

Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, El Salvador, Guatemala, Mexico, Panama, Peru, Uruguay and Venezuela. This was the first course, admittedly of an experimental nature, organized for Latin Americans. Because of OAS participation in several training programs offered by the Government of Israel in other fields, it was invited to send an observer to the youth leaders training course in order to determine possible OAS participation in future courses. The Chief of the Exchange of Persons Service, Department of Technical Cooperation, spent two weeks in Israel observing the course and discussing with participants its value for their work in Latin America.

Conditions in Israel make this youth training course peculiarly valuable. The Israelis are experienced in training for youth leadership; they also work in an environment that inspires confidence in the capacity of people to solve difficult problems through education and cooperation; they make effective use of the means at hand; they offer a living example of the spirit of devotion to the common good.

Another course is planned for October 1963. In the light of the fact that the majority of the trainees feel that the GADNA course merits being offered again for Latin American youth leaders training, it is suggested that participants in this meeting discuss the relative merits of the GADNA course in Israel and make recommendations regarding its future development. They should also indicate whether their organizations would be interested in participating or supporting such an activity by sending trainees to the course at their own expense. The Government of Israel covers all expenses connected with the course, with the exception of the international travel. The General Secretariat of the OAS is tentatively considering its future participation in the course.

"Juvenile delinquency in all countries today reflects a heavy investment of initiative and youthful energies, but not for social-spiritual purposes. This overflow of energy hints strongly of the vast reservoir of unused power that is available--a surplus commodity in a glutted market. This source of youthful power and initiative could be readily tapped for social, civic, cultural and economic betterment. Youth represents the biggest and the best source of unused human energy and imagination which appears to be more successfully piped into national purposes in the Eastern orbit than in the Western sectors.

"The critical youth question facing all nations today--and there are no exceptions--is 'How can we initiate youth activities to tap the great supply of youthful vigor, enthusiasm, enterprise and imagination for social-civic progress and improvement?'"

This question of how to tap the resources of youth is not such a difficult one for many of the Latin American countries. Evidence of this is the readiness which many governments have indicated to receive Peace Corps volunteers of the United States to assist with their national programs: community development projects in Colombia and Chile, rural youth club work in Brazil and Venezuela, recreation projects in Venezuela, agricultural projects in El Salvador, health and home economics projects in other countries. More than 1200 United States volunteers were in Latin America at the end of 1962, many of them young college graduates. As a result of the initiation of the U.S. Peace Corps, several Latin American governments have indicated interest in setting up national peace corps projects to utilize the untapped idealism and enthusiasm of their own young people.

A project which may point the way for other Latin American student unions is that of the Confederación Universitaria Boliviana which has undertaken a campaign to combat illiteracy in Bolivia, with the assistance of the Coordinating Secretariat of National Unions of Students, and UNESCO. Eradication of illiteracy has a high priority in Alliance for Progress plans. A similar project is being organized in Valparaiso, Chile, in cooperation with the National Union of Students.

The Government of Ecuador has recently passed a National Adult Literacy Law which provides that all citizens between the ages of 15 and 50 must enroll in the literacy courses being organized by the Ministry of Education. Dispositions have been made for all citizens to cooperate with the Ministry to the extent requested of them. The Government will undoubtedly call upon its student population to assist with such a campaign.

In another campaign, in Chile, organized and financed by private enterprise, 1600 illiterates enrolled during the first week of registration at the twenty provincial and regional centers being set up throughout the country.

These latter campaigns, initiated as a result of recommendations of the Alliance for Progress, undoubtedly will require the cooperation of all members of society, particularly the young student element.

Student groups in Mexico have cooperated with school improvement projects, literacy campaigns, and others of benefit to the community. Numerous other student groups in Latin America are seeking ways to help their countries raise the standard of living of their peoples. Their efforts include measures to improve facilities for higher education to permit an ever-increasing number of young people to prepare themselves to meet the needs of their community. Students have for a long time been interested in university reform which would bring the teachings of the university more in line with the needs of modern society. Many students still need to leave their countries to obtain the training they require, not for short periods, which could be a cultural asset, but for two or more years, with the consequent danger of their losing their identity with their home country.

Student groups should rightfully be concerned with such developments. The integration of the Central American universities is a case in point. Such integration would permit them to obtain the training they require in familiar

The workcamp activity is one that can be used to advantage in Latin America to harness youthful energies into constructive channels on a national or inter-American basis. They have the advantage of providing opportunities for young people to develop physical fitness, use their energies constructively, while at the same time benefit from the cultural exchange, in the case of international workcamps. One such workcamp was successfully carried out in Chile after the earthquake of 1960. Students from many countries went to Chile to help with reconstruction work under the auspices of the Coordinating Secretariat of National Unions of Students. Workcamps might be developed in cooperation with international organizations, particularly with those working in the rural areas, i.e. FAO, the Inter-American Institute of Agricultural Sciences or the Inter-American Rural Youth Program, as suggested in a recommendation of the 13th Conference of Organizers of International Voluntary Workcamps held in 1962 in the Cameroons, Africa ^{1/}. The Conference also recommended that workcamps should be planned to fit into a national community development plan organized either by a large private association or the government.

The OAS through the Alliance for Progress is committed to assist the governments of member states in their economic and social development plans, and therefore, will cooperate with them and through them with programs involving youth and other sectors. The Alliance for Progress specifically calls for more participation on the part of the private sector.

5. Encouragement of Youth Interest in Local, National and International Problems.

As indicated earlier, the Organization of American States is in a position to help Latin American youth groups to develop member interest in inter-American affairs through existing programs and offices.

^{1/} Workcamps Across the World, Vol. III, No. 1, May-June 1962, a bimonthly publication of the Coordinating Committee for International Voluntary Workcamps. UNESCO, Paris, p. 3.

thorough understanding of national policies and goals. It is for this reason that the Pan American Union will work more with the international programs of youth organizations, while assisting, insofar as possible, with national programs as requested by governments or private groups.

What the OAS can do in the Field of Youth Activities

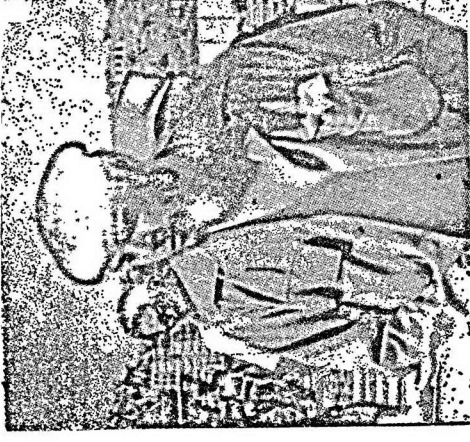
Since the purpose of this consultative meeting is to "determine the role of the OAS in the field of youth activities," it is expected that the organizations represented will have concrete proposals and suggestions to present in this respect.

This document will limit itself to suggesting activities which the Pan American Union is prepared to carry out, based on its past experience and present programs and on observed needs:

1. Cooperate with information programs of youth groups, especially through the national committees of the Alliance for Progress in each country, the Pan American Union offices in member states and its programs of public information, education and technical cooperation. The other offices of the General Secretariat of the OAS will continue to cooperate with youth organizations as requested.
2. Cooperate with youth organizations in the field of training through existing programs: the OAS Fellowship Program, the Leo S. Rowe Pan American Fund, OAS Youth Leadership Training Grants and the Program of Technical Cooperation. The General Secretariat of the OAS is also prepared to cooperate with youth organizations in providing training facilities which do not now exist.

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AL COMANDANTE
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