

INTER-OFFICE CORRESPONDENCE

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FROM: JBG

DATE: February 8, 1952

TO:

AJW	FEB 11 '52	<i>[initials]</i>
C/B	FEB 13 '52	

COMMENTS:

JAN 29 1953

SUBJECT:

I am wondering whether in the developing interest in India the Foundation's experience in China would be of any interest. I would call attention to pages 8 and 9 of the enclosed. This document was dictated in connection with my ECA loan.

[Signature]

John B. Grant

JBG:VAC

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The R.F. "CHINA PROGRAM"

The North China Council on Rural Reconstruction was the most important aspect of the R.F. "China Program" in that it integrated and applied to the community the support of the China program to the most outstanding national agencies in social economic welfare. The N.C.R.R.C. was in concept essentially a prototype Point IV; but, primarily rural and without an immediate industrial goal, except small cooperatives. It was only becoming established when the Marco Polo bridge incident of 1937 began the Japanese war and disrupted the movement. The efforts to re-establish it in Free China were unsuccessful and preferably should not have been attempted. The purpose of this brief summary of the project is to answer the query as to whether the experience gained has any value or application to the current interest in the development of backward areas. The project can be interpreted only against background knowledge of the two factors which made possible its establishment. These were the Chinese Mass Education Movement on the one hand, the R.F. on the other.

The Chinese Mass Education movement originated during the First War through the Chinese Labor Corps in France, with James W. C. Yen, who had volunteered from Yale as a Y.M.C.A. secretary. To meet the 90 per cent illiteracy, he devised a system of adult education whereby the individual could learn 1000 selected characters within three months. This system was further elaborated in China with the establishment (in the early 20's) of the M.E.M. as a national movement with branches in practically all the important cities of the country.

Realizing the predominantly (87%) rural nature of the population, Yen moved his own activities to the County of Ting-hsien with 400,000 population, about 100 miles from Peiping. The program expanded as its success created and

solved successive problems. Education required follow-up literature and this naturally was on agriculture. The articles contributed by academic professors trained in the U.S. had no practical bearing or interest in the daily life of farmers and, consequently, the professors moved to Ting-hsien and established an experimental station related to local problems. Successful agriculture led to the need for cooperatives. Better transport had to be provided. There was no health organization and its provision became a necessary corollary. Eventually it became evident that the Movement was undertaking responsibilities which could only effectively be carried out by government. Whereupon the Movement was given authority to nominate the magistrate of the county with fairly authoritarian powers. Yen was able to enlist the advice of the P.U.M.C. in health care and Nanking University (Cornell) in agriculture. In other fields he relied upon technical personnel employed by the M.E.M. itself. The P.U.M.C. established an organic relationship to assure the medical and nursing personnel, in return for which its undergraduate students were provided with a rural practice field in health care. Over these years, Yen, with a very dynamic personality, obtained most of his support for the Movement from friends in the U.S. and Hawaii and he must have collected close to a million dollars. The medical program was supported by Milbank. It was at this stage that S.M.G. reached China on his world survey. However, before describing the entrance of the R.F. on the scene it may be well to amplify the foregoing brief summary of the M.E.M. by a description of public health as illustrative of one of the new reconstruction agencies.

The first consideration in all branches of work was that of economic practicability for a country such as China. Fortunately, the earlier rural survey by Gamble permitted of a base line. It was estimated that the Ting-hsien community could afford an annual per capita expenditure for health care of 27 cents Chinese currency (\$0.12 U.S.), exclusive of expenses for training

at the base which constituted itself as a charge against the experimental nature of the project. This charge approximated that of the general health expenditures. Previously, the county had no western medicine, the nearest centre being Paoting, some 60 miles distant and connected by train with the county seat. This previous absence of western medicine made the population suspicious at first, particularly of hospitalization. A single hospital of some 50 beds was provided at the county seat. It also housed the health administration under Dr. C. C. Chen, (P.U.M.C. and Johns Hopkins) as Commissioner of Health. He was assisted at the base by a deputy who was also Superintendent of the hospital and discharged limited clinical responsibilities as well as doing some inspection. Nursing was in charge of Chou Mei-Yu (P.U.M.C. and Teachers' College). Each of these individuals were outstanding and today are acknowledged as among the two or three most prominent national leaders in their respective fields. Without such leadership, success in such a plan would be dubious. The county was zoned into areas of 20 to 30,000 population determined by the radius not being more than 3 miles from the peripheral village to the sub-centre. Each of the some 15 sub-centres were staffed by a physician, largely graduates from the Medical School at Paoting, and assisted by a nurse, also from non-P.U.M.C. schools. These doctors and nurses had received brief courses of training in public health at the county seat. Each 2 or 3 sub-centres had a sanitary inspector. The crux of the organization was the "medical-helper" in each of the constituent villages (averaging some 1100 population).

It is necessary here to give some picture of the village under the M.E.M. Following the initial adult education campaign, a village self-government organization would be set up from among the "alumni." Specific individuals would voluntarily take the responsibility for one of the various fields

of government. The "medical-helpers" were brought to the base for six weeks' training and followed up with annual one-week refresher courses at the Chinese New Year. Upon return to their village, they were responsible for sanitation and the meeting of primary medical needs with some "first-aid" medicines. They were supervised once a week by visits from the sub-centre physician and nurse and once or twice a year by visits from the base. The "medical-helpers" had conferences at the sub-centre every other Saturday afternoon. Among their other duties were Vital Statistics, the notification to the sub-centre of pregnancies as they occurred, and serious illnesses, etc. The sub-centres had a polyclinic each morning, to which patients were referred from the villages by the "medical-helpers." Scheduled immunization clinics for smallpox, diphtheria and typhoid ran concurrently with the clinical sessions. The response to diphtheria and typhoid was extremely good. The population had already been accustomed to smallpox. The infants were brought in generally by mule cart. It was realized that birth-control was an essential public health problem. This was a special interest of Miss Chou, who had experience in clinics in New York. The economic situation precluded imported contraceptives and experimentation was made with local products. The program was instituted in several selected villages with some degree of success. A high infant mortality from tetanus-neonatorum was one of the phenomena encountered due to the hereditary village midwifery system from mother to daughter. Control was effected through instituting short training courses for these native midwives and prohibiting practice when they proved untrainable. The organization could not have functioned without the voluntary "medical-helper" who, not only himself discharged many health care functions, but was the local individual chiefly responsible for the extent that either health care was brought to the village or the village was stimulated to seek it at either the sub-centres or base.

The concept of organization in other governmental fields was much similar. Thus, the farm of the village self-governing committeeman responsible for agriculture would demonstrate new seeds, poultry, etc. Similarly, the committeeman for communication would be responsible for enlisting the voluntary labour required for either repairing or building of roads. All such activities were under supervision of individuals with some degree of qualification, in turn supervised by the selected technically trained personnel at the base.

Mr. Gunn, Vice President of The Rockefeller Foundation for Europe, was commissioned to recommend to the R.F. a possible locality in which the several divisions of the Foundation could undertake an integrated program.

As a result of two studies made in China by Mr. Gunn between July 1931 and February 1934, the Trustees approved of the "China Program" at the December 1934 meeting. The program was an experiment to coordinate Foundation interest in a single objective which, broadly stated, was to be national reconstruction with special reference to rural problems. A secondary objective was to conserve previous Foundation investments in China and to attempt to bring about a larger return on these than had been obtained previously. It was felt that China's chief need after the initiation of the Nanking government in 1927 was an effective agricultural economy. The program itself was based upon the consideration of certain principles which are attached as an appendix. The outset of the program found numerous uncoordinated activities in rural reconstruction lacking both adequate definition of the problems or of the steps necessary for their solution. The Foundation stimulated Chinese leadership to define that the fundamentals in connection with the rural reconstruction involved: (1) creation of practice techniques in administration, education, agriculture, economics, health and medicine and other necessary services

considered as part of a general program in a rural community; (2) the development of the organization necessary to put into effect the methods referred to in (1); (3) the supplying of competent personnel in the many fields.

The program's initial interest in rural reconstruction was with respect to the Mass Education Movement described above. The two years following the inception of the program July 1, 1935, resulted in a rapid evolution not only in effecting the coordination hoped for originally but in the establishment of a much more comprehensive and effective organization, namely the North China Council for Rural Reconstruction.

Exploration of the three objectives referred to above led to two conclusions: first, that the development of the organization necessary to put into effect reconstruction techniques required a unit of population which was autonomous with respect to both the regional and the national social fields enumerated in the appendix. Ting-hsien's 400,000 population was insufficient for this purpose. Consequently authorization was effected with both the national government in Nanking and the Shantung Provincial government whereby the Council was entrusted with the administration of a ten million unit of population with headquarters in Tsining, which constituted one of the three regions of Shantung Province. Obviously even this was insufficient to consider certain national fields as currency or tariff.

Paralleling evolution of a more self-contained organization there was also the development of more effective machinery for the creation of techniques and the supplying of competent personnel, through the constituent members of the Council which were the National Tsing Hua University (engineering), Nankai University (economics and civil administration), Yenching University (education and social administration), Peiping Union Medical College (social medicine), University of Nanking (agriculture), and the Mass Education Movement).

The purpose of the Council was to provide controlled community facilities and services to develop techniques and to supply personnel. Academic personnel were transferred to Tsining, the headquarters of the community in question, as officials of the Shantung government responsible for developing and administering the several fields in question. The Council was linked with Education, Industry, Agriculture and Health at both the national and provincial levels. In effect the techniques of Ting-hsien were extended and more extensively developed and applied in the Tsining area.

The R.F. "China Program" contributed to the North China Council both in support of the key personnel in the field as well as in certain instances of strengthening where necessary the constituent members at their base.

Long term planning made the Council realize that eventual development of reconstruction would be proportionate to the development of power. The engineers of the Council were able to point out that the Tsining region of Shantung set aside was not a natural power region. The recommendation was made to Nanking that the U.S. government should be approached for the loan of some of the engineers who had recently completed a survey of the power regions of the U.S. for the purpose of making a similar survey of China. It was anticipated that upon the completion of such a survey the Council was to move into one of the power regions so designated.

It was at this point, July 7, 1937, that the Marco Polo bridge incident precipitated the war and Shantung was one of the earliest provinces occupied by the Japanese. In hopes that a very considerable and stable Free China could be established, it was decided to attempt to reestablish the Council. This was done under the name of the National Rural Administration Training Institute in Kweichow. Unfortunately this hope of a stable Free China was not

realized with the result that the original Council gradually disintegrated with each removal to the rear. The Foundation continued emergency support on a decreasing basis to various original constituents of the Council into 1946 after which further support was discontinued.

The most obvious lessons learned from the China Program were as follows:

(1) The success in a backward area of introducing modern knowledge in any field is generally in direct proportion to the extent its program can be integrated with the development of other community fields.

(2) It is essential that a base line of economic practicability be established as early as possible for the activity in question if the pilot plant is to be reduplicated successfully on any wide scale. Such an economic base line would not include the engineering experimental costs such as leadership personnel, etc.

(3) It was found that the extension and reduplication of a successful reconstruction pilot plant requires large scale training of personnel in techniques and methods hitherto not available in that country. The required training could best be done satisfactorily on a large scale by educational institutions undertaking this responsibility rather than by the reconstruction agency itself. Thus reconstruction in the field must be intimately associated with both vocational and professional training institutions of the country in question.

(4) The largest item in the cost of reconstruction is personnel. It is futile to expect in the first instance that backward communities can support the number or ratio of trained personnel to be found in industrialized countries with their manifold higher economic level. The solution of this problem was found to be through instituting Self-Help. By and large individuals over 35 years of age in medieval communities are beyond reconstruction,

but the younger group, particularly between 18 and 25, both men and women, can be encouraged to volunteer services to work in various community fields. This proves quite satisfactory provided there is a mechanism to give them some training and if their activities are under the routine supervision of more qualified personnel.

(5) Long term planning resulted in the conclusion that the base line of departure for reconstruction should be "power." It is well that the community in question should be surveyed at an early stage with respect to its natural power regions, even though their development in a manner similar to the T.V.A., would be in a considerable future. This would permit the shaping of many ad hoc details of organization and administration as components of an eventual blue-print; and, thus obviate the necessity of time to time reorganization which otherwise would become necessary if, with progress of reconstruction, the new organizations were brought into existence to meet only what appeared to be the immediate need.

JBG
March 1950