



International studies and programs: Venezuela.

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U.W. NEWS

International
Programs Studies
Venezuela

FROM THE UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN NEWS SERVICE, MADISON, WISCONSIN 53706

10/14/64 jb

RELEASE:

Immediately

MADISON, Wis.--A South American university that asked the University of Wisconsin to install a quality upgrading program has some serious problems to be solved, says Dean Erwin A. Gaumnitz of the UW School of Commerce.

Dean Gaumnitz and Dr. Anthony Curreri, professor of surgery and director of the division of clinical oncology at the University, recently returned to Madison after a visit to Carabobo University in Valencia, Venezuela.

Representatives of the national university in Carabobo visited Wisconsin last June. At that time, they asked UW officials to help establish a management institute program, train promising advanced graduate students at Madison to prepare them for faculty roles at Carabobo, provide staff members to give advisory help in curriculum matters concerned with business administration, participate in a faculty exchange, and provide special training in medical techniques and research.

Eventually, Carabobo officials hope to set up a student exchange between the two schools.

Dean Gaumnitz said his visit to Carabobo helped him to realize the needs of the Venezuelan university.

"We found the South American university very much in need of a quality upgrading program," the UW educator said. "There are some serious problems to be solved. An extension and enrichment of basic education are needed, such as freshmen and sophomore students take in the United States, both in science and non-scientific fields.

-more-

Add one--Carabobo

"We believe the university at Valencia should add some courses, after they have deepened and enriched the basic educational program. Better facilities are needed for courses in the natural sciences taught by the laboratory method."

Dean Gaumnitz said most of the 6,000 students at Carabobo attend classes only for a few hours several evenings a week. He continued:

"There is need for more homework on the part of these students, and greater use of textbooks. We also recommend more active student participation in discussion and the analytical process of education--and less in signing petitions and engaging in political activities which only serve to decrease the amount of workload they are able to carry."

To finance the exchange project, sessions are being held with representatives of the Agency for International Development and several foundations which have already indicated an interest in sponsoring the North-South American program.

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U. W. NEWS

Venezuela

FROM THE UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN NEWS SERVICE, MADISON 6, WISCONSIN

8/7/54

RELEASE:

Immediately

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MADISON, Wis.--University of Wisconsin regents Saturday approved leaves of absence for two University faculty members, Ricardo B. Quintana, professor of English, and William S. Middleton, dean of the Medical School.

Prof. Quintana will teach at Harvard during the first semester of the coming academic year, and will conduct research into the literature of the 18th Century, utilizing the resources of the Harvard Library.

Leave for Dean Middleton was approved for two periods, July 26-31, and Sept. 16-30. The first period was utilized to study the research program in the Canadian Department of Veterans Affairs. The second is to enable him to attend the sessions of the International Society of Internal Medicine, meeting in Stockholm and for travel in the Scandinavian countries.

In other personnel actions the regents approved a reduction in the appointment of Prof. Henry Sterling to part-time for the first semester of the coming academic year to enable Prof. Sterling to complete reports on the University's cooperative project with the Venezuelan government.

The regents approved a special service contract with Paul F. Clark, emeritus professor of medical microbiology, who will be employed on a part-time basis in the Medical School to continue his research on diphtheria.

The regents also approved a special service contract with Della F. Wilson, emeritus professor of art education, to enable her to conduct studies of the curricula of the applied arts and art education programs and make an analysis of post-graduate activities of the graduates of the art education department.

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FEATURE STORY

3/17/54

Venezuela

FROM THE UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN NEWS SERVICE, MADISON 6, WISCONSIN

RELEASE: Noon, Monday, March 22

By HAZEL McGRATH

MADISON, Wis.--The future health and happiness of thousands of Venezuelans may well depend on the research report now being written by social scientists at the University of Wisconsin.

From the report may come help for the children of Chachopo, whose red cheeks spoke to the scientists' trained eyes, not of blooming health, but of hunger and cold, of leprosy and tuberculosis; for the farmers on the high coffee haciendas, where uncertain land tenure and a one-crop economy breed discontent and insecurity; and for the remote villagers who work long hours for their thin corn cakes and coffee, and whose lives are as monotonous as their diet.

The party, led by Prof. Henry Sterling, specialist in Latin-American geography, included Prof. Milton Barnett, anthropologist; Bert Ellenbogen, doctoral candidate in rural sociology; Roberto Lizarralde, graduate in geography from Uruguay who is still working in Venezuela; and Robert Hall, De Pere, and Ernest Harburg, Madison, graduate students in anthropology.

The men spent a year in the country diagnosing the social and economic ailments of three Andean states whose problems resemble those in the Southern Appalachian area of the United States. Their report, which includes photographs, charts, maps, and tables analyzing the land and human resources, will also include suggestions for treatment of the problems.

Dr. George Hill, head of the department of cultural anthropology and sociology at Central University in Caracas, first saw the need for an integrated

ad one--venezuela

research project in the Andes. As adviser to the Venezuelan government on rural affairs, and former member of the UW staff, he was able to interest both the government and the Wisconsin men in the venture.

Hill, Sterling, and Lizarralde made the preliminary survey in the Andes during the 1952 spring recess. The following September, Sterling, Barnett, Ellenbogen, and Lizarralde set out from Caracas to travel by station wagon, jeep, mule-back, and shanks' mare to the most rugged Andean areas.

The party surveyed briefly the states of Tachira, Trujillo, and Merida, and then separated while the anthropologist and the rural sociologist concentrated on community studies and the geographers made a reconnaissance survey and a series of maps of the entire region. U. S. and Venezuelan specialists from Caracas, and local talent, including doctors, foresters, and soil and agricultural extension specialists, assisted them periodically.

"Farming methods in much of the Chachopo area in Merida are extremely primitive: digging sticks to plant corn; wooden plows drawn by oxen; hoes; and sickles," Barnett and Ellenbogen report. "Women do not generally help in harvest operations, but they walk miles over the bare mountain sides to gather brush for firewood. The grade is so steep that several teams of oxen are sometimes hitched together to work the fields."

The people of Chachopo are as "pure" an Indian stock as any to be found in the Andes, they discovered. The church is the center of village life, and religious festivals provide the only community diversion to break the hard-working monotony of the villagers' lives. Many of the men belong to the Society of San Benito, which holds religious rites, neither Spanish nor Catholic, to insure rain and good crops.

Potatoes are the main crop scratched from the stony soil; and unmarketable potatoes--baked, boiled, fried, and in soup--form the day-in day-out diet. Seven years ago a stranger brought in carrot, beet, and cabbage seeds. These vegetables

ad two--venezuela

are now grown for market, but many growers have yet to add them to their own diet, the scientists found.

The cottages of Chachopo are built of stone, and stone fences crisscross the landscape. Cooking is done over open fires on the dirt floors or on raised hearths, and because the smoke has no outlet but the thatched roofs, the cottages are murky. They are also filled with insects. It is cold up that high--7,600 to 11,500 feet--but only the men have blanket-like garments to keep out the chill.

"The people are remarkably shy, but they were friendly and willing to cooperate when they knew what we were trying to do," Barnett says. "They suffer from tuberculosis, gastro-enteritis, and leprosy. Around 60 per cent of their babies die the first year."

There is one telephone in Chachopo. There are 10 radios and three sewing machines. There are two schools, one in town and one higher up; but at least 80 children cannot attend school because they would have to walk many miles, and "they aren't well enough fed to walk far," Barnett reports. There is nothing in Chachopo to keep the young people, who are leaving for the army or for the cities to find work and entertainment.

"It was worse before the trans-Andino highway was built," Ellenbogen adds. "It used to take two days to get to the nearest large town."

Later Barnett lived for three months in a Shell exploration camp in the tropical forest near the Uribante River, studying the pattern of migration and adjustment of people coming into the area from the Andes or as refugees from Colombia.

During this time Ellenbogen lived on a coffee hacienda of 7,000 acres, once owned by the dictator, Gomez, and later parcelled out by the government to around 2,500 people. He studied the social and economic effects of land tenure policies, living standards, and population mobility.

"At first I was suspected by some of being an investigator from Caracas sent to look into the matter of contraband coffee from Colombia. Others thought I

ad three--venezuela

was a government snooper sent to report who were good and who poor farmers," Ellenbogen says. "When I had convinced the people I was neither, I was able to interview about 60 families several times over."

In February, Hall and Harburg joined the field party, and after a brief period of orientation each settled in a small rural village.

"The most striking thing about Santo Domingo, the first community I studied, is the depletion of the male population in the 18-25 age group since the new road was built," Harburg says. "The soil is so bad the young men go to Maracaibo and Caracas to look for work. They never come back."

"Another outstanding characteristic of the area is the universal interest in education and the increase in school building," he continues. "In 1940, in the three Andean states we studied, 75 per cent of the children 7 to 14 were not in school. Now the proportion has been whittled down to 50 per cent."

"Officials are all appointed in the capitals, so sudden changes in administration involve everyone from the mayor and his staff to the school teachers. Communications break down so frequently that it took 30 days for a telegram from my wife, announcing the birth of our twins, to reach me."

Hall settled in San Miguel, a town of 185 which is the county seat for a population of 5,000. After setting up housekeeping in the village he ingratiated himself with the villagers by doing favors for their children. He was particularly interested in studying the effects of the building of community roads, in cooperatives, labor practices, and the church archives.

"With the permission of the Archbishop I was able to make 800 frames of microfilm covering local births, deaths, and marriages. As one can see from the big stack of births and deaths and the small number of marriage records, the people are informal about marriage rites. There is a high birth rate among the people, and high infant mortality."

"The local diet is deficient in proteins, and the population suffers from nutritional deficiencies as well as from the damp climate," he says. "The local

ad four--venezuela

cows give only a couple of pints of milk at best; and after the government insisted on more hygienic handling, the milk stopped coming to market.

"I was official photographer for the marriages and burials while I was there," he continues. "I was also called upon to take the natives to the hospital in Bocono. Good free medical service is now within an hour or two's walk of even the remotest regions, and medicines are also free."

The Wisconsin group found definite assets in the region, including a vigorous population, occasional farms which can serve as models of sound farm management, and some under-developed areas which could support denser populations or higher standards of living with better roads and other forms of government encouragement.

"We believe that with certain gradual changes in population distribution, living habits, and methods of resource utilization, this complex region might be able, not only to provide a better livelihood for its present population, but to contribute more positively to the national economy," Sterling says.

"We have made the first integrated study of this area to be undertaken by social scientists viewing problems from the points of view of several sciences. For example, when some of us would question the kind of housing in some areas, our sociologist would discover the houses were what the people had found best adapted to their environment. One of the easiest mistakes many Americans fall into is to suppose that we can use American standards to judge what's needed in other parts of the world," Sterling concludes.

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U. W. NEWS

FROM THE UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN NEWS SERVICE, MADISON 6, WISCONSIN

3/7/53

RELEASE:

Immediately

*Venezuela, U. of -
Exchange Program
(new folder)*

MADISON, Wis.--A program of exchange of professors and graduate students between the University of Wisconsin and the University of Venezuela, unique in that the total cost will be paid by the South American university, was approved by UW regents Saturday.

A 10-year memorandum of agreement, signed by officials of both universities, provides that:

1. A limited number of junior and senior faculty members from the University of Wisconsin and other North American universities will go to Venezuela to teach at the South American university, do research, or act as research consultants to government agencies;
2. The University of Venezuela will send to the University of Wisconsin or other North American universities, a selected group of graduate students for continuation of their training.

The agreement provides that University of Venezuela financial support of the project would be such that the exchange professors and graduate students "should neither gain nor lose financially."

A joint committee made up of three persons from each institution will work out the details of the exchange program.

UW Regent Wilbur Renk, who recommended approval of the agreement for the Regent Education Committee called "a true 'good neighbor policy'...on the academic level."

ad one--University of Venezuela

He said "two great nations, the United States of Venezuela and our own country, are thus, in a small but very important manner, demonstrating to the world how neighbors can work together for mutual improvement."

The plan, he predicted, would bring "great benefits to both the University of Wisconsin and the University of Venezuela."

It would aid in the improvement of the South American university's graduate education, he reported, and "offer unusual opportunities for research for the professors and graduate students" of the University of Wisconsin.

Three University of Wisconsin professors are now on leave for work in Venezuela. Prof. George Hill, of the UW rural sociology department, is adviser to the government; Prof. Henry S. Sterling, is director of a large research project on population in the Andes; and Prof. M. L. Barnett of the department of sociology and anthropology has four UW graduate students with him in Venezuela working on the population research.

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