1952/53 appear in most cases to be appreciably lower than those given in 1947. This was partly because of restrictions imposed by the Emergency in 1952/53 and partly on account of the volume of other heavy commitments which had by then accumulated on the shoulders of State and Settlement Social Welfare Officers. A more important reason was that in 1947 the Central Welfare Council offered \$10/- a month for everybody who came forward to register as blind—this resulted in a considerable eagerness to be registered, sometimes on rather questionable grounds. On the figures given, the estimated total number of blind for the whole Federation is 14,020. Table II gives the

breakdown figures by age groups. For long term planning by age groups it is advisable to balance the estimates deduced from the Kelantan percentages against those deduced from the United Kingdom percentages. This method has been used in order to arrive at the numbers of blind children and adults for whom special educational or other provisions have been recommended elsewhere in this Report.

Prevention of Blindness in the Federation.

39. There is no record of there ever having been a full survey to determine the incidence of the various causes of blindness in Malaya. Hospital returns, useful as they can be for other purposes, are only based on actual cases treated and therefore provide unreliable data. The Blind Register compiled so far contains too little in the way of informed knowledge about the primary or contributory causes of blindness to be of any value. There is a popular belief that venereal disease and conjunctivitis are amongst the two main causes, but it is also safe to say that bad feeding in infancy or childhood is often a major factor. Trachoma, perhaps the most widespread cause in India and Indonesia, seems to be very limited in Malaya.

40. Malaya is a country which on the whole is kind to the eyes. There are no large desert areas with their consequent glare and continual strain on the eye, and by tropical standard the landscape is generally restful to look at with its predominant background of green. Malaya is also a comparatively clean country, for being frequently washed by rains it is relatively free from flies which might otherwise spread the disease and dirt which contribute to blindness. And yet in spite of these tremendous advantages there is a very high proportion of preventable blindness in Malaya. Some observers have put that proportion as high as 75 per cent: 50 per cent. would be a conservative estimate. One reason is of course that the preventative agencies such as clinics are few and far between. On the other hand it is probably true to say that if the people of Malaya had really wanted these agencies, then the demand would have been met if not fully at least to a far greater extent than it is now. There is a much more fundamental trouble: it is combined ignorance and apathy. Ignorance that the eye is dependent upon the general health of

the body, which in turn is dependent upon adequately nourishing food, and apathy over following any advice on these matters. The plain fact is that there is a great deal of malnutrition in Malaya, not necessarily because food is irremediably scarce, although this is from time to time true in isolated cases, but because people do not know what to eat and make the very minimum effort to augment or vary their diet. People remain unconvinced that wrong feeding can have anything to do with impairment of vision, and do nothing about it even when informed.

41. Malnutrition, even when it is not a primary cause of actual blindness, in the majority of cases weakens the individual's resistance to disease. Even so, once a disease of the eye has evidenced itself, it could often be brought under control if treated in time by a qualified practitioner. But how often do most of the people of Malaya come to a qualified practitioner only when all other "cures" have failed even if those "cures" have not already aggravated the trouble beyond hope?

42. What is the answer to this avoidable blindness? Apart from building up all the technical facilities required, which is bound to take a long time, is there anything else which can be done? The Director of Medical Services reports that an Ophthalmic Specialist has recommended that it would be advisable not only to give vitamin A in fairly large doses to pregnant women to prevent blindness in their young children but also to distribute vitamin A & D concentrates to young children. The Ophthalmic Specialist also suggested that widespread publicity by radio might help to overcome difficulties which may have confronted any similar project in the past. The Director of Medical Services has circulated all State Medical and Health Officers and the Malayan Association for the Blind have indicated their willingness to co-operate in any pilot or full-scale scheme. There is so much preventable blindness in this country which is due to malnutrition that an all-out effort should be made to deal with the problem.

43. The Director of Medical Services has further reported that the Child Health Specialist, Federation of Malaya, has emphasised that an intensification of health education is urgently required. The Director of Education, Federation of Malaya, has reported that the syllabus for all types of school, English and

Vernacular, lays stress on the importance of a balanced diet, of cleanliness and care of the eyes. It has also been suggested by a State Social Welfare Officer that close contact be maintained with the Federation of Women's Institutes, Kuala Lumpur, where courses are held for women from remote areas. The Women's Institutes should be able to help in combating blindness particularly when this is caused by malnutrition. This suggestion might be extended even further with a view to building up closer co-operation with all other statutory or voluntary organisations which might be interested.

44. It is also strongly recommended that more home visits should be paid by social workers who have had some training in health and hygiene to combat malnutrition. This means more and better trained staff which in the end would be an economy. Recommendations for training in this work are included in Appendix C.

Synopsis of Blind Work in the Federation 1926—1953.

45. In 1926 the Anglican Church opened a small Home for blind and crippled children in Malacca. In 1931 this was moved to Penang, where it still is to-day and is known as St. Nicholas' Home. This Home has about 50 children and the management is most anxious to co-operate in any overall plans for work for the blind throughout the Federation, although its own particular speciality is in the education of blind children. The work done by this Home through slumps and during the Japanese Occupation provides an excellent example of the tenacity and faith of all good voluntary organisations. The Committee of St. Nicholas' Home has recently reviewed its policy and plans for the next 10 years and extracts of the relevant portions of their January 1954 report are given in Appendix D, together with certain comments by the Blind Welfare Officer, on their recommendations. On completion of their plans it may well be found that certain of the recommendations in paras. 55—57 have been adequately met.

46. In 1946 Mrs. Cheah of Penang brought the plight of Malaya's blind to the notice of the Central Welfare Council, with the result that a cash relief scheme was instituted. Government was also recommended to secure the appointment of a Blind

Welfare Officer in the then newly formed Department of Social Welfare. Major D. R. Bridges was appointed in July, 1947.

47. In 1948 the Blind Welfare Officer's Report and Recommendations were tabled at Legislative Council as White Paper No. 9. The Report strongly recommended the formation of a representative voluntary body which would be able to accept certain responsibilities for work for the blind in Malaya. As a first step, a Working Committee was set up by the High Commissioner, Sir Edward Gent, though this Working Committee later became temporarily a sub-committee of the Central Welfare Council. In November, 1951, an independent Malayan Association for the Blind was formally inaugurated under the management of a Provisional Council. During the next 18 months this Provisional Council, on behalf of the Association, initiated or undertook a considerable amount of constructive work for the practical welfare of Malaya's blind. At the time when the Association's draft rules had been drawn up it had been felt essential to insist on the closest co-operation with Government through the Department of Social Welfare. This was achieved by appointing the C.S.W.O. as ex-officio Chairman and by providing for six officially nominated members. In June 1953 at the Annual General Meeting the Chairman proposed the adoption of a new constitution as the Association had now become sufficiently mature to manage its own affairs without any official supervision or guardianship imposed upon it. There are now no ex-officio or officially nominated members on the Association's Council or on its Executive Committee, but a friendly and effective link with Government is maintained through the Blind Welfare Officer who is ex-officio Hon. Secretary though he is not a member of the Council and has no right to vote.

48. The work of the Malayan Association for the Blind up to June 1953 has included raising sufficient funds to build the Princess Elizabeth School for the Blind in Johore Bahru on ground granted by the State Government, the building of the Gurney Training Centre in Kuala Lumpur on a site granted by the Selangor State Government, and acceptance of the responsibility for the Blind Workers' Scheme in Negri Sembilan which has to date turned out manufactured articles to the value of \$18,000. In addition the Association accepted the responsibility for financing

discounts on special equipment for blind customers, and the payment of small contributions to the Post Office accounts of the children in the Princess Elizabeth School. Finally it issues periodical Bulletins on Blindness which at present have a circulation of about 1,000 copies.

49. In all this work by the Malayan Association for the Blind the Welfare Office of the Department of Social Welfare has been very closely connected. All commitments accepted by the Association have originally been started by the Blind Welfare Office, and that office still contributes substantially in service as well as in cash and kind towards the work of the Association. The annually recurrent expenses of the Princess Elizabeth School and the Gurney Training Centre are met from public funds and all the staff are on the official establishment. In addition, as has already been mentioned, it was the Blind Welfare Office and the State and Settlement Social Welfare Offices which between them carried out the organisation of the registration of the blind. Successful tours have also been organised throughout the Federation by the Blind Welfare Office and State/Settlement Social Welfare Offices. In these tours a small blind team demonstrated the results of their training and awoke considerable interest in the practical work which can be done for the blind.

50. In 1953 a Compensatory Allowance Scheme was officially introduced for payments to workers engaged on certain trades in Sheltered Workshops or in Home Workers' Schemes, and who earned by their own efforts an approved minimum. This Scheme was designed to compensate the blind worker for his or her loss of earning power caused by blindness and at the same time to act as an incentive to the individual who has the ability and the will to improve his or her lot. At present only a few workers in the Blind Workers' Scheme in Negri Sembilan have qualified for this allowance.

51. A small library consisting of classics as well as historical, children's and other books has gradually been built up since 1948 with the invaluable help given by individual voluntary Braille writers by the Blind Welfare Office. The Blind Welfare Office has also a small Braille Publishing Unit which prints, proof reads and binds Braille books. The original Crab Printing Press was

not entirely satisfactory, and a solid dot Braille duplicator has now been purchased by the Association with funds made specially available from an official grant-in-aid.

52. A demonstration team consisting of three trained blind adult workers and a sighted leader toured the Federation of Malaya during 1953. In one State the visit of this team in July 1953 produced more and better results than six years of other propaganda in the kampongs. There was for instance a steady increase in the number of blind persons registered, 75% of whom came forward of their own accord.

CHAPTER III.

RECOMMENDATIONS.

Registration.

53. The relief count attempted in 1946 and 1947 depended largely for any success as an experiment in registration on the lure of the monthly \$10/- relief grant promised at the time to each blind person by the Central Welfare Council. The new attempt at mass registration which was started in 1952 was based on a more scientific approach but has been badly hampered through lack of staff and by the Emergency. There can however be no question of the need for pushing forward with an effective register of the blind throughout the Federation. The value of such a register is not to be measured in short term goals. There is no immediate beneficial effect to the majority of the blind people in Malaya accruing from mere registration. This is simply because the services for the blind are still so very limited. But it becomes increasingly difficult to plan those services in advance and to work out Malaya's real needs in the field of work for the blind without reliable information about the incidence and extent of blindness.

54. It is recommended that the 1952 experiment be continued. This means the compilation first of a Soft Register, preferably by trained social workers but if the worst comes to the worst by laymen. This Soft Register has then to be passed to a qualified medical officer to check each case. His findings are then summarised in a Hard Register, which will not only give the true extent of blindness but should be of some assistance in giving information about the causes of blindness. It is also recommended that the compilation of these registers should be done on a State and Settlement basis and that the ultimate responsibility of compiling them should be left with each State and Settlement Government. Each Government would then take such steps as it thought best to complete this work, although of course the advice of the Blind Welfare Officer and his staff would always be at their disposal.

Education.

55. *Nursery Schools.* For the purpose of planning ahead the estimated minimum number of blind children of nursery school age throughout the Federation should be taken as 150. Nursery

schools elsewhere do not normally accept more than about 24 pupils. However, in Malaya it would be more realistic to allow for 30—50 children, and to plan for a total of only 3 Nursery Schools. One should be situated on the East Coast, one in the North-West and one in the South-West of Malaya. The Nursery School could be built adjacent to a Primary School.

56. *Primary Schools.* The estimated minimum number of blind educable children between the ages of 7 and 12 should be taken as 350. Primary Schools for these children should as far as possible fall in line with the National Schools set up under the Education Ordinance of 1952, following the same curriculum and using English from the first year. This gives a good grounding for those children who will be going forward to secondary education and will in any case give additional advantage to most of the blind children when they have to enter into open competition later with the sighted population for jobs. As National Schools, the blind primary schools will of course also have to teach Malay and would teach either of the other major languages provided there were sufficient students requiring them. Religious instruction must be given in accordance with the requirements of the law. Government should plan to establish 3 Primary Schools for blind children, each capable of accommodating between 80 and 120 children. They should if possible be situated one on the East Coast, one on the North-West and one in the South-West of Malaya.

57. *Secondary Schools.* Provision need not be made in the foreseeable future for more than 10% of blind primary school children to go on to Secondary Grammar schooling. The remaining 90% should take a form of Secondary Modern schooling. The present estimated number of blind educable children of secondary school age is under 250, although some allowance will have to be made for further intakes from the primary schools. The Director of Education, Federation of Malaya, has advised that in the case of the few pupils whose performances in the Primary School suggest an academic secondary education, economic staffing for their instruction in secondary sections of the Primary School would present a grave problem. It would be preferable, in the interim, for all the pupils proceeding beyond the primary stage to take a two year course in their Primary Schools on the lines suggested for the 12+ to 14+ group in paragraphs 46, 47 of the Report of the

Special Committee (No. 70 of 1952). The instruction would be approximately the same for pupils who would go on to "grammar" and "secondary modern" schooling, but with a bias for the former which would enable them later to work with one special tutor at one centre, whilst attending for much of their instruction an ordinary secondary English School. Since the cost of equipment for "secondary modern" work is high, the Director of Education recommends that plans should include the building and equipment of one residential "secondary modern" school. A somewhat different experiment is being considered by St. Nicholas' Home, the details of which are given in Appendix D; in these early days it would seem at the very least no bad thing to have individual experiments conducted on their own lines by voluntary organisations.

58. *Training Centres.* Half of the Gurney Training Centre in Kuala Lumpur has already been built and can accommodate up to 50 blind men and women between the ages of 16 and 35. When it is complete it will be able to take up to 100 students. For a start only the simple traditional trades of the blind should be taught in the Gurney Training Centre. Later this work should be transferred entirely to the Sheltered Workshops and the Gurney Training Centre should concentrate on the more special and advanced forms of training such as those for Telephone Operators, Stenographers, Masseurs, Weavers, Machine Knitters, etc.

Employment.

59. *Sheltered Workshops.* The estimated employable group of blind persons is between 2,000 and 3,000, and it would appear that about half of these could at present best find employment in Sheltered Workshops. It is therefore recommended that plans should be made for erecting 5 such workshops each capable of employing between 200 and 300 blind men and women. Two of these workshops should be on the East Coast and three on the West Coast. All should preferably be in or near towns.

60. *Home Workers' Schemes.* There is insufficient information as yet to justify any firm recommendations on the setting up and practical administration of Home Workers' Schemes. For this reason it is all the more important that one pilot scheme should be

started forthwith, preferably under the auspices of the Malayan Association for the Blind though with some government financial backing. Administratively it would appear advantageous to link Home Workers' Schemes to the Sheltered Workshops, but at least during the experimental stage it would be better to run the Home Workers' Schemes as an entirely independent project.

61. *Placement Service.* When a blind person has been trained it is still necessary to place him in a satisfactory employment. Only some of this work could be done direct from the Training Centre or Sheltered Workshops and requires no special auxiliary service, and there will be a pressing need for a Placement Service to assist the Training Centre, the Workshops, and all blind persons who are setting up to earn their living on Own Account. This Placement Service is a highly specialised one and requires the closest liaison with industries, commercial firms and employment exchanges. Reference has already been made to Appendix A which lists occupations open to the blind in the United Kingdom. Many of these occupations could also be open to the blind in Malaya and have been tentatively marked accordingly; one of the tasks of the Placement Service staff must be to make a detailed survey of where additional occupations can be thrown open. The Placement Service should not be created out of nothing as a new venture; it should grow out of a slightly expanded staff attached to the Gurney Training Centre.

62. *Legislation.* It might be thought that legislation, such as the United Kingdom's Disabled Persons Employment Act, 1944 would be of the greatest value in helping to find employment for the blind of Malaya in local industries. In practice it has been found in the United Kingdom that this legislation never needs to be invoked and there seems to be no good reason why it should be imposed on Malaya. Government should however bear in mind that it could be both the best and the largest employer of trained blind telephone operators, stenographers and masseurs. Certain administrative posts could also be open to suitably qualified men.

63. *Sales Policy.* In the past it has been the policy in the West for most sheltered workshops to retail the goods they manufactured. Many of these goods found a ready market with local authorities such as Town or County Councils, but this

specialised market had the effect of restricting the types of articles made to the few that could be readily sold to local authorities. In other forms of direct sale the Workshop had to provide its own sales agency, which is a fairly expensive commitment. There is now a tendency in some workshops to sell direct and wholesale to the Trade, thus reducing the overheads by doing away with the necessity of having a sales agency, and at the same time widening the range of articles that could be manufactured. In Malaya the simplest solution to this problem of selling what the blind make would appear at first sight to be to concentrate on sales to Government, especially to the Public Works and other consumer Departments. Up till now the P.W.D. has in fact been the best buyer of articles made by the blind. But with the growth of the Malayan Association for the Blind there is greater opportunity for gaining commercial confidence in and subsequent support for blind workers if an attempt is made to sell wholesale to the Trade. The Malayan Association for the Blind, with its wide unofficial membership will be particularly able to liaise freely with both the Sheltered Workshops and the Trade. Provided always that the Workshops turn out goods of a suitably high standard, there will also be the advantage that they will not then be competing against the Trade in the retail market and therefore disliked as heavily subsidised institutions which are difficult to undercut.

64. It is therefore recommended that for the immediate present the Sheltered Workshop should be able to look towards Government to buy their manufactured goods, but that the Malayan Association for the Blind should be relied upon to do all in its power to build up direct wholesale connections with the Trade. If the Malayan Association for the Blind were further able to establish liaison posts throughout Malaya it would be possible to dispose of the manufactured goods of each Workshop throughout the country rather than purely locally. This would allow different Workshops to go in for greater degrees of specialisation and so increase the quality of their goods without increasing the cost.

65. *Home Visitors.* Home Visiting is one of many services provided for the blind in the West. There the Home Visitors are trained to give instruction in Braille and in simple handicrafts to the blind in their own homes, and can also assist in giving advice in connection with blind children and on the social rehabilitation

of newly blinded adults at home. A Home Visiting Service should be started in Malaya with full-time paid visiting officers whose responsibilities would include in particular the provision of advice to the parents of blind children and the encouragement of the registration of the blind. In addition the Home Visitors should from time to time be required to visit all blind persons in their areas and where necessary assist them in learning pastime occupations. Home Visitors should not be employed in connection with any Home Workers' Schemes, which demand the specialised services of professional craftsmen. It is recommended that special staff be recruited who could combine their other responsibilities with their Home Visiting work.

66. *After-Care.* After-care is a general term used to describe various other forms of service provided for the blind. It may include financial aid to set a man up in a profession or a business, to provide a Workshop in the home where the worker may follow his own trade, or may even include special legal aid. This service is the one which is most urgently required by the blind who are in employment, and has elsewhere been a powerful factor in assisting them and in maintaining their morale. Too often in the past it has been the practice for blind schools or training centres to have nothing further to do with their students once the courses of instruction or training are over, even when suitable employment has been found by a Placement Service. And too often such training has been wasted because there was no machinery for maintaining contact between the blind person and his trainers and the blind person found himself up against difficulties with which he could not cope single-handed. A separate establishment for a Malayan After-Care Service is not however recommended. This sort of work is best undertaken by a suitable local committee which decides how best to act on the merits of each individual case. Such committees might well be sponsored by the Malayan Association for the Blind.

The Untrainable or Unemployable Blind.

67. *Condoers.* Even with the limited registration that has been carried through in Malaya a number of Condoer cases have been discovered and some provision must be made for them. No firm estimate of their total numbers can yet be given, although

out of the 150 children who had been brought to the two schools for the blind now in Malaya about 10 could have been classified as Condovers. This may be a slightly high proportion as there is a tendency amongst some parents of such children to be more willing to abandon the responsibility for bringing them up. However, Nursery Schools are amongst the most valuable screening centres for physically and mentally classifying blind children at an early stage and therefore, although a Condover School is required now in Malaya it is recommended that its establishment should not be considered until at least one Nursery School has first been opened. The problem of dealing with the adult Condover, whether or not he has been to a Condover School, must be left unsolved for the time being. As mentioned earlier it is hoped that within the next few years some useful information may be gathered from experiments in the West.

68. It must be stressed as a matter of policy no Condover child should ever be admitted to any ordinary school for the blind in Malaya. There are too few places for the normal child, and to admit a Condover would be to deprive another normal child of his chance of winning self-reliance and economic independence.

69. *The Indigent Aged.* An earlier part of this Report anticipated a recommendation that provision should be made for the grant from public funds of a pension of between \$15/- and \$20/- a month to every indigent blind man or woman in Malaya over the age of 60 provided that each case has been recommended on the authority of the Blind Welfare Officer. It would appear that the total cost a year would at present be approximately \$1,000,000/-; against this there would be savings on relief grants already being made through other channels to the near-destitute aged blind, and a reduction in the number of expensive cases (now averaging \$50/- a head a month) admitted to official Old Persons' or Decrepits' Homes. In such a pension scheme it will be essential to ensure a uniformity of eligibility for such a pension and of the amount of the pension. Otherwise there is a very real danger that, as has happened elsewhere, the near indigent or homeless blind will tend to migrate to places offering the most generous terms. They are human after all, and it would be stupid of them not to attempt to make the best of their world.

70. Special consideration will still have to be given to the aged and indigent blind who would have nowhere to live and no one to care for them, even if they did receive a pension. The proper provision for these unfortunates is to establish something similar to the United Kingdom's Twilight Homes. But Twilight Homes are not cheap and in Malaya until such time as all other categories of blind have been catered for, this group of homeless blind persons should only be assured of a refuge in the official and voluntary Old Persons' Homes. This may appear to be somewhat unfeeling, but the plain fact is that money and staff are desperately needed for other work and it is this group of aged and homeless blind who have the shortest expectation of life and from whom no constructive results can in any case be expected. This does however reveal special additional opportunities for voluntary work.

Hostel Services.

71. The provision of hostels in towns where there is a Sheltered Workshop or where there are several blind working on their Own Account will in certain cases be essential. Many blind persons will of course be living with their own families and would not require the use of a hostel, but a hostel can help take the place of the family for solitary blind men or women and ensures that outside their working hours the blind are not left to sit idle in some boarding house. For a start it would be better to leave further exploration into local requirements and preliminary experimental provision of a hostel to voluntary effort. However, as a temporary measure it may on occasions be possible to accommodate a few blind or partially sighted boys in certain hostels administered by the Probation and Approved Schools Section of the Department of Social Welfare; these boys will often be able to have a small room to themselves or to mix with the rest of the inmates as they wish.

Concessions and Technical Facilities.

72. *Concessions.* The cost of living for a blind person in employment is normally higher than for a sighted person. One simple example is provided by the blind person who has to travel with a guide, thus having to pay for two persons' fares instead of one. There are two basic ways of approaching this problem of individual financial concessions to the blind. One is by a

number of ad hoc special reductions on such items as railway or bus fares, licences, the cost of special equipment or income tax assessments. The other is to make no individual concessions but to arrange for a flat grant to all blind persons. The grant system is generally thought to be better in theory than the ad hoc concession system. The principle adopted elsewhere is that if the cost of living is scaled on a thermometer registering zero for a normal sighted person, then a normal blind person would register a predetermined minus quantity and would automatically qualify for the appropriate grant to bring him up to the level of the ordinary citizen. There is of course no means test. At first sight this would appear to be a very expensive scheme, but in a highly developed State it seems that it is both easier and far less costly to administer. In Malaya the present system of ad hoc concessions should for the time being be continued, but that the whole question should be reviewed when half of the trainable blind are satisfactorily placed in employment.

73. *The Braille Library.* Publication of Braille text-books is of the highest importance to schools for the blind, as well as an obvious service for all blind people. Braille publishing at the best of times is a costly business and the only way it can be run economically is through bulk production. On the other hand one of the benefits of Braille is that there is only one type, which can be used for any language. The obvious conclusion would appear to be that the printing of Braille for the whole of South East Asia could best be done at one centre. There seems to be no reason why Malaya should not have the energy as well as the foresight to provide that centre. At present the Government Blind Welfare Office has a small Braille Printing and Publishing Unit, and it is strongly recommended that this Unit be expanded with a view to its providing an International Braille Service for the whole of South East Asia. This Service would cater at first for schools and training centres as it would not for some years be economically practicable to develop the printing of the comparatively few copies needed for circulating Braille libraries; in any case the Federation has been fortunate since 1948 in having a band of voluntary Braille writers working hard to produce books for the small lending library now maintained by the Braille Publishing Officer.

74. *Other Equipment.* The provision of other necessities such as talking books, special recreational or occupational equipment, watches, etc., would best be dealt with centrally and should continue to be managed under the authority of the Blind Welfare Officer until such time as the Malayan Association for the Blind could consider taking over these commitments.

Office Accommodation.

75. There appears to be no reason why the official Blind Welfare Office should ever expand into a large bureaucratic machine. There is a great deal of room for constant improvement in and further specialised training of its staff and some increases in that staff may be essential as work for the blind develops. But if that development is to be a healthy one, carrying Malaya with it, it is voluntary effort which must be encouraged to expand to the limit. At the same time there is a very strong case for continuing to keep the Malayan Association for the Blind, as the principal voluntary organisation, and the Blind Welfare Office in close physical as well as administrative touch. It is therefore recommended that when the Gurney Training Centre is fully completed it should also provide space for the Association's and the Blind Welfare Office's Headquarters.

The Malayan Association for the Blind.

76. The Malayan Association for the Blind is now a completely independent voluntary organisation, receiving as yet no subsidy from Government, and having no ex-officio government representative on its Council. This should not mean that the Malayan Association for the Blind suspects or resents official action. It is the first stage in a policy agreed to and approved by Government—a policy of encouraging voluntary work and voluntary interest as much as possible. The Malayan Association for the Blind's new independence from any appearance of official control has not only enabled it to stand more firmly on its own feet, but has encouraged it to co-operate freely with official services in open partnership rather than to be confined to the role of a mere para-government organisation. It is now essential to review and determine the respective future responsibilities of the Malayan Association for the Blind and of the Government's Blind Welfare Office.

77. The Malayan Association for the Blind is at present responsible for the conduct of all its own affairs, makes its own appeal for funds, has built and owns the new Princess Elizabeth School's and Gurney Training Centre's buildings, administers the business side of the Blind Workers' Scheme which is housed in the Government "Welfare" Home in Seremban, arranges for certain concessions, and issues the periodical "Bulletin on Blindness". The Blind Welfare Officer is ex-officio the non-voting honorary secretary of the Association and provides the main link between the Association and Government.

78. The Federal Government, through its Blind Welfare Office, maintains that Office, staffs and maintains the Princess Elizabeth School, the Gurney Training Centre, the Seremban Blind Workers' Scheme, and the Braille Publishing Unit. The Blind Welfare Office is also responsible for organising the registration of blind persons in the Federation, which has hitherto been carried out by State and Settlement Social Welfare Offices. Finally the Blind Welfare Officer is Government's principal professional adviser and executive on all matters pertaining to official interest in work for the blind and as already mentioned provides a permanent link with the Malayan Association for the Blind through his ex-officio position as that Association's non-voting honorary secretary.

79. It is recommended that henceforth Government should adopt as its policy the encouragement of the Malayan Association for the Blind to take over the greatest possible degree of executive and administrative responsibility for work for the blind in the Federation, excluding purely medical attention. At the same time Government should turn to the Association as its principal adviser on all work for the blind in the Federation, again excluding technical medical matters. As a corollary to this, Government will have to give the fullest support, including the necessary financial aid, to the work of the Association. It will not be sufficient, for instance, for Government to acknowledge the value and importance of work for the blind and then leave financial aid to chance.

80. This devolution of work on to the Malayan Association for the Blind must be done step by step, and must primarily depend on the ability of the Association itself to accept heavier

responsibilities not only at its Kuala Lumpur headquarters but throughout the Federation.

81. It is recommended that the first step should be for the Malayan Association for the Blind to form suitable Committees to which Government through its Blind Welfare Office would turn for advice on every aspect of the administration of the Princess Elizabeth School, of the Gurney Training Centre and Hostel, of the Seremban Blind Workers' Scheme, and of any other schools or training centres to be established. With experience these advisory committees should be able to develop into potential Management Committees, working under the direct supervision of the Association. If and when this stage has been reached Government should hand over the whole management to the Association in return for a sufficient block subvention.

82. The same policy should also be adopted for all other schemes recommended in this Report, each one being considered on its merits as and when the Malayan Association for the Blind feels able to accept the appropriate responsibilities.

83. It would however appear advisable to make one reservation with regard to staff. It is doubtful whether for many years if ever, the Malayan Association for the Blind could offer with certainty the terms of service, including pensions etc., which Government gives its employees. In fairness therefore to those who are now or would be employed full time by Government, and thereby to help ensure continuing and improved effectiveness in all branches of officially approved work for the blind, it is recommended that full time staff be placed or retained government service on the establishment of the Blind Welfare Office for the purposes of salaries and allowances, but seconded to the Malayan Association for the Blind for their work.

Summary of Priority Recommendations.

84. Certain of the recommendations in this Report may take a long time to implement because possible financial restrictions apart, all the necessary staff will first have to be recruited and trained. The following priority requirements are therefore recommended for implementation by the end of 1959:—

- (1) A Malayan, preferably a man, to be sent in late 1954 to the United Kingdom for twelve months to study the

- training and employment of blind persons, with a view to his adopting what he learns in the United Kingdom to use in the Gurney Training Centre. The United Nations Technical Aid Administration has already expressed its interest in such a project, and may be able to contribute towards the cost which is estimated at \$5,000/-, including passages each way.
- (2) One Nursery School, on a site already promised by the Kelantan Government by the end of 1955. Estimated capital cost \$150,000/-, and \$45,000/- annually recurrent. (including salaries, etc.)
 - (3) A pilot Home Workers' Scheme to be inaugurated by the end of 1955. No capital cost. Estimated initial annually recurrent cost for salaries \$5,000/-.
 - (4) A Malayan officer to be sent by Government in 1955 to study the Home Visiting Scheme in the United Kingdom with a view to initiating a similar scheme in the Federation in 1957. Estimated cost of one year's study plus passages, etc. \$5,000/-.
 - (5) One Sheltered Workshop in Perak, where there is already a certain amount of industrialisation and a likely local market for the Workshop's goods, by the end of 1955 so as to absorb any unplaced students from the Gurney Training Centre. Estimated capital cost \$200,000/-, and annually recurrent \$25,000/- (including salaries, etc.) for an initial maximum of 30 blind employees.
 - (6) One Primary School on the East Coast by the end of 1957. Estimated Capital Cost \$350,000/-, and \$85,000/- annually recurrent (including salaries, etc.)
 - (7) The Training Wing of the Gurney Training Centre to be completed by the end of 1956. Estimated capital cost \$250,000/- and an additional annually recurrent \$10,000/- (i.e. over and above present staff emoluments and other charges). This Centre will then be able to start proper training for telephone operators, stenographers, typists and masseurs. It will also be able to accommodate the Blind Welfare Office and the

Malayan Association for the Blind headquarters under its roof.

- (8) The Recommendation in White Paper No. 17 of 1950 for grants-in-aid to be reviewed forthwith by Government, and appropriate adjustments made to the Blind Welfare Office's 1954 Estimates.
- (9) A trained teacher to be sent by Government in 1956 to the United Kingdom to study the treatment there of Condovers. Estimated cost of an eighteen months' course plus passages, etc. \$7,500/-.
- (10) A Condover School to be built in the Federation for 40—60 children and young persons by the end of 1959. Estimated Capital Cost \$200,000/- and annually recurrent (including salaries, etc.) \$65,000/-.
- (11) All recommendations in paras. 76 — 83 to be implemented one by one as soon as the Malayan Association for the Blind is able to accept the consequent increases in responsibility.
- (12) All recommendations relevant to St. Nicholas' Home for the Blind as summarised in Appendix D should be implemented as soon as possible.
- (13) The Recruitment and training of staff to be implemented as recommended in Appendix C.
- (14) It is recommended that the Federal Government on the advice of the Malayan Association for the Blind should apply for aid from the United Nations Technical Aid Programme in accordance with the suggestions made in Appendix E.
- (15) This Report should be printed, together with any comments or reservations the Government may wish to make, and given the widest possible distribution in the Federation of Malaya.

85. It may be argued that Malaya cannot afford the "luxury" of work for the blind whilst the country has no stable economy. But the vast majority of the blind community is at present an economic as well as a social liability. They require food, clothing and shelter and this must be provided either from public funds

or by the families of the blind themselves. Most of them in fact do find some measure of the necessities of life from their families. The cost to the country must be quite considerable when it is realised that there are about 14,000 of them. It is also a fact that trained blind labour can be an economic asset to the country. The value of work already being done in the Federation of Malaya by trained blind individuals is approximately \$2,400/- a year, and the number of such blind people is only about half a dozen. But if all the blind employable community were to provide this average—and they can with training—then the gain to Malaya becomes a worthwhile figure. If the number of employable blind is between two and three thousand, then the value to the National income may be expected to be between \$5,000,000/- and \$7,000,000/- a year. This is a conservative estimate as it is believed that the productive power of individual blind can be increased substantially from this figure. However, if we estimate that a blind worker has twenty years of productive work then he can be expected to contribute \$48,000/- to the National income. Against that should be set the need of the average blind person for up to ten years' education and training—and this is a high figure—at a cost of \$1,000/- a year making a total of \$10,000/- to the country. Surely, this is proof enough that constructive work for the blind is of direct economic value to the country and that the sooner this addition to National income is tapped the better. Malaya cannot afford not to do this, nor can it afford to let the work develop slowly over one hundred and fifty years as in the West. The Federation of Malaya can reach the standard of the West in one generation or say, thirty years.

APPENDIX A.

OCCUPATIONS OPEN TO THE BLIND.

1. This list is a copy of one originally compiled for employers and employment exchange managers in the United Kingdom. Jobs marked with an asterisk are believed to be available in Malaya.

2. Every job on this list can be efficiently and economically done by blind or partially sighted workers. Evidence proves that in most large factories there are some jobs which can be done as well by touch as by sight, and on which, in consequence, the blind can work in competition with the seeing.

Key to Symbols.

- A. — Available only on a small scale in peace-time.
- C. — Known to have been successfully performed and therefore certainly suitable.
- D. — Regarded as definitely suitable.
- E. — Experience in the same trade before blindness desirable and usually necessary.
- F. — Usually female labour in peace-time.
- G. — Guiding sight needed.
- H. — Regarded as highly suitable.
- J. — Job requires enough sight for easy and rapid movement.
- M. — Usually male labour in peace-time.
- N. — Non-factory employment.
- S. — Employment fluctuates seasonally.
- T. — Requires special training.
- U. — In unusual circumstances only.
- W. — In special workshop for the blind.

ASSEMBLY.

Industry, material or article.	Operation.	Symbol.
Accumulators—Alkaline	- Fitting cases into frames ...	DSF*
	- Packing carbons ...	DSF
„ —Lead Acid	- Fitting handles ...	DSF*
„ „	- Fitting tops ...	DSF*
„ „	- Screwing in inlet stoppers ...	DSF*
„ „	- Terminal fitting and assembly ...	DSF*
Aircraft	- Bolting ...	CM
„	- Frames, wood or metal ...	M
„	- Instrument panels ...	CM
„	- Petrol tanks ...	CM
Aircraft & Electrical	- Plastic components ...	CF
Clothing	- Crash helmets ...	C
Dry Cell Batteries	- Packing cells into division ...	DSF
„ „ „	- Placing washers in cases ...	SF
„ „ „	- Placing washers on dollies ...	SF
Electrical	- Fitting up terminals ...	DF
„	- Torches ...	CF
Electrical Condensers	- Scraping ceramic trimmers ...	DF
„ „	- Spinning ceramic trimmers ...	DF
„ „	- Stripping wax ...	DF
Engineering	- Ball bearings ...	C
„	- Fitting bearings ...	CM
Fancy goods	- Pen and pencil outfits ...	CM
Internal Combustion Engines	- Fixing studs on cylinder block ...	CM
„ „ „	- Studding or bolting up crank cases ...	CM
Metal Smallwares	- Fitting gun belt links ...	CA
„ „	- Lighters ...	CF
Miscellaneous	- Pilots' goggles ...	C
Radio	- Wireless masts ...	C
Small Arms	- Base plate of rifle butt ...	CA
Various	- Screw fitting ...	CF
Wood, Metal, Plastics, etc.	- Sub-assembly of many articles ...	H*

CLERICAL, ADMINISTRATIVE, ETC.

Industry, material or article.	Operation.	Symbol.
	Canvassing	... C*
	Filing Clerk	... CUN*
	Office Messenger	... CUN*
	Progress-chasing	... CUNM*
	Shorthand-typist	... CN*
	Store-keeping	... CJ*
	Telephone Operator	... CN*
	Welfare Officer	... CU*

INSPECTION.

Aircraft	- Petrol tank inspection	... CM
Electrical	- Aural inspection of mine detectors	... CM
"	- Sorting Mica	... C
Engineering	- Aural inspection of rotors	... HTM
Munitions & Aircraft	- Touch inspection	... C
Radio	- Aural inspection of valves	... H
Various	- Fixed gauge inspection	... CF

MACHINE OPERATING.

Accumulators—Alkaline	- Carbon pressing	... DSF
" "	- Perforating rod ends	... DSF
" "	- Turning over case edges	... DSF
Artificial Flowers	- Cutting out flower petals	... CWF*
" "	- Veining flower petals	... CWF*
Breeze Slab and Blocks	- Moulding	... DM*
Brushware	- Stock boring	... DM*
Cardboard Boxes	- Banding, stripping and edging	... CWE*
" "	- Bending	... DF*
" "	- Bottoming and tipping	... CWF*
" "	- Corner cutting	... CWF*
" "	- Corner staying	... CWF*
" "	- Covering	... CWF*
" "	- Cutting and scoring	... CWF*
" "	- Ending on	... CWF*
" "	- Slotting	... DF*
Clay bricks	- Brick Moulding	... CM*

MACHINE OPERATING—(cont.)

Industry, material or article.	Operation.	Symbol.
Corozo Bricks	- Blanking slices on auto lathe ...	M
Cosmetics, Drugs, etc.	- Collapsible tube closing ...	DF*
„ „ „	- Collapsible tube filling ...	DF*
Cycle Tyres	- Wrapping ...	F*
Drugs	- Bottle corking ...	DF*
„	- Bottle filling ...	DF*
Electrical	- Linishing terminals ...	DF
„	- Terminal fixing on Stakon Machine ...	C
Electrical Bulbs	- Cap filling ...	CF
Electrical & Metal		
Smallwares	- Spot and seam welding ...	DF
Engineering	- Capstan lathe ...	CM
„	- Engraving on Pantograph ...	HF
„	- Grummett power press ...	C
„	- Reaming ...	CM
„	- Rough turning ...	DM
„	- Semi-automatic grinder ...	HM
„	- Tread tapping ...	CM
„ Electrical	- Milling ...	CM
„ Light castings	- Airchuck lathe ...	DM
„ „ „	- Profiling machine ...	HM
„ Woodwork and		
Plastics	- Jig drilling ...	CM*
Fencing	- Chestnut pale fence making ...	DM
File Warehouse	- Cropping machine ...	C
Food and Drugs	- Filling bottles with tablets on automatic machine ...	F
„ „ „	- Tin can lid taping ...	DF*
„ „ „	- Weighing on automatic scale ...	DF*
Food, Drugs and Cosmetics	- Filling containers ...	DF*
Foundry	- Ingot sawing on automatic circular saw ...	DM
Golf Balls	- Filling core bags ...	F
„	- Machine winding of elastic ...	F
Incendiary Bomb	- Broaching ...	DM
Internal Combustion Engine	- Grinding valve heads ...	DM*

MACHINE OPERATING—(cont.)

Industry, material or article.	Operation.	Symbol.
Internal Combustion Engine	Polishing valve stems ...	C*
Leather	- Skiving ...	C
Metal Smallware	- Hand fly press ...	C*
„ „	- Kick press ...	C*
„ „	- Light power press ...	C*
Plastics	- Hydraulic hot press ...	CUM
„	- Injection moulding ...	CWM
Plastic and Metal	- Linishing on belt or disc ...	DF
Sheet Metal	- Guillotine ...	DM
Soap	- Mixing on mill ...	CWM*
„	- Plodding ...	CWM*
„	- Presses, hand and power ...	CWF*
String and Twine	- Balling ...	DF*
Textiles	- Knitting machines, flat and round ...	CWF*
„	- Weaving on hand loom ...	CWF*
Toolmaking	- Die lapping ...	CM
Various	- Belling or flaring pipes ...	C
„	- Blue printing ..	C*
Wire	- Spring knotting ...	D*
„	- Wire crimping ...	HM*
„	- Wire cutting & straightening ...	HF*
„	- Wire forming ...	HF*
Woodwork	- Belt sander ...	DM*
„	- Cross cutting saw ...	DM*
„	- Dovetailing machine ...	DM*
„	- Lock tenoning machine ...	DM*
„	- Morticing machine ...	CWM*
„	- Portable disc sander ...	DM*
„	- Recessing machine ...	DM*
„	- Routing ...	CW*
„	- Single tenoning machine ...	CWM*
„	- Three drum sander ...	CM*
MISCELLANEOUS.		
Accumulators—Alkaline	- Boring rod ends ...	HSF
„ —Lead Acid	- Assembly and tying up replacements ...	DSM*

MISCELLANEOUS—(cont.)

Industry, material or article.	Operation.	Symbol.
Accumulators—Lead Acid -	Brushing & filing lead plates ...	HSM*
„ „ -	Guillotining lead grids ...	HSM*
„ „ -	Planing, grooving & cutting wooden separators ...	DSM*
Agglomerated Cork -	Woulding shoe lasts ...	F
Aircraft -	Sealing oil pressure pipes ...	C
„ and Others -	Pipe bending ...	DM
Artificial Flowers -	Pinning flag-day emblems ...	CW*
„ Stone -	Finishing concrete surfaces ...	DM*
„ „ -	Handfilling and ramming of moulds ...	DM*
„ and Paving slabs -	Dismantling moulds ...	DM*
Asbestos -	Boring brake linings ...	DM*
„ -	Feeding disintegrator ...	DM
„ -	Joint washer moulding ...	DM*
„ -	Moulding insulating blocks ...	DM*
„ -	Sanding brake lining ...	DM*
„ Cement -	Corrugating sheets ...	DM*
„ „ -	Cutting and trimming tiles—wet & dry ...	DM*
„ „ -	Feeding tile polishing machine ...	DM*
„ „ -	Moulding pipes, etc. ...	HM*
„ „ -	Trimming and cutting sheets ...	DM*
Asbestos Cement, Breeze Slabs, Paving slabs, etc. -	Stacking—wet and dry ...	DBM*
Binders -	Bookbinding ...	CM*
Brewing -	Conditioning department ...	CUM*
Brushware -	Fibre mixing ...	CF*
„ -	Hair and bass pan work ...	CWF*
„ -	Wire drawing ...	CWF*
Building -	Handymen ...	CNUM*
Cameras -	Film magazine loading ...	C
Casein -	Knitting pin manufacture ...	CW
Catering -	Canteen Assistant ...	CNJ*
„ -	Kitchen Assistant ...	CNJ*
Clay Bricks & Tiles -	Hand moulding ...	CM*
Clothing -	Army hat making ...	CA

MISCELLANEOUS—(cont.)

Industry, material or article.	Operation.	Symbol.
Clothing	- Pressing	... CF*
Cocoa Fibre	- Coal bag making	... CWM
„ „	- Mat weaving	... CWM*
Concrete Manhole Pipes	- Hand moulding	... DM*
„ „ „ etc.	- Hand ramming	... DM*
„ „ „	- Levelling edges	... DM*
Dairy	- Bottle washing	... CNM*
Drugs, Food, etc.	- Bag making on templates	... DF*
„ „	- Bottle capping (tin-foil)	... DF*
„ „	- Corking bottles	... DF*
„ „ & Cosmetics	- Screw Capping	... DF*
Dry Cell Batteries	- Unloading dollies from automatic machine	... DSF
Earthenware	- Moulding of chimney pots, sinks, drain pipes, etc.	... HTM*
„	- Throwing jars and bottles on potter's wheel	... HTM*
Electrical	- Electrician's mate	... CUEM*
„	- Taping wire	... C*
„	- Transformer core building	... C*
Electric Bulbs	- Cap indenting	... DF.
„ „	- Cap recovery	... DF
„ „	- Cap stamping	... CF
„ „	- Seal forming by hand	... CF
„ Condensers	- Wax mica laying	.. DF
„ Motors	- Sleeving copper wire with silk tubing	... CF
„ „	- Taping armatures	... C
Engineering	- Bushing bearing brackets	... C
„	- De-burring (burr-filing, frazzing or fettling)	... CM
„	- Filing to templates	... CM
„	- Fitting, unskilled	... CUM
„	- Lapping by hand	... HF
„	- Sorting & grading of rivets etc.	... C
„	- Tool greasing	... C
„ Aircraft	- Metal forming on templates	... HM

MISCELLANEOUS—(cont.)

Industry, material or article.	Operation.	Symbol.
Engineering Electrical	Thread tapping, testing and	
Plastics	- re-tapping	... C
Food	- Bakery work	... CMU*
Foundry, Light castings	- Sand blasting	... CM
Furniture	- Cabinet making	... CWM*
"	- Cane chair making	... CWM*
"	- Mattress making	... CWM*
"	- Upholstery	... CW*
"	- Woven fibre furniture	... CW*
General	- Crate painting	... CUM*
"	- Honing	... C
"	- Labouring	... CMJ*
"	- Loading and unloading trucks, trolleys, racks, conveyor belts, etc.	... CGM*
"	- Porterage and trucking	... CGM*
Golf Balls	- Feeding testing machines	... HF
" "	- Fitting outer covers	... DF
" "	- Hand winding of elastic	... HF
" "	- Painting	... HF
" "	- Stripping core bags	... DF
Heat Treatment	- Loading centrifuge	... DM
" "	- Loading & unloading furnace conveyor belt	... DM
Incendiary Bombs	- Swarf emptying from conveyor belt	... DA
Inner Tubes	- Bevelling	... DF*
" "	- Buffing	... DF*
" "	- Smoothing valve patches	... F*
" "	- Stripping rods	... F*
Internal combustion engines	Busing inside piston heads	... C*
" " " "	- Tapping out cylinder blocks	... CM*
Leather	- Boot repairing	... CWM*
"	- Straining	... C
Local Authorities	- Salvage sorting	... CNF
" "	- Servicing street danger lamps	... CUMN*
Metal, Plastics, etc.	- Buffing on circular mop	... F

MISCELLANEOUS—(cont.)

Industry, material or article.	Operation.	Symbol.
Metal, Smallwares, Plastics and Others	- Barrelling	... DGM
Metal Smallwares	- Removing & replacing defective gun belt links	... CAW
Miscellaneous	- Carpenter	... CEN*
„	- Checkers' Mate	... CUM
„	- Firewood chopping	... CWM*
„	- Lodge Porter	... CUM
„	- Net making	... CWF*
„	- Piano tuning	... CNM*
„	- Quartz grinding	... C
„	- Wire stripping	... C
„	- Wire tinning	... C
„	- Wool rug making	... CW*
Motor Tyres	- Shaping on form	... HTM
„ „	- Tread forming	... DTM
Munitions	- Cleaning shell cases	... CA
„	- Cleaning shells with compressed air	... CA
„	- Shell filling	... CA
„	- Shell painting	... CA
„	- Screw tapping of bombs	... CA
Non-rigid Materials in General	- Cutting sheets, tubes, wires, etc. to length	... D*
Non-rigid Materials in General	- Hand punching	... CF*
Paving Slabs & Curbs	- Assembling moulds	... DM*
„ „ „	- Filling & vibrating moulds	... DM
„ „ „	- Hand moulding	... DM*
Photography	- Dark Room operations	... DF*
„	- Plate & film packing	... DF
„	- Loading conveyor belt application plant	... DF
Plastics	- Flash filing	... CF
„ & Wood	- Sanding by hand, belt, disc, or portable disc	... C*

MISCELLANEOUS—(cont.)

Industry, material or article.	Operation.	Symbol.
Plating, Painting, etc.	- Wiring articles for dipping ...	C
Radio Valves	- Anode smoothing and straightening ...	F
" "	- Circular grid twisting ...	F
" "	- Feeding and unloading cap-stripping machine ...	F
" "	- Grid stretching ...	F
" "	- Pin tightening ...	DF
" "	- Pre-sintering (circular bore) ...	F
" "	- Seal blowing ...	F
" "	- Seal dipping ...	F
Rope, String, Twine and Textiles	- Coir rope laying ...	CWM*
" " "	- Feeding carding machines ...	DF*
" " "	- Grummett making ...	HF
" " "	- Hanking, coiling, splicing and binding ...	HTM*
Rubber	- Cold moulding ...	DF*
Rubber Soles and Heels	- Mould filling ...	M*
" " " "	- Mould stripping ...	M*
Salvage	- Extracting nails from timber ...	CNM*
Sheet Metal	- Feeding forming and seaming machine ..	A
" "	- Fitting bomb tail buttons ...	DA
" "	- Fitting bomb tail tops ...	DA
Soap	- Bar cutting ...	CWM*
"	- Frame filling, cold process ...	CWM*
"	- Mixing, cold process ...	CWM*
"	- Slab cutting ...	CWM*
"	- Tablet cutting ...	CWF*
Tennis Balls	- Buffing cores ...	DF
" "	- Pressing cores ...	DM
Textiles	- Blending wool ...	C
"	- Mop making ...	CW*
Tobacco	- Hand making of cigarettes ...	CW*
"	- Leaf stripping ...	CF
Toolmaking	- Testing and trimming dies ...	CE

MISCELLANEOUS—(cont.)

Industry, material or article.	Operation.	Symbol.
Toys	- Soft toy stuffing ...	CF*
Tubes, Rods and Sheets	- Tube drawing ...	CM
„ „ „ „	- Tube soaping ...	CM
Various	- Indenting pipes ...	C
„	- Mechanical cement mixing ...	JM
„	- Soldering ...	CU*
„	- Welding ...	CUE*
Waste Rubber	- Rubber mat making ...	CWM*
Willow and Cane	- Basket weaving ...	CWM*
Wire working	- Hand coiling of springs ...	DF
„ „	- Handmaking of wire splinter netting ...	CA
„ „	- Riddle & sieve making ...	DM*
„ „	- Wire fluffing & clenching ...	DM
„ „	- Wire forming on jigs ...	H*
„ „	- Wire seat making ...	DF*
Woodwork	- Cleaning scarf joints ...	DM
„	- Feeding self-feeding tongueing and grooving machine ...	DM
„	- Feeding self-feeding four-way moulder ...	DM
„	- Feeding self-feeding rip saw ...	DM
„	- Feeding self-feeding double and tenoner ...	DM
„	- Feeding thicknessing and planing machine ...	DM
„	- Glueing Plywood ...	D*
„	- Interwoven fence making ...	HSNM
„	- Loading panel sizer ...	HM
„	- Plywood assembly ...	S*
Woodwork, Aircraft, etc.	- Jig drilling with portable power tool ...	CM
„ „ „	- Sanding & polishing propellers ...	G
„ „ „	- Spar forming ...	DM

PACKING AND PACKAGING.

All trades	- Packing, wrapping, or bundling (Standardized lines) ...	C*
Munitions	- Boxing shell cases ...	CA

APPENDIX B. TABLE I.

ESTIMATED NUMBER OF BLIND IN THE FEDERATION OF MALAYA.

State/Settlement.	Estimated Population at the end of 1952.	No. of Blind in 1947.	No. of Blind on Soft Register in April 1953.	Estimated Total No. of Blind at 2.5 per 1,000.
Perlis	79,784	57	10	200
Kedah	634,207	470	78	1,590
Penang	503,838	302	154	1,260
Kelantan	487,635	—	988	1,220
Trengganu	246,199	—	144	610
Perak	1,097,106	263	331	2,740
Selangor	829,287	—	157	2,070
Pahang	277,450	292	148	690
Negri Sembilan	314,836	173	99	790
Malacca	278,340	221	28	700
Johore	860,523	—	21	2,150
THE FEDERATION	5,609,205	1,778	2,158	14,020

APPENDIX B. TABLE II.

BREAKDOWN BY AGE GROUPS OF ESTIMATED NUMBER OF BLIND.

Column 1	Column 2	Column 3	Column 4	Column 5	Column 6
Under 5	26	2.6%	.4%	360	60
5 — 15	130	13.2%	1.7%	1,850	240
16 — 20	45	4.6%	.3%	650	180
21 — 39	260	26.4%	9.5%	3,700	1,330
40 — 49	173	17.5%	8.7%	2,450	1,220
50 — 64	191	19.4%	22.6%	2,720	3,170
65 — 69	39	3.9%	11.3%	550	1,580
70 and over	122	12.4%	44.5%	1,740	6,240
TOTAL	986*	100.0%	100.0%	14,020	14,020

* —Including 2 age unknown.

Column 1—Age Groups.

Column 2—No. of Registered Blind in Kelantan.

Column 3—Percentage of Registered Blind in Kelantan by Age Groups.

Column 4—Comparative Percentage of Blind Population in United Kingdom by similar Age Groups.

Column 5—Estimated numbers of Blind by Age Groups for whole of Federation if calculated from Kelantan percentages.

Column 6—Comparative totals of estimated numbers of Blind by Age Groups for whole of Federation if calculated from United Kingdom percentages.

APPENDIX C.

STAFF: CONDITIONS OF SERVICE, AND TRAINING.

1. The success of any work outlined in the main body of this Report depends very considerably on the staff, both technical and non-technical. It is probably true to say that the staff of any organisation working for the blind have a greater responsibility placed on them than those in a similar organisation dealing with the sighted, and for this reason alone it is most important that they are given appropriate consideration both in their training and conditions of service.

Training.

2. The majority of the staff will be sighted and as a general rule they will have qualified in their trade or profession as a sighted person in the sighted world before coming to an organisation for the blind. For instance, a teacher in a school for the blind should first have qualified as a teacher for the sighted and possibly have had several years' practical experience. The same applies to instructors for trades and professions. There should be a short conversion course to enable the teacher or instructor to adapt his methods of imparting knowledge to the blind student. This course should be done under arrangements made centrally in order to maintain a uniform and high standard of teaching methods. However good the qualifications, it will not be possible to determine whether a teacher or instructor will be successful until after he has had sufficient practical experience with blind people. Until such time that it is possible to establish a Blind Teachers' Training Centre, it will be necessary to conduct such courses in the existing schools and training centres. It is not thought necessary or entirely desirable to send any staff outside Malaya for conversion courses, with the exception of the three officers referred to in paragraph 84 of this Report. However, courses of observation by senior members of the staffs who have reached responsible posts would be invaluable.

Teachers.

3. The Director of Education, Federation of Malaya, has said: "It appears desirable that any teachers who are going to teach in schools for the blind should be trained teachers before

they elect to try this work and enter on special courses of training. It would appear to be uneconomic to appoint teachers-in-training who may later discover that they are not suited to the work, or who may find it inconvenient. They would have to be replaced by further teachers-in-training and it might be some time before a suitable teacher is found. This will result in considerable inconvenience not only to the schools of the blind but to the local Department of Education which would be involved in frequent changes in postings to suit this arrangement. As it is most improbable that there would ever be more than one such school per State, and that the school would be for 100 pupils, it would not be a serious staffing problem from the point of view of the Chief Education Officer of the region. It is also felt that the purely schooling side of these institutions should be the responsibility of the Department of Education. It should not be impossible for the necessary co-operation between the two Departments at State or Settlement level to achieve this and to ensure the smooth working of both sides of the school's activity. It is understood that whatever the future administration of these schools may be, the teaching staff in them would remain Government officers. It may well be that the Administration of the school may consider that the teacher who has spent a number of years in the school should be given opportunities for preferment by transfer to one of the Departmental schools. It would be in the interests of the schools for the blind that there should be an opportunity for changes of staff, both in the interest of the teachers and of the schools themselves. This will be assured if the teachers were on the State or Settlement Department of Education Establishment, although held against posts carried on the Estimates of the Department of Social Welfare."

4. In accordance with the general practice in the United Kingdom, the Federal Government is paying allowances to teachers with the qualifications of "Teacher of the Blind" and to teachers in blind schools on probation employed by the Department of Social Welfare, Federation of Malaya, provided that they obtain the necessary qualifications in three years. One teacher at the Princess Elizabeth School, Johore Bahru, already has the United Kingdom qualifications for "Teacher of the Blind" and it is likely that one more teacher will be sent to the United Kingdom in 1954

to attend a "Teacher of the Blind" course. On the return of this teacher at the end of 1955, it should be possible to devise a suitable conversion course and "Teacher of the Blind" examination in Malaya.

Trade and Professional Instructors.

5. The best type of trade or professional instructor is a man or woman who has had practical experience in his or her profession. It is not usually sufficient to take instructors or reasonably qualified persons direct from technical colleges and similar institutions, because before they can be effective teachers they must have had several years' practical experience in the relevant trade or profession.

6. In the case of these instructors, it is not practical or desirable that there should be rigid schemes of service. It is thought that the majority of them would prefer a form of contract rather than to be placed on the permanent establishment. The employment of instructors on contract also allows for greater flexibility in the development of this work.

Field Officers.

7. Field Officers include Home Visitors and Supervisors of Home Workers Schemes. The Home Visitor with his field work and wide responsibilities, but with comparatively limited scope for a young and ambitious person, will attract older people who have for one reason or another an interest in this type of work which offers unlimited scope through constant and personal contacts with blind individuals of all categories. It is recommended that appropriate Schemes of Service should therefore be designed so that the range of salaries from the bottom to the top of the scale is not particularly wide.

Salary Scales and Schemes of Service.

8. The following list of salary scales is a target at which to aim. It is not suggested that they should be introduced immediately, but only as and when a particular appointment justifies their introduction. It is considered that the relevant Schemes of Service should not be too specific as they sometimes have to be in certain departments, so that they are reasonably

flexible and so that practical experience and merit as well as academic qualifications may be taken into consideration when making selections for appointments or promotion. The terms of service and engagement of vocational instructors and of domestic staff should be left to the Malayan Association for the Blind who would be the employers of such staff in return for suitable grants from the Federal Government.

New Salary Scales Proposed for Blind Welfare.

A	90 x 6	E	336 x 12	H	780 x 30
	96		348		810
	102		360		840
	108		372		870
	114		384		900
	120		396		930
			408		960
B	132 x 6		420		990
	138				1020
	144	F	438 x 18		
	150		456	I	1056 x 36
	156		474		1092
			492		1128
C	180 x 12		510		1164
	192		528		1200
	204		546		
	216		564		
	228		582		
	240		600		
D	252 x 12	G	660 x 30		
	264		690		
	276		720		
	288		750		
	300				
	312				
	324				

Braille Printer:

A-B-C (90 x 6-120/132 x 6-156/
180 x 12-240)

*Asst. Braille Publishing
Officer:*

C-D-E (180 x 12-240/252 x 12-324/
336 x 12-420)

<i>Braille Publishing Officer:</i>	E-F	(336 x 12-420 / 438 x 18-600)
<i>Home Workers' Supervisor & Vocational Instructor:</i>	B-C-D	(132 x 6-156 / 180 x 12-240 / 252 x 12-324)
<i>Home Visitor and Rehabilitation Asst:</i>	C	(180 x 12-240)
<i>Home Visitor Sp. Grd.</i>	D	(252 x 12-324)
<i>Home Visiting Officer and Rehabilitation Officer:</i>	E-F	(336 x 12-420 / 438 x 18-600)
<i>Foreman:</i>	C-D	(180 x 12-240 / 252 x 12-324)
<i>Matron:</i>		(168 x 12-300)
<i>Matron Sp. Grd.:</i>		(342 x 18-486)
<i>Deputy Supt. G.T.C. (To be renamed Dpy. Training Officer):</i>	E-F-C	(336 x 12-420 / 438 x 18-600 / 660 x 30-750)
<i>Supt. G.T.C. (To be renamed Training Officer):</i>	G-H	(660 x 30-750 / 780 x 30-1020)
<i>Teachers (Blind Schools) English Normal Trained:</i>		(240 x 12-372 / 390 x 18-534)
<i>Principal:</i>		(492 x 36-852 / 912 x 36-1200)
<i>Federal Blind Welfare Officer:</i>	G-H-I	(660x30-750 / 780 x 30-1020 / 1056 x 36-1200)

Training of Non-Specialist Officers who may Work for the Blind.

9. It is thought that officers in the Department of Social Welfare, other than those in the Blind Welfare Section, and officers of voluntary organisations such as Red Cross, St. John's Ambulance, Women's Institutes, etc., may benefit from short courses which should be held from time to time at blind schools or training centres. This would also enable them to acquaint themselves with the various organisations already in Malaya as

well as with the types of blind persons who can be admitted to them. Potted information such as the cause and prevention of blindness would be invaluable to all field workers. The type of course recommended is that known as a "Week-end Course". Since it is to the ultimate benefit of Government that as many people as possible know how to assist in the work being done for the blind, it is suggested that these "Week-end Courses" should be the financial responsibility of the Government.

APPENDIX D.

OUTLINE OF FUTURE POLICY DRAWN UP IN JANUARY 1954 BY ST. NICHOLAS' HOME AND SCHOOL FOR THE BLIND IN PENANG, AND COMMENTS THEREON BY THE BLIND WELFARE OFFICER.

General

1. STATEMENT OF POLICY: The Committee of St. Nicholas' Home consider that the function of the Home in the next 10 years should be as follows:—

- i) To provide a Home for 20 babies and nursery school children up to school age (six plus).
- ii) To provide a Residential School for 50 boys and girls (25 in each of the 6+ — 12 and 12 — 16 age groups), a general education on National School lines for the younger group, and a Secondary Modern education for the older group.
- iii) To provide an education on Primary and Secondary Modern lines according to age groups for an additional 50 or 60 pupils who would be housed and maintained apart from their education by Government or other sources.

It should be clearly understood that St. Nicholas' does not favour large numbers. The present accommodation for boarders in all the above age groups is 13 babies, 12 girls and 18 boys. After the completion of the building programme outline below, it is intended that this should be raised to 20 babies, 25 boarders (boys and girls in the age group 6+ — 12) and 25 boarders (boys and girls from 12—16).

Building Policy

2. As previously stated, it is considered that an important function of St. Nicholas' should be education, and it is hoped that the Education Department will ultimately assume full responsibility for the School as a National School. All school buildings and staff appointments will be made with a view to this end. The

Home Committee will undertake to raise, by private subscriptions and public appeals, funds to provide buildings for the *Home* as distinct from the *School*.

HOME BUILDINGS:

(Committee to raise funds for these)—

- i) A boys' cottage to accommodate 25 boys in 3 dormitories with 2 staff-rooms and adequate bathing and sanitary facilities.
- ii) Girls' cottage to accommodate 25 girls in 3 dormitories, as for the boys' cottage above.

N.B.—(These cottages are for the school groups 6+ — 16)

- iii) Common play-room in main house for all boys and girls.
- iv) New chapel to seat 150.

SCHOOL BUILDINGS:

(Government or other help is required for these)—

- i) 5 more classrooms, Principal's Office, store and teachers' room.
- ii) Library.
- iii) Music rooms.
- iv) Gymnasium.

It is not intended that items ii), iii) and iv) should be elaborate buildings. The Gymnasium could well be a partially open-air structure.

Handwork Section: No new building is envisaged here, but the existing block of six rooms will require considerable alteration and conversion when the boys' cottage has been built.

Staffing.

3. It is desired to have one senior staff member in each house (total 4). The present senior staff are 3 in number, and the Committee would be willing to provide an extra senior staff member if help for the school is forthcoming from Government sources.

4. SUMMARY OF PROGRAMME.

FOR ACTION BY ST. NICHOLAS' COMMITTEE.

- i) Engagement of Nursery Teacher.
- ii) Building of Boys' Cottage and engagement of Assistant House-mother for Boys.
- iii) Building of new Chapel.
- iv) Building of Girls' Cottage and engagement of Assistant House-mother for Girls.
- v) Rearrangement of Main building and provision of common play-room.

FOR GOVERNMENT ACTION.

- i) Removal of 8 over school-age girls to Gurney Training Centre.
- ii) The equipment and maintenance of a Hostel on a separate site for 50 — 60 day-pupils.
- iii) Completion of School buildings.
- iv) School Staff Salaries.

Comments by the Blind Welfare Officer.

1. *General.* The St. Nicholas' Policy concentrates on the development of education, which agrees very well with the relevant recommendations in the main body of this Report.

2. *Buildings.* All these appear to be very desirable and careful consideration should be given to any specific recommendations made to Government in the future for assistance.

3. *Staffing.* In principle this is desirable, provided always that the education authorities are able to give the assistance suggested for the school.

4. *The Recommendations for Government Action.*

- i) Admissions to the Gurney Training Centre can only be made after very careful selection and the case of each of the 8 girls is being dealt with on its merits.

- ii) It is understood that this Hostel will be for blind children of all races and all creeds who would attend secular school classes but, unless they were already Christians, would not attend any religious ceremonies or any courses of religious instruction at St. Nicholas' Home. It would appear under the present financial circumstances that Government is not likely to be able forthwith to build and maintain this Hostel; it is therefore recommended that this proposal should not be further investigated in the fullest detail by the Malayan Association for the Blind in conjunction with St. Nicholas' Home Committee.
 - iii) Please see comments on para. 2 (Buildings) above.
 - iv) This appears to be not so much a question of general policy as an administrative problem lying purely within a sphere of the Department of Education to whom this question should be referred. At present the St. Nicholas' Home is recognised by the Department of Education as a Special Agreement School.
-

APPENDIX E.

SERVICES AVAILABLE FROM THE UNITED NATIONS' TECHNICAL AID ADMINISTRATION.

In his report to the United Nations, dated 7th January 1953, Sir Clutha Mackenzie recommended that the following services might be requested by the Federation of Malaya from the United Nations' TAA.

1. A Braille press for printing chiefly in Malay language for use in the Federation and, if desired by other countries in the region, for them also. A certain amount of local text books and reference works will also need to be printed in English, Tamil and Chinese Mandarin. The equipment should include a stereotyping unit, printing press, binding machine, guillotine, etc. A tentative offer of assistance in this direction has been received by the Blind Welfare Officer from the American Foundation for Overseas Blind.
2. The granting of scholarship to enable a selected man, experienced in small factory operation in this country, to be sent abroad for six months to investigate the details of trades for the blind with a view to his returning to take charge of the workshops and of a trade training centre for the blind here. A suitable course might be arranged in the United Kingdom with the co-operation of the British Empire Society for the Blind, 53, Victoria Street, London, S.W.1.
3. Aid to provide the services for three years of an instructor of modern massage as taught to the blind of Japan. This instructor would require to be a trained Japanese with a fluent command of English. The question of permitting a Japanese to enter Malaya for this purpose has been discussed with the Government, which has expressed its readiness to consider such a proposal.
4. Aid to provide the training equipment (duplicate switchboards, telephones and adapters) for the training of blind telephonists as soon as the technical question of

the adapter has been solved, and the services of a blind telephonist engaged for one year to train a local instructor.

It is probable that the Malayan Association for the Blind and the Blind Welfare Office of the Department of Social Welfare would be able from time to time to supplement these recommendations with further requests which will be formally submitted to the Federal Government.

APPENDIX F.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS.

1. The first draft of this Report was sent in October 1953, with requests for criticisms and advice, to the following:

The Director of Medical Services, Federation of Malaya.

The Director of Education, Federation of Malaya.

The Commissioner of Labour, Federation of Malaya.

The State or Settlement Social Welfare Officers of Johore, Kedah/Perlis, Kelantan, Malacca, Negri Sembilan, Pahang, Penang, Perak, Selangor and Trengganu.

The Principals of the Children's and of the Probation and Approved Schools Services, the Youth Services Adviser, and the Information and Training Officer, in the Federal Department of Social Welfare.

The Principals of the Princess Elizabeth School and of the Gurney Training Centre for the Blind.

The Executive Committee of the St. Nicholas' School and Home for the Blind.

2. Expert and practical comments were received back, often at great length and in most useful detail. These comments were then analysed and collated before being incorporated in a substantial volume of amendments which, together with the original draft, were referred to the Malayan Association for the Blind. The seal of approval given by this Association is reproduced at Appendix G.

3. A special tribute is due to Mrs. D. E. Teale, Secretary to the Blind Welfare Officer, who dealt so efficiently with the laborious tasks of assisting in writing up and then typing drafts, re-drafts, amendments, tables, letters and other papers used in the preparation of this Report.

APPENDIX G.

THE STAND TAKEN BY THE MALAYAN ASSOCIATION FOR THE BLIND

The letter reproduced below merits particular attention for its statement of the Association's attitude towards the recommendations made in this Report. It is also very useful in that it sets out the Objects of the Association, which are not given elsewhere in this Report: a study of them may be considered an essential preliminary to any consideration of recommendations affecting the Association.

MALAYAN ASSOCIATION FOR THE BLIND.

Registered under Societies Ordinance, 1948.

P.O. Box 687.

— KUALA LUMPUR.

Patrons

Phone: Kuala Lumpur 4471

His Excellency the High
Commissioner

Please reply to the
Hon. Secretary

Their Highnesses the Rulers

and quote.....

12th March, 1954.

The Chief Social Welfare Officer,
Federation of Malaya,
KUALA LUMPUR.

Dear Sir,

I have the honour to refer to the draft of 'Blindness in Malaya,' together with the copy of the proposed amendments which you were good enough to forward to this Association for comments and suggestions.

2. The Council on behalf of the Association supports all recommendations as now amended, and in particular approves in principle the recommendations contained in paragraphs 76—83, in so far as they affect this Association.

3. My Council is fully appreciative of the very considerable assistance that the Government has already given to the blind in Malaya directly or indirectly through the Princess Elizabeth School, the Gurney Training Centre, the Blind Workers' Scheme, and in other Homes throughout the Federation as well as by grants sent to St. Nicholas' Home, Penang which is independent of this Association. The close and cordial relationship of the Blind Welfare Section of the Department of Social Welfare and this Association has been a major factor in the development of this Association and it is therefore hoped that the Government will continue to support its work.

4. The Association is anxious to make plans for the extension and consolidation of its services, and would be greatly assisted if the Government were to define its policy towards work for the blind and indicate in what manner and to what extent Government is prepared to implement the recommendations contained in the above mentioned Report. In this connection, and for your convenience, I give below the Registered Objects of the Association :

- i) To undertake and encourage measures for the prevention of blindness.
- ii) To undertake and encourage measures for the well-being of all categories of blind persons.
- iii) To advise and make recommendations to the Government on all matters concerned with the prevention of blindness and the Welfare of the Blind.
- iv) To co-ordinate the activities of existing organisations with the same or similar objects by inviting their affiliation to the Association.
- v) To co-operate and wherever desirable to affiliate with other organisations devoted to the same or similar objects as the Association.
- vi) To create public interest in measures for the prevention of blindness and the Welfare of the Blind.
- vii) To accept donations, endowments, legacies and subscriptions from persons or bodies desiring to promote the objects aforesaid or any of them and to hold such funds as trustee for the achievement of the said objects.

- viii) To donate, disburse or expend money under its control in any manner approved by the Council of the Association in order to further such objects.
- ix) To invest the funds not immediately required in such manner as may from time to time be determined.

Yours faithfully,

Sd. M. ALBAKRI,

Chairman,

MALAYAN ASSOCIATION FOR THE BLIND.

(Che Mustapha Albakri).

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