Fulbright Program: Retrenchment Is the Word

The Fulbright program, which after World War II mushroomed into the world's most extensive international educational exchange program, has been dealt the sharpest blow in its history. Just before recessing, an economy-minded Congress reduced funds for international exchange programs by an unprecedented 30 percent—from $46 million to $31 million.

Officials of the State Department's Educational and Cultural Affairs Office say that the number of Fulbright grants available will drop from 3600 to 2500. The cuts will affect students and faculty selected during the coming year to hold grants during the academic year 1969-70. Hardest hit will be the programs for U.S. graduate students and exchange faculty abroad, where funds will be reduced by 67 percent. While statistics on exact cuts have not yet been developed, it is estimated that the reduction will mean a drop in the number of U.S. students participating in the program from 906 to about 300 and a drop in the number of U.S. university lecturers, research scholars, and teaching assistants from 933 to about 300.

The number of foreign students studying here will be reduced by 20 percent, a drop of about 800 students from a total of 2700, and a drop of about 260 faculty from a total of 1300.

Congress was brusk in making the reductions. Representative John J. Rooney (D–N.Y.), chairman of the House Appropriations Subcommittee on State, Justice, Commerce, and the Judiciary, said the committee reduced the fellowship program because "the President does not want the public traveling abroad because of the balance-of-payments situation and these professors are bound to take some money of their own and do some purchasing. . . ." Representative Durwood G. Hall (R–Mo.) claimed that the Fulbright program duplicated and overlapped similar travel programs within the National Science Foundation, and added, "I might say that this program has supported the sending overseas of some people who have not entirely agreed with the position of the government and they never should have been allowed to go."

When the appropriations bill moved out of committee and was passed in both houses, concern for the balance-of-payments deficit and the need for a general spending reduction were stressed in the debates.

State Department officials said they had "anticipated the cut" but had not expected it would be so great. In recent years there has been some pressure on the program, and in each of the past 3 years it was cut by 10 percent (the budget in 1966 was at an all-time high of $53 million). This year's 30-percent reduction is the deepest cut in the history of the program.

Government financing of an international educational exchange program dates back to September 1946, when freshman Senator William J. Fulbright (D–Ark.) introduced a bill to use foreign currency from the sale of surplus military property abroad to establish an international educational exchange program. Fulbright steered the bill around such controversial issues as the jurisdiction of the federal government in international education and the possible future cost of a continuing program to the American taxpayer. Fulbright had been a professor of law and, later, president of the University of Arkansas. As a student he had spent 4 years in Europe, 3 at Oxford as a Rhodes scholar and 1 in Austria, and he was a strong advocate of an international educational program.

When the Fulbright program went into effect in 1948, it was limited to countries in which the United States had accumulated large amounts of foreign currency; these were principally in Europe. The early program provided travel funds and expenses for Americans studying in designated countries where foreign currencies were available, and it provided travel grants for foreign students studying in the United States. In 1948, the first year of the program, a total of 84 grants were made—48 to Americans, of which more than half were faculty grants; and 36 to foreigners, of which one was a faculty grant. The average amount per student grant was $2190, although the individual grants varied greatly in size.

In 1948 Congress passed the Smith-Mundt Act, which, unlike the Fulbright Act, did not authorize bilateral agreements based on foreign currency settlements. Instead, it was financed by dollars appropriated annually by Congress. The Smith-Mundt Act was much broader and more flexible than the Fulbright Act and provided for information, entertainment, and cultural exchanges, thus going beyond the Fulbright Act, which was limited to academic exchanges. Moreover, agreements under the Smith-Mundt Act were not restricted to nations where the United States held large amounts of foreign currency. The two programs were coordinated; foreign students, for example, received Fulbright travel-fund grants and Smith-Mundt study fellowships. In 1948, some 1833 Fulbright grants were made, 831 to Americans and 1002 to foreigners. The average size of the grants was still about $2200, and the proportion of faculty to student grants for both U.S. and foreign was about half-and-half. A total of $6.2 million was spent in international exchange programs, about $2 million for Smith-Mundt fellowships and about $4 million for the Fulbright program.

In 1954, because funds from the sale of war materials were drying up and

Visits to East Europe "Discouraged"

Since the Soviet Union and its Eastern European allies sent troops into Czechoslovakia last week, the State Department has been "discouraging" travel to these countries by American scientists planning to attend meetings and by other U.S. citizens. No travel ban had been put into effect at the time of the *Science* deadline; but officials say the situation is uncertain, and they are advising against visits to Czechoslovakia, the U.S.S.R., Poland, East Germany, Bulgaria, and Hungary. The caution list includes Rumania, which does not have troops in the occupying contingents. Yugoslavia is not on the list. It is estimated that more than 75 scientific meetings of interest to Americans are scheduled in Eastern Europe before the end of the year.—J.W.

a new source of revenue was needed, Fulbright proposed and Congress adopted an amendment which authorized the use of U.S.-owned foreign currencies built up abroad from any source, including the sale of U.S. agricultural commodities. Congress thus greatly increased the funds available to the Fulbright program.

The program faced other difficulties. Senator Joseph McCarthy's criticisms of State Department operations affected all overseas programs, but Congress refused to go along with McCarthy's proposal that recipients of Fulbright grants undergo State Department security clearance. During this period some State Department officials saw the Fulbright program as a potential information conduit; they wanted American Fulbright grantees to promote American ideological views abroad. This ceased to be a live issue after 1955, when the U.S. Information Agency (USIA) was created.

The Fulbright-Hayes Act of 1961 brought all educational and cultural exchange programs under one law and consolidated their administration and financing. In 1962, a year after the act was passed, Congress expended $23 million for educational exchanges. Fulbright grants totaled 4838—some 1800 grants to Americans, of which more than half were faculty grants, and some 3000 grants to foreigners, of which less than half were faculty grants. The average amount per student grant was around $1800.

About 135 nations were participants in some phase of the Fulbright program in 1968. A total of 5840 academic grants were awarded: 685 U.S. lectureships and research scholarships, 248 U.S. teaching assistantships, 906 U.S. student grants, 602 foreign lectureships and research scholarships, 698 foreign teaching assistantships, and 2701 foreign student grants. The average amount for grants of all kinds was $2551; a typical faculty grant was about $4000, but the amounts varied greatly. One grant awarded last year to a professor of physics was for $16,000. This year's budget cuts may have a multiplying effect, because many of the Fulbright grants are coordinated with cost-sharing programs supported by the receiving foreign governments or by private organizations. It is possible that, when Congress reduces its financial support, the confidence of these contributors may be shaken and their own levels of support may drop.

Perhaps predictably, reactions to the Fulbright cuts on the part of professors reflect dismay. Clifford O. Berg, a Cornell University professor of limnology who held a Fulbright grant in biology in Brazil last year, said the cut was "most unfortunate." Berg said he had hoped that the program might continue at its usual support level, despite the serious cuts in most government agency budgets. Israel N. Herstein, a University of Chicago mathematics professor and Fulbright lecturer in Brazil, said the cut was a "stupid reduction," but he added that he considered the Fulbright cuts less serious than government cuts in domestic graduate fellowships and research grants. Bernard F. Erlanger, Columbia University professor of microbiology and Fulbright scholar in biochemistry in Peru, said the cut would be a "tremendous detriment to this country. I think," he said, "that when we look back on this era, we are going to be very ashamed of ourselves."

Regrets in the academic community about the Fulbright reductions may understandably be sharp among scientists, since, over the years, more than half the recipients of Fulbright grants have been scientists and students of science.—MARTI MUELLER

ONR: Economy Cuts Hit London Office

London. An unusual offshoot of the military's postwar interest in science and technology is to be severely cut as part of the effort to reduce the dollar flow from the United States. This is the London branch of the Office of Naval Research (ONR) which, since the end of World War II, has been responsible for keeping the Navy in touch with what is going on in Europe's basic and applied research laboratories. Now, under a directive from the Department of Defense, ONR London is to cut its staff from the present 61 down to 20 by June 1970. Within the same period, the European research offices maintained by the other services are also to be similarly cut, and they are to move—the Air Force from Brussels and the Army from Frankfurt—into the London premises that house the Navy. However, though the three will be housed together, they have not been directed to combine their operations, which, in the case of the Air Force and Army generally involve liaison and monitoring with European research and development contractors.

ONR London, however, has played a different and fairly unique role over the past 2 decades. The Navy lets the Air Force serve as the monitor of Navy research in Europe, while ONR London is charged with roaming around Europe to gather information on the people and work that are important in European science and technology. For this purpose, ONR London currently has a staff of 11 civilian Ph.D's, most of them on a year's leave from active research positions, and 12 military officers with at least fairly advanced scientific or technical training. There is also a clerical and administrative staff of approximately 40 persons. A Navy captain heads the office, but immediately beneath him is a civilian who holds the title of chief scientist; currently, this post is occupied by Alfred B. Focke, on leave from the physics department chairmanship at Harvey Mudd College.

All in all, ONR London adds up to a high-quality surveillance operation. The professionals spend about one-third of their time visiting research centers or conferences in their disciplinary areas. Reports of their findings on unclassified matters are published monthly in *European Scientific Notes,* whose circulation, about 7000, is largely confined to Department of Defense employees and contractors.

No other nation and no other service has anything resembling this window on foreign scientific activities, though, on a much smaller scale, some industrial firms assign specialists to monitor developments in European science and technology.