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SERVIÇO PÚBLICO FEDERAL

1953

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CENTRO DE ALTOS ESTUDOS EDUCACIONAIS

Wagley?

(mesmas características: papel
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mesmo)

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CENTRO DE ALTOS ESTUDOS EDUCACIONAIS

During recent months, it has been the general consensus of opinion that some sort of a major research plan on the social, economic, and culture backgrounds for Brazilian education should be undertaken. It is also agreed that it is of equal importance to develop a simultaneous program of research training on a high level. A brief memorandum written by Dr. W. Beatty, and addressed to UNESCO in December, 1952 outlined the possibility of a cooperative venture of this kind between the Ministry of Education (INEP), the Ministry of Agriculture, the Institute of Inter-American Affairs, and UNESCO. Mr. Atcon's later memorandum to the Executives of INEP, CAPES, and CILEME elaborated upon this plan a program to be entitled The Brazil Project. The subject has been taken up in several meetings in the INEP offices in some of which the writers of this memorandum have been present. The purpose of the present memorandum then is to bring together some of the general points of agreement on the plan for a combined research-training educational institute, or Centro de Altos Estudos Educacionais and to suggest some concrete points of departure.

A few words of preface may be necessary to explain the tentative plan which follows:

1. It seems to us that the initiation of a constructive plan should not be delayed until all the complex mechanisms of cooperative between MES, MA, IIAA, and UNESCO are worked out in detail.
2. It appears that it would be wise to start with a more modest undertaking, in terms of cost, the difficulties of recruiting suitable personnel, and the problems of integrating various fields of interest -- than would be involved in a larger plan.
3. It is felt that only two general fields of interest should be included at the beginning - namely, Education and Social Anthropology combined with Sociology.
4. A larger organization of wider scope should grow out of the more modest beginning envisaged in the series of recommendations that follow.

OBJECTIVES:

1. Continued research, using modern quantitative and qualitative techniques, into current conditions and directions of Brazilian Education, and into the cultural and social setting which the educational process is intended to serve.

2. The training through participation in research and seminars of a group of specialists in educational and social research and theory.
3. The adaptation of know educational doctrine and techniques to Brazilian conditions and the creation of a body of Brazilian educational theory, techniques, and policy.
4. The diffusion of this body of theory, techniques, and policy to Brazilian educators and teachers and to legislators, administrators, and the public in general through publications, demonstration projects, and other suitable methods.

THE ORGANIZATION OF THE CENTRO

It is suggested that although the Centro have an organization resembling a faculty of a university, the titles and functions assigned to the personnel of different categories differ from the customary ones. The reasons for this suggestion are several. First, this should not be usual kind of teaching faculty, but an organization in which teaching and fundamental research are carried out as intimately inter-related processes. It should not (at least in its early stages) issue diplomas or even certificates. Second, such titles as "professor" and "student" are apt to convey a more formal relationship between teacher and his associates than we hope will exist in the Centro.

The following categories of personnel are envisaged:

I - Directors:

It is recommended that the Centro be headed up by two co-Directors: one of them should be a top Brazilian Educator and the other should probably be a foreign social scientist, preferably a social anthropologist. By dividing the directorship between these two disciplines we would guarantee that both the educational and the anthropological viewpoints would be given equal attention and importance. By having one co-Director from Brazil and one from abroad, we would avoid the dangers of naiveté on part of newcomers to Brazil and yet be assured of the fresh viewpoint which newcomers can bring. Both of these men should bring prestige and experience to the Centro. They should above all not be "armchair Directors", but should be full participants in the research-training program of the Centro. They should

II - The Senior Research Fellows, or "Associados do Centro"

These men would correspond to the faculty in a university, but in the Centro, they would be more in the position of research leaders or senior research associates. Their number should depend upon the growth of interest and activities - and upon the availability of suitable individuals. It is suggested that they be at least five in number to begin with and that they be drawn from the following fields of interest in so far as

it is feasible. 1) Educational Philosophy or Theory; 2) Social Anthropology; 3) Educational Psychology and or Social Psychology; 4) Educational Administration; 5) Sociology (especially survey techniques).

Other specialized interests and abilities (such as knowledge of Primary or Secondary Education) should be sought in combination with some of the above fields of interest.

The associados could be individually either Brazilian or foreign but they should be among the best and the most energetic men procurable in their fields of interest. They need not be the most "famous" men in their fields, but they should have knowledge and experience of the best research techniques as well as great enthusiasm for research.

If they are from abroad (from the United States, Canada, England, France), it is suggested that the best men to be contracted would be younger men who have perhaps only recently just finished their doctoral degrees. They are available; they are eager to gain reputation and knowledge through creative research; they would be willing to take the time necessary to learn Portuguese; and they would not be separated too much in prestige, age, and interests from their associates (see next section).

III - Visiting Research Fellows, or Associados Estagiários do Centro.

These members of the personnel are here called "Associados visitantes" rather than "students". Some other title may be better than the one suggested, but in any case the title should convey the idea that they are on a level close to that of the Senior Members of "faculty". These associados visitantes should be selected very carefully from among the leading young educators (or social scientists primarily interested in education) from the various states of Brazil. In appointing the associados visitantes, preference should be given to persons already actively integrated into educational research or administration in one of the states. These associados visitantes would be invited to attend the "centro" for a one year period, in exceptional cases renewable, to participate fully in the research projects and in the seminars. They should be a highly selected group with intellectual stature as high as it is possible to procure. They should have the desire to return to their home states after training in the Centro, to become leaders in education at the state level. These are the men who should be active in developing regional Centros, patterned after the national Centro described here. Very exceptional men from this category, however, should probably be retained as permanente associados at the national Centro, as this expands, and as replacements for foreign personnel as the latter can be dispensed with.

IV - Administrative Personnel:

A certain number of administrative personnel will, of course, be necessary. There should be:

1. An administrative secretary or executive
2. Secretarial assistance
3. A librarian
4. Archivists
5. Miscellaneous

V - Visiting Consultants:

These should be specialists in education and the social sciences of world wide fame. They would be invited to participate in the program of the Centro for periods of 2 to 3 months at a time, although one-year appointments might be made if opportunity arises to secure men at this level during sabbatical leaves. Since specialists of this category generally have permanent academic or administrative connections, their periods of work with the Centro must be adjusted to their university vacations or other free time. If this is done, many specialists on this level would be delighted to accept an invitation to work with the Centro. It would give them a new experience and the change to know Brazil. Their function in the Centro would be to stimulate with their knowledge and experience new programs and directions of thinking and to criticise the current projects undertaken by the Centro. The Centro should probably invite at least two visiting consultants to come from abroad each year. Lyman Bryson and George Counts in Education, Robert Merton in Sociology, and Ralph Linton in Anthropology suggest the type of men we have in mind.

FUNCTIONS OF THE CENTRO

As stated earlier, the major objectives of the Centro would be to carry forward educational and social research and to train high level educational personnel. In order to do so, the members of the Centro would "learn by doing" - that is all major aspects of the training program would be oriented around actual research projects in which members of the Centro of all categories would participate. During any given year, more than one, even several, research projects may be underway simultaneously in the various fields of interest of the members of the Centro. Care should be taken, however, that all research projects conform to the underlying purposes of the Centro and that they be given unity by an over-all but tentative and developing set of hypotheses regarding the Brazilian educational and socio-cultural scene. (Such a tentative view is now being attempted on the broadest scale by Wagley and Harris). The primary way of

giving the desired unity to the various research projects should be through continuing Seminars and discussion among all the members of the Centro. In addition to Seminars, the Centro should have occasional lectures not only given by the Visiting Consultants (see above) but also by other specialists in the fields of education and social science. It is not planned that the Centro should offer regular academic courses, but there is no reason why it should not offer from time to time a series of lectures on subjects within its scope for an audience composed of its staff and other specialists, or even for a larger public interested in the same goals.

PUBLICATIONS

One of the important ways in which the Centro can influence Brazilian education is by publication of the results of its research and of critical and theoretical articles by the staff of the Centro. It would not seem necessary to create a special journal, for the Revista Brasileira de Estudos Pedagógicos already provides a necessary outlet for short articles. Longer works might well be published in cooperation with commercial publishing companies.

LOCATION

Neither a very large building nor a newly constructed building would seem to be necessary for such a center. Yet sufficient office space for the co-Directors and Associados, a library, offices for administration, several rooms for seminars and lectures, and a room for archives will, of course, be necessary. It should be stressed, perhaps, that as many individual rooms as possible should be furnished members in order to give them maximum isolation for study, thought and intimate conferences. Furthermore, the location of the Centro should certainly be outside the business-administrative center of Rio de Janeiro. It has been suggested that the Praia Vermelha district might perhaps be suitable, or that the State of Rio de Janeiro might furnish a building in Niteroi for the Centro. A large residence house would probably provide sufficient space.

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