The times are forever changing, and along with them society, thought and concepts also change. Since the War, mankind's knowledge of the Earth we live on and its place in relation to the universe has been growing. To include this kind of new, vital information in the secondary school curriculum, geography is the only course that can meet the demand. Thus, countries all over the world are placing more and more importance on geography in the Sec. school curriculum. Some good examples are Hong Kong, America and Japan, where advances are being made in Sec. school geography education.

In Singapore, however, teaching of geography, editing of textbooks, and selection of teaching materials have shown little change in the years since the war. Until quite recently, geography educational circles seem to have lacked the spirit of actively seeking progress. In the past few years, geography educators have been showing more interest in making changes. The discussions now in progress about the problems of secondary school geography education should be a transitional period leading toward bold advancements in this area.

In promoting progress in geography education, I feel that the term "geography" is much too broad. No one is able
to study in detail all the innumerable phenomena that can
be included under the category "geography", so in preparing
a geography curriculum, careful selection of materials is
essential. Topics to be studied should be based on problems
that Singapore is presently facing in its development, such
as the questions of urban population, urban transport, and
land use. The growing demand for study of this kind of ma-
terial is reflected in the Chinese Pre-U school exami-
nation syllabus for this year, but educators should ex-
tend this kind of development further, especially in the
secondary school curriculum, which is centered on problems
irrelevant to the Singapore region. Educational circles
should re-determine their standards for geography education.

Today, geography teachers place too much importance
on handing down to the students great quantities of fact-
ual material, with passing the examination as the goal.
Factual information is very important, but topics to be
included in the curriculum should be carefully selected,
all decisions based on the long-range goals of geography
education. The principles "What information is really
useful, the comprehension of what concepts is really vital,
and how much can the student actually comprehend" should
be kept in mind. Only in this way can the geography curri-
culum get away from being merely a "collection of facts";
and it is the lack of this kind of change that can explain
the trend for the number of students passing the secondary school geography examination to drop significantly each year.

The greatest problem facing geography teachers today is that the examination system has deprived them of academic freedom. Apparently, only through the cooperative effort of all parties involved can we achieve improvement of geography education, including changes in the examination system as well as changes in the syllabus.

Improving geography education is an extremely complex problem. It certainly is not within the power of any publishers or educators to make any significant progress. In order to achieve significant advancement, the government must cooperate with educational specialists in initiating thorough investigation and cooperative effort.