

REPORT ON THE BEHAVIORAL SCIENCES IN WESTERN EUROPEAN COUNTRIES

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I

Procedures of Study

This report is based on material collected and analyzed during July and August, 1951 in the course of travel to Paris, Stockholm, London, Oxford, Amsterdam, Liege, Frankfurt, Berlin, Milan, and Rome. The following sources of information are utilized.

1. Visits to institutions conducting research ~~in~~ training in the behavioral sciences, and discussions with individuals active in the field. The names of the persons seen are listed with the notes on the separate countries.

2. Interviews with persons outside the behavioral sciences who were in government positions which would give them an opportunity to know the problems and status of scientific work in their country. Examples of such persons are:

England--Max Nicholson, secretary ^{to} of the Lord-President of the Council (in charge of all government sponsored scientific research).

France--M. Jamiti, assistant director, Centre National de la Recherche Scientifique.

Germany--Shepard Stone, Fred Burkhart, George Felke, Leo Crespi, Office of the High Commissioner for Germany.

Italy--Howard Comfort, head of the Cultural Relations Office, U.S. Embassy; Guido Nadzo, E.C.A.; S. Olivetti, industrialist active in housing and welfare programs.

Sweden--Karin Kock, head of the Central Statistical Bureau of the Swedish government.

3. Interviews with American scientists who have spent considerable time in Europe recently in studying behavioral science. Among such persons the following

were most helpful:

Otto Klineberg, who spent a year in the UNESCO office and traveled in European countries this summer.

Robert C. Angell, director of the Social Science Division of UNESCO, 1950.

George Katona, recently completed a two-months survey of social research in Western Germany.

David Krech, who spent a year in Oslo, 1949-50.

C.B. Robson, University of North Carolina, who spent a year studying universities and particularly social science in Germany.

Forrest Kirkpatrick, Department of State, who last year made a study of social research in Germany.

4. A variety of documents describing research and teaching in the behavioral sciences in the various countries. The most systematic material of this sort is perhaps the 700-page volume published by UNESCO containing descriptions of political science in most of the countries of the world. A similar undertaking is now being carried out by the International Sociological Association, and although the final volume will not be ready for another year I was able to obtain drafts of most of the chapters. The other documents were prepared for various special purposes, some of them in response to my request, and are listed in the bibliography for each country.

5. A final source of information which deserves more attention than I was able to give to it in the time available is of course the volume of published research work in each of the fields from each of the countries. Such material is available in any good American library and will necessarily have to be consulted before specific decisions on particular proposals could be adequately made.

It is obvious that a single person in two months cannot make an exhaustive study of a field as large in scope as the behavioral sciences, and in a territory as large as England and Western Europe. Many general impressions, however, emerge

rather quickly, and I was encouraged in my conviction about such impressions by the fact that they tended to be confirmed from multiple sources of information as the study progressed.

II

Current Status of Behavioral Sciences

Probably the most clear-cut single impression from a survey of behavioral science in European countries is the limited scale of activity. Although accurate figures are not readily available, I would estimate that the total number of social scientists in all the countries of England and Europe is not greater than a fourth of the corresponding number in the United States. For example there are only four professorships in anthropology in France, and two of these are held by the same man. There is only one professor of sociology in Sweden. The Psychological Association in Great Britain numbers four hundred members in contrast to the eight thousand in the United States. The laboratory of experimental psychology at Oxford University is constrained in six small rooms in a re-converted garage. The total sum available for research and scholarship in all the social sciences in Sweden is \$60,000 a year in addition to university salaries for teaching.

A second clear general impression is that many features of the social sciences in foreign countries resemble closely stages in the development of the social sciences in America one or two or three decades ago. For example, psychology seems to be still mostly concerned with esoteric laboratory problems rather than with practical problems of social significance; anthropology is largely descriptive and less concerned with methodological and theoretical considerations; sociology is more speculative and in its field research is more limited in method and scope; political science is more reliant on historical legalistic and speculative approaches as contrasted with the empirical. These

statements, of course, are very broad generalizations, and clear-cut exceptions to each of them can be found.

University training in the behavioral sciences. The traditional organization of continental universities makes it difficult for the social sciences to find a natural place. When one of the social disciplines is assigned to one or another of the traditional Faculties of law, medicine, or letters and science, it finds itself with strange bedfellows, and cut off from its neighboring social studies. Because the Faculties are relatively autonomous they tend to inhibit the growth of the newer studies which do not seem central to the main purpose of the Faculty. Although undergraduate education in general provides more specialization than is common in American universities, the lack of systematic graduate training is a definite limitation on the development of trained personnel in the behavioral sciences.

Institutes. Partly because of the difficulty of finding a place in traditional university organization, and partly to enable applied and practical research, much of the work in both teaching and research in the social sciences is organized in special institutes which are independent or loosely affiliated with a university.

Government agencies for social research. Government sponsorship of social research varies considerably from one country to another but with the exception of economics it is not very great any place. England, Holland and France support social surveys of various problems, and England, France, and Belgium support anthropological work in connection with their colonial affairs.

Intellectual leadership has shifted rather markedly in the social sciences to America. American books are very widely used either in translation or not--indeed seminars in Norway and Holland are sometimes conducted in English because American materials are almost their only source. This orientation to American social science is least noticeable in the established universities such as Oxford, Cambridge and the Sorbonne, and it may not be unrealistic to expect the

most rapid development of the newer scientific approach to social problems to occur in the provincial universities and in the smaller countries of Holland, Sweden, Norway and Belgium. Opportunities for study and visit in the United States are highly valued and eagerly sought by social scientists in every country. I was able to elicit no criticisms of the exchange program other than the difficulty of securing such opportunities for the more mature workers. Those who have returned from study in the United States seem to be exercising a profound influence on the development of their subject in their own country.

The several fields of social science do not of course present the same picture, and a few observations about each of them may be in order.

Economics is easily in the most favorable position. It has a strong tradition in every country and has demonstrated its obvious value to government and industry. It is relatively well supported in the major universities and the research and scholarly work compares well with that carried out in the United States.

Psychology is also an established subject in every university. Located in the Faculty of Science it has established laboratory experimental work which is the equal of anything in America although on a smaller scale. Outstanding laboratories in Paris, Cambridge and Louvain are uninfluenced and uninterested in developments such as psychoanalysis or social science, and consequently do not make the methodological contribution to social research which has characterized the development in the United States.

Sociology seems to be the orphan of the social sciences. There are relatively few chairs in the universities and in many instances it is taught only by a professor of philosophy or economics. Sociology is traditionally a speculative subject for teaching, and where empirical social research has been found necessary it has developed sometimes under a different name such as sociography in Holland, human geography in France, and in other instances as population research or social statistics. Opinion and attitude studies have not grown up in the university or

academic setting but are conducted in every country except Spain by government organizations or by private commercial agencies. Whatever the reason, they give much less attention to methodological developments than is found in the United States.

Political science shows some rather marked contrasts with the subject as it has developed in America. In most European universities it is a part of the law school, and while law training may be thereby enriched political science has shown very little trend toward objective empirical studies. It is predominantly characterized by historical, philosophical and legalistic studies and work on public administration, political behavior, and political process is almost unknown.

Financial support of work in the behavioral sciences is severely limited in every country on which I have information. University support is limited by the inflexibility of university administration and of university funds. The behavioral sciences are relatively recent in their demands and such demands do not receive a sympathetic hearing in the universities with established scholarly traditions or in the newer smaller universities where funds are just not adequate. The early steps in the growth of the social sciences in American universities were made possible by the expansion of university faculties to take care of increased student interest, but while the same increase in student interest exists in European countries it is reflected in nothing more than larger sized classes.

Government support, in addition to general subventions for the universities, is administered in each country through an agency like our proposed Science Foundation. In each country social science is recognized as eligible for support but the amounts available are very small. It is unlikely that such support will be any greater in the next few years because of the pressures of the expense of rearmament, and I know that in some countries there is a definite

cut in the government funds for scientific research.

Foundation support of the social sciences is not an important factor in any country. The Nuffield Foundation in England makes one or two small grants for particular projects in psychology, but generally speaking there are no foundations in any of the European countries which are important in the general picture of support.

Applied social research, as could be inferred from prior notes, is carried it quite independently of university research and teaching. The director of the psychological laboratory at Oxford University, for example, says that he would feel obliged to refuse any applied research in order to maintain his dubious status with his university colleagues. Whether this separation of applied research from the universities is good or bad, it probably results in the elimination of a potential source of support and stimulation for university departments.

Intercommunication and inter-disciplinary co-operation seems to me very poorly developed in the social sciences in England and Europe. There is a marked spirit of individualism--even competition--among scientific workers, and a large amount of criticism of one's co-workers in another university or another discipline. There are very few mechanisms for intercommunication. The professional societies offer an opportunity for public display of one's own work rather than an opportunity for discussion leading to co-operation. Inter-disciplinary seminars or research projects must be rare because I heard of none. Similarly, no university that I know has any organization such as a social science research council, and no country has any organization serving any of the purposes of the S.S.R.C. in the United States.

Political considerations seem to enter into social science work to a much greater extent in Europe than in America. In Germany, Italy, and France a political scientist, for example, is identified by his party affiliation, as much as by his field of work. Many of the scholars in these countries are active in political affairs, and their published work is frankly intended to support some political party. I did not encounter any discussions of the ethical responsibilities of the scientist in the field of social research such ^{as} are common in the United States.

Prognosis. While most of the above observations may seem fairly pessimistic there are very definite resources for growth of the behavioral sciences in England

and European countries. There are many individuals, many of whom have studied in the United States, who are working with a spirit of dedication under quite adverse conditions. There is moreover widespread interest among undergraduate students in the behavioral sciences and a desire on their part for improved training. There are a half-dozen outstandingly effective examples of research and training centers in the behavioral sciences which can serve as models for further growth. Furthermore there seems to be no insurmountable obstacle to the development of the behavioral sciences, as exists in Russia or as existed in Germany under the Nazi regime. The limitations seem rather to be those of the heavy hand of tradition and the inadequate financial resources. On the basis of these observations I would predict a generally static picture with gradual development in some countries and with a rapid growth dependent upon general economic recovery in each of the countries.

III

Some Considerations in a Program for the Development of Behavioral Science in Foreign Countries

At this point it is necessary to ask whether the Ford Foundation should extend its program for the support of behavioral sciences to countries other than the United States. The returns to be expected from such an extension may be summarized in four points:

1. Contributions to basic knowledge of human behavior and social relations are equally good whether they come from one country or from another. In the history of science it is apparent that no one country can maintain a monopoly of any branch of science, and there are obvious advantages in the multiple approaches and diverse findings that result from utilization of talent in many countries.

2. For many problems which are of high interest to the United States it is necessary that there be behavioral scientists in other countries who are capable of conducting research on such problems. For example, the problem of

economic productivity is not limited to the United States but is perhaps even more crucial in France, Italy, and Germany for example. Other problems such as the factors predisposing to Communist or Nazi affiliation can only be solved with the co-operation of scientists of other countries.

3. The development of a vital behavioral science in foreign countries should serve to create among the intellectual elite a method of independent objective analysis of social and political problems which would serve as an alternative to the emotional and demagogic approach. Indeed, it may be true that the successful maintenance of a democratic state demands a body of public servants who are capable of objective, dispassionate and scientific examination of policy questions, and a public who will follow such leaders.

4. The development of a corps of social scientists in foreign countries would greatly facilitate communication with the United States on matters of joint concern. Public administrators in foreign countries who are trained in social science are also necessary to carry out the administration of programs such as E.C.A. and U.N. in which we have a vital interest.

To explore further the nature of such an extension of the program to foreign countries we should examine the procedures in detail which might be employed and attempt to estimate their relative effectiveness for the goals of such a program.

1. It would seem unnecessary to support international associations at the present time. UNESCO is stimulating the development of such associations and is providing a certain amount of money for their use. There will be pressure to provide travel expenses for individuals to attend congresses and meetings of such international associations, but I do not see how such expenditures could be justified. The contribution of international congresses either to scientific growth or to international understanding does not seem to be as great as could be accomplished in other ways.

2. Support for libraries and the purchase of books and magazines does not seem to be of high priority at the present time. With certain exceptions most of the European centers have been able to do a fair job of rebuilding their libraries and other agencies such as UNESCO and the Rockefeller Foundation have provided help in this task.

3. So long as the Fulbright, Smith-Mundt, and Rockefeller programs for the exchange of persons are active, it would seem unnecessary for the Ford Foundation to undertake a general program of exchange fellowships in the behavioral sciences. It would seem to be more valuable to support selected exchanges which were designed to strengthen certain programs which have been designated for general support. By restricting additional exchange fellowships to this type it might be possible to guarantee more effective utilization of the exchange experience.

4. International institutes of social science are being proposed from many quarters at the present time. It is my opinion that the time is not ripe for such developments. It would be hard to recruit high calibre personnel of a truly international character for such an institute, and there is no assurance that it would accomplish anything which could not be accomplished more certainly by other methods.

5. It is likely, therefore, that the procedure of most frequent choice would be direct grants to individuals and to institutions which show the greatest promise for the development of behavioral science.

6. The development of international cooperation in the behavior sciences might most effectively be promoted by the organization and support of seminars and research planning conferences composed of individuals from different countries who are actively engaged in work of a particular kind. The experience of the past few years with the planning conferences of the SSRC,

and the summer seminars financed by the Markle Foundation provide a basis of confidence in choosing these mechanisms for extension to the international field.

We may now consider the mechanisms of administration which would be most appropriate for the procedures outlined above. On the basis of my inquiries and observations this summer I feel certain that there does not exist any agency which could be entrusted with the administration of such a program. UNESCO does not have, nor is it likely to secure, a staff satisfactory for this purpose, and in any case it is too beset by the nationalistic demands of its member countries to be able to carry out an objective distribution of funds on the basis of quality of work. Similarly there does not exist in any of the countries a social science research council or similar organization which could administer funds within that country. It seems inevitable therefore that the decisions in the administration of the program should be made by Foundation staff. In this the Foundation should probably take a good deal of initiative in discovering the projects and institutions worthy of support, although it would be desirable to permit applicants to submit proposals.

If the program reaches any considerable size it will be necessary to maintain a European office, presumably in Paris. Such an office would have a minimum staff of a controller and a secretary, with Foundation staff rotated or assigned from the United States office.

On the basis of the foregoing considerations it may be possible to formulate certain general principles for guiding the selection of activities for support in the behavioral sciences in foreign countries.

1. Activities should be supported only to the extent that they will contribute to one or more of the following objectives:

- a. Contribution to the general fund of knowledge of human behavior.

Proposals in this category should compete with American proposals.

b. Development of research resources which can be utilized in joint programs of primary interest to American investigators. (For example, statistical and demographic resources in underdeveloped countries; attitude measurement resources in allied and critical countries.)

c. Development of research and training institutions which will produce objective, science-oriented members of the intellectual elite. This will facilitate communication with America and contribute to the planning and administration of the programs (such as industrial productivity, UN cooperation), in which the United States has a high interest.

2. Since the support of behavioral science is a relatively long-range program as distinguished from the more immediately critical activities of program 1, the countries should be selected, not by their present importance for current international relations, but in terms of their potential for behavior science development.

Schematic outline of support for behavioral sciences
in foreign countries

Country	Projects	Agencies	Total
Great Britain	LSE-class 15,000	Oxford-Zangwill 10,000 Cambridge-Fortas 10,000 London-Russell 10,000 Tavistock 15,000	100,000
France	Levi-Strauss 10,000	Fraisse 10,000 Friedmann 10,000	50,000
Germany	Authority 20,000	Horkheimer 10,000 Muenster 10,000 Berlin 10,000	50,000
Holland		Amsterdam Psych Soc 10,000 10,000	20,000
Belgium	4 Univ 20,000	Brussels 10,000	30,000
Sweden	Census 10,000	Uppsala 10,000 Stockholm 10,000	30,000
Norway	Rinde 20,000		20,000
Finland		Karsten 10,000	20,000
India			40,000
Israel		Guttman 20,000	20,000
Italy			30,000
South America			30,000
Japan-Philippines			30,000
UNESCO			<u>30,000</u>
TOTAL			500,000