

MEMORANDUM: CONDITIONS AFFECTING THE MEMORIAL'S PARTICIPATION
IN PROJECTS IN SOCIAL SCIENCE.

At the meeting of the Board of Trustees of the Memorial on May 28th, 1924, applications from Harvard University and the Robert Brookings Graduate School of Economics and Government were referred to the Executive Committee with power. The Harvard application contemplated the establishment of a Bureau of International Research and the Brookings Graduate School outlined its research requirements for consideration.

It was the feeling of the Board that both applications were intrinsically meritorious; however, the Executive Committee was asked, prior to action on these requests, to study the conditions under which the field of social science, that is sociology, economics, political science, and psychology, anthropology and history, may be considered an appropriate field for the Memorial. The question arose primarily because of the controversial nature of the problems characteristic of these fields, not because of any doubt as to the importance or urgency of these problems or as to the practical need for knowledge bearing on their solution. It was felt that an examination might show certain conditions under which it would not be expedient to take up projects in this field and other conditions under which the position of the Memorial would appear to be reasonably safeguarded. It was felt that in the beginning it would be wiser to err on the side of conservatism, permitting extensions of the program as experience with the field shows the way.

The present memorandum proposes to indicate conditions which affect the ability of the Memorial to become associated with projects in the field of social science. Certain conditions would seem to make association undesirable. It appears ⁱⁿadvisable

1. To contribute to organizations whose purposes and activities are centered largely in the procurement of legislation. Examples: National Child Labor Committee, National Consumers League, National Woman's Party.
2. To attempt directly under the Memorial to secure any social, economic or political reform. Examples: more playgrounds, less unemployment, extension of the merit system in civil service.
3. To carry on investigations and research directly under the Memorial, except for the guidance of the Memorial. Examples: Handbook on Camping, Opportunities in Vocational Education of Women, Relations between Immigration and the Business Cycle.
4. To contribute more than a conservative proportion toward the current expense of organizations engaged in direct activity for social welfare. Examples: International Migration Service, Playground and Recreation Association.
5. To attempt to influence the findings or conclusions of research and investigations through the designation of either personnel, specific problems to be attacked, or methods of inquiry to be adopted; nor through indirect influence in giving inadequate assurances of continuity of support.
6. To concentrate too narrowly on particular research institutions, incurring thereby the danger of institutional bias.

Certain conditions would seem to make assistance from the Memorial desirable. It appears appropriate

1. To support scientific research on social, economic and governmental questions when responsible educational or

scientific institutions sponsor the research and assume responsibility for the competence of the staff and the scientific spirit of the investigations. Examples: University of Chicago, Carnegie Institution of Washington.

2. To contribute to agencies which may advance in indirect ways scientific activity in the social field. Examples: Social Science Research Council, National Research Council.
3. To offer fellowships to students of competence and maturity for study and research under the supervision of responsible educational and scientific institutions.
4. To make possible the publication of scientific investigations sponsored by responsible institutions or organizations through general appropriations to be administered in detail by the sponsoring agency.
5. To contribute toward the expense of conferences of scientific men for scientific purposes.
6. To make possible, under the auspices of scientific institutions, governmental agencies or voluntary organizations, demonstrations which may serve to test, to illustrate or to lead to more general adoption of measures of a social, economic or governmental character which have been devised, studied and recommended by responsible agencies.

The essence of the situation appears on examination to be not whether a problem is controversial, but rather whether it is studied by men of competence in a spirit of objectivity and thoroughness with freedom of inquiry and expression. The sponsorship of a responsible educational or scientific institution assures to the Memorial and to the public that these conditions will be reasonably met in the prosecution of research.