

2005
Natl Inst Public Adm.
Old Age Security

NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION

BUREAU OF MUNICIPAL RESEARCH

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February 21, 1930.

Mr. Raymond B. Fosdick
61 Broadway
New York City

My dear Mr. Fosdick:

I owe it to you to make a report of recent happenings in our work. The most important is perhaps the completion of the work for the New York Commission on Old Age Security. Much to the surprise of all persons involved, the Commission finally agreed on a unanimous report signed by the three representatives of the Governor, including the labor representative, by the president of the American Association for Old Age Security, by the Republicans and the Democrats, and by the majority leaders of the Senate and the Assembly. Obviously, this was not possible without a great deal of give and take on all sides. Nobody achieved all of what was wanted. This brings to a close a task which I was personally very loath to tackle because at first it did not seem to me to fall within the scope of our work. As the work progressed, however, it became clear that administration and finance were the crux of the problem and that we were therefore able to make a very real contribution to the work of the Commission. This was acknowledged when the report of the Commission was presented by the chairman and also by the majority leader in his commendatory comments with regard to the work of the Commission. You will be interested, I am sure, in the policy which has been recommended by the Commission here in New York State. This may be summed up as follows:

The Commission recommends:

1. That those 70 years of age and over be classified separately from the standpoint of public assistance.
2. That the normal method of assistance shall be in the home of the individual unless physical or mental conditions make it necessary to place the individual in an institution.
3. That assistance shall be furnished in the form of money payments or the grant of food, clothing or rent, depending upon the individual conditions.
4. That the administration be placed first of all upon the city and county welfare districts which were created by the New York State's new public welfare law which went into effect January 1, 1930. Under this plan the original investigations and grants are made by the county and city welfare officials subject to revision by the state department of social welfare on its own motion, or on appeal by any interested person.

5. The cost both of the old age assistance and of administering the new assistance is to be shared equally by the state and by the localities.

You will note that the plan here outlined is not in reality an old age pension though in spirit and in method of administration it breaks away entirely from the old traditions of poor law and the almshouses. The plan suggested is, as a matter of fact, social welfare legislation and not social insurance. It did not take a great deal of investigation to demonstrate that social insurance could not provide for the needy aged-- the problem which the Commission and we as their research staff have endeavored to solve. Within a few days I will send on to you a copy of the Commission's recommended legislation and of the Commission's report which will be printed together with an extensive research report we prepared for them based on our administrative, legal and economic studies of the problem. During the year, we also shall carry forward for this same Commission a further study of the age factor in industry.

Another very important piece of work completed is the New Jersey survey and audit. The work was completed and the report delivered on December 31. Since that time the New Jersey papers have been full of discussions based upon the report. A number of important bills have been introduced to carry into effect some of the more important suggestions with respect to financial administration. It is too early to say yet whether these will pass or not. It was necessary for us in our report to disclose many serious irregularities in the New Jersey administration. These have been the subject of a great deal of subsequent discussion from which we have, however, remained entirely aloof. If this survey does not result in very important advances in New Jersey in the next three or four years, it will be extremely surprising. I do not expect the present administration, however, to have the leadership, the imagination, or the capacity to carry through any extensive or far-reaching reforms.

While these two major projects were under way, we managed to complete a very brief report on the problem of consolidation and the establishment of a city in Tarrytown and North Tarrytown, New York. This report has now been delivered.

The training school program is going forward under difficulty this year because of vacancies in our staff which cannot very well be filled at the present time because of our financial situation pending the completion of the endowment campaign. We have in the full time spring course for men entering the field of public administration, nine students at the present time. A number of the men are unusually promising. We will know more about them in a few weeks. The course of Municipal Administration which we offer in cooperation with Columbia University has a registration of twenty-three, which is slightly in excess of the registration during the recent years. In addition three men are writing doctors' dissertations for the university under our joint supervision.

There has been an unprecedented demand for survey and technical service. We have already mortgaged most of our time for the coming year in accepting a survey of the state of Maine at the request of Governor William Tudor Gardiner; an organization study of the state government of Arkansas for Governor Harvey Parnell,

and a survey of the city of Williamsburg, Virginia, for the mayor and council. This latter project is especially interesting to us as Williamsburg is, as you know, being restored as a colonial city. Those who are at work on the restoration and the city authorities have become convinced that this beautiful colonial town cannot be governed today without a modern, efficient city government. Perhaps, however, we can work in a few colonial titles!

There have been three important developments in connection with the remarkably successful work which Bruce Smith has carried out over the past two years for the International Association of Chiefs of Police. The House of Representatives, on January 20, passed unanimously, after some debate, a bill expanding the powers of the Bureau of Identification in the Department of Justice to include the collection of criminal statistics. The bill has not gone to the Senate. In the meantime, we have started collecting here in New York City monthly crime reports from the cities. This work will be turned over to the Department of Justice as soon as Congress acts. The registration area from which we are now receiving reports includes 22,000,000 population, or approximately 40 per cent of the cities in the population group which we have endeavored to reach. This response has been built up in less than two months on a purely voluntary basis. The third matter of special interest in the establishment in Ohio of a central state bureau of criminal statistics with a paid staff in accordance with the recommendations of Mr. Smith's committee. Practically every police report which we now receive shows evidence of an effort to follow the suggestions which have been offered with respect to police reporting. The work with the Citizens' Committee and the Commissioner of Police in Chicago is proving even more successful than we have any right to expect in commencing the work. Thus far practically all of the suggestions with regard to the departmental reorganization have been accepted and many of them have already been put into operation. The financial situation in Chicago is the only important matter now hampering the work of Mr. Smith and his staff, but in spite of this, a great deal is being accomplished.

From this statement you will see that we are again thwarted in our desire to have time for the prosecution of our own independent studies-- that is, for research of a broader character, less controlled by the immediate requirements of a survey in a particular locality. The time for this will come when our financing is arranged.

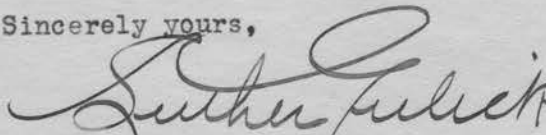
We have been given considerable thought to the ultimate development of a journal of public administration which will serve partly as a revival of "Municipal Research" which we published for a number of years until it was discontinued during the war. It is our thought that the basic purpose of such a journal would be a distribution and critical appraisal of current trends in the field of public administration and a presentation and analysis of research methods and methods of control in government. Emphasis would be based upon unity and balance in the governmental program. In view of our extensive activities in the field of state government,

we would naturally deal extensively with state problems and problems of state and local relationships. We have thought that such a journal should appear perhaps five times in the year and should be so arranged as to make room for rather extensive and thoughtful articles by our own staff and by others. Obviously, this is not a matter for immediate decision as the conduct of such a journal must depend upon special financing. Those of you especially who are familiar with the British Journal of Public Administration will appreciate the very great need and opportunity there is in this country for such a journal. It would appeal of course primarily to students of public affairs, to the thoughtful public administrator, and to newspaper editors. If you have any thoughts with respect to such a publication, I should be pleased to have them.

This par. in all letters to trustees

Mr. Cutting and Mr. Fosdick have been in conference with President Butler and Dean McBain of Columbia University in connection with the suggestion that an affiliation be worked out between the Institute and Columbia University on the completion of the endowment campaign. The negotiations are proceeding satisfactorily. We still need \$240,000 toward the completion of the endowment program. Word was received yesterday from Mr. George Eastman that we could not count on his assistance. I had a long conference yesterday morning with a representative of Mr. Harkness following various conferences between Mr. Fosdick and Mr. Harkness. If you have any further suggestions with regard to the endowment, we need them now.

Sincerely yours,



Luther Gulick

DIRECTOR