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RBF

Letter No. 75.

La Baule, December 12, 1939.

Dear Balfour:

You may be somewhat surprised and disappointed that you never received from me any long letter giving comments regarding the China program. This is not because of complete neglect of the matter. The more I thought about it, the more difficult it seemed to me to advise you, particularly in regard to details. A long time has elapsed since my departure from China; and a survey of the various documents and reports, not to mention your letters, leaves me with the feeling that it is much wiser to give you full authority to make recommendations with regard to the future.

It is quite obvious that the war produced a tremendous dislocation in the program, and the different elements which were supposed to bear on the program as a whole have been scattered so considerably that the program as it exists today is obviously very different from what it was prior to the war. The "university-community" concept which was emphasized so considerably has necessarily to a large extent gone by the board.

I have just received the Annual Report of the National Council For Rural Reconstruction, the major portion of which was prepared by Dr. C.C. Ch'en. It is a pretty thin document for a year's work, although I presume that there may be other material available. Perhaps the different activities produced their own individual annual statements. You will be the better judge of what, if anything, can be salvaged in connection with the work of the NCRR. What is the relationship between the NCRR and the National Institute of Rural Reconstruction, which Jimmy Yen has set up? I have recently had forwarded to me a

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letter written on August 12th by Jimmy Yen to Professor Shotwell of Columbia University. I am sending herewith the correspondence dealing with this matter. I presume that Jimmy Yen's major interest is in Szechuen, and although one of his important staff members is now director of the Rural Service Training Institute in Tingfan, I do not know if there is any form of inner cooperation in technical programs between the work in Tingfan and in Szechuen. You will recall that one of the fundamental points in connection with the pre-war program was the intimate integration of the various activities that were carried on in Tingsien and Tsining. In reading C. C. Ch'ien's statement, I do not find any special emphasis on this subject.

I am hopeful that the program in Kweichow can survive and that there may be sufficient financial assistance from national, provincial, and local governments to take up the burden as our appropriation decreases.

It is not clear to me at this distance what interest, if any, the ministries in Chungking have in this whole movement. Before the war we had just about reached a point where we were getting ready to anticipate material financial contributions, even from the national government. I can understand the circumstances which make national contributions more difficult to obtain, but it would seem to me that, unless we have real evidence of an interest including financial aid from the different branches of the government, we are in a very weak position. I am sure that Franklin Ho and others who are connected with the national government must realize this and should be able to bring the necessary pressure to assure financial assistance. How about the Kweichow provincial government? How real is their interest? Is Y. T. Tsur still connected with this provincial government?

Of course you have a completely free hand to determine what you think it is proper to recommend concerning the training work of the National Health Administration. Standards are, of course, different in China than in

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most western countries. and I shall be interested to know what decisions you come to in relation to the continuation of this whole question. What are your plans going to be in regard to malaria work, and will any of them have a bearing on Tingfan, where I note that malaria is abundant in certain parts?

I am wondering how much pressure will be brought to bear on you to continue aiding Agricultural Economics at Nanking University. I have no doubt that they will need aid, but I wonder how important a rôle they can play in connection with the work of the NCRR.

I feel sure that K. S. Sie, the Director of the National Agricultural Research Bureau, has been carrying on good quality work in connection with our aid to the insect control program. However, I cannot see at this distance how we can be expected to continue this grant very long. This is a type of activity that one could aid indefinitely. But it will have to be your decision as to just when our assistance should terminate.

These same general remarks would, of course, apply to the National Central University grant. This was always the weakest of the grants up to the time of my departure from China. I was rather surprised that they were able to transport their stock up the river and keep going. When we started our program we had in mind the development in Nanking of an integrated program in agriculture between Nanking University, National Central University, and the National Agricultural Research Bureau. The dispersal of these institutions naturally threw a pretty large monkey-wrench into our major point of interest. While perhaps our aid has been justifiable and considerable good may have come out of it, at this distance certainly it does not seem that there are great arguments in favor of our continuing aid to these three agricultural institutions very much longer.

Yenching of course stands in a very peculiar position as it is isolated to such a great extent from the other institutions. It seems difficult to me to

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imagine that Yenching can do very much in cooperation with the other activities located in South-West China. I am inclined to believe that any further aid to this University would have to be decided on its local merits. It is an institution that has received over a long period of time assistance from different Rockefeller Boards. Incidentally, both Yenching and Nanking are receiving aid outside of the China program from the special grant made by the RF to Chinese universities through the Associated Board of Christian Colleges in New York. Undoubtedly Mr. Lobensine has been able to give you a lot of valuable information regarding these two and other Christian colleges. What the attitude of the RF would be in regard to further aid to these colleges through the Associated Board I do not know.

Another institution which has been one of our serious interests is Nankai, and its Institute of Economics certainly was the best thing of its kind in China. I gather that particularly through H. D. Fong this institution is closer to the work in Tingfan than the other institutions. On the basis of my previous knowledge of this institution and the quality of its work, I would place it on the preferred list for consideration.

I feel rather helpless in making any comments concerning James Yen's Mass Education Movement. As you will recall, we were rather disappointed in Yen, partly because of our difficulties in getting adequate reports and financial statements from him. That he has been very busy these past two years is evident. As to the significance and quality of the efforts of this organization I am without sufficient data to form an opinion that has any value. This does not mean that I would be opposed to further aid being considered for him. I am also not in a position to give you an opinion in regard to the Commission on Medical Education.

I am assuming that your recommendations will include consideration of grants for foreign and local fellowships and grants in aid. As you know our foreign fellowship program has been reduced to very small dimensions. Possibly

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the time has now arrived when we could afford to be more generous in this line. This of course may apply to IHD fellowships. I should be interested to get your comments on the significance of the local fellowship program. As hundreds of men have benefited under this program, it may be possible now to get some evaluation of the results obtained.

After the trek of the various institutions to South-West China Grant and I were of the opinion that continuation of the program in the new regions was justifiable on the basis of conservation of past personnel and effort. I gather that it is felt at least by some of the important people that this period has passed and that the program now is based on permanency. As I told you when you were in Paris, and as I think I have written you since, it was the weighted opinion of New York that the Foundation would withdraw from the China program over a period of time. Before the war came and disturbed all our plans, I had anticipated presenting the situation to the Trustees and asking for an appropriation to be spread over a period of years on a decreasing scale. We had in mind then that funds from purely Chinese sources could be found to take over the load as we withdrew. Our plans, of course, were shattered, but we are still facing the question of withdrawal. I am inclined to believe that the officers and trustees will be anxious to see that the withdrawal can be accomplished reasonably generously and in a manner which would at least in the major instances leave behind some permanent mark.

I gather that the whole question of rural reconstruction is definitely in the minds of the Chinese Government and believe that our efforts probably have had a wide influence in affecting public opinion. With all the complications in other parts of the world, there is a possible tendency that China and her problems may be forgotten or neglected. I for one hope that the Foundation, even if the China program itself is liquidated, will continue to do what seems to be reasonable to assist the Chinese people in their difficulties. It is therefore

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most encouraging to me that the IHD has apparently such a keen interest in certain problems in China, and Dr. Gregg's letter to you, to which I referred in my last letter, gives me an additional feeling that the Foundation at least is not forgetting our Chinese friends.

Yours sincerely,

Selskar M. Gunn.

Dr. M. C. Balfour,
The Rockefeller Foundation,
Cathay Mansions, Room 115,
Rue Cardinal Mercier,
Shanghai.

SMG:CWN
Enclosures:2.