

THE AMERICAN UNIVERSITIES

FIELD SERVICE

A group of representative colleges and universities, including Caltech, organizes its own corps of correspondents to furnish accurate, firsthand information on foreign areas.

LATE THIS month Edwin S. Munger and John B. George will visit the Institute to report to the faculty, students and friends of the Institute on current conditions in East and West Africa. Early in January, Albert Ravenholt will be here with firsthand information on the Far East. He will be followed in February by Phillips Talbot, who will report to the Institute on Pakistan and India.

These four men are all representatives of the new American Universities Field Staff plan, organized by a group of American colleges and universities to send qualified young men out as their correspondents in foreign areas. In addition to sending back regular reports to the sponsoring colleges and universities, each of these men returns home every two years to visit the campus of each of the sponsoring institutions to report in person on current conditions, problems, and personalities in the area he is studying.

Though the American Universities Field Staff plan is brand new, it is actually an extension of a plan which has been in existence since 1925. In that year the Institute of Current World Affairs was incorporated in New York and provided with an endowment which now has a book value of about \$1,500,000 by the late Charles R. Crane (Crane plumbing) to give young men of promise an opportunity to study, firsthand, foreign areas about which there is a general lack of knowledge in this country.

Charles Crane, a widely traveled man, was always interested in the development of international information services. He was one of the men who put up money when Adolph S. Ochs took over the *New York Times*. He helped finance the *Japan Advertiser*, among other publications. He brought a number of distinguished foreign professors to this country, and financed a chair of Russian history at the University of Chicago.

In 1925 he endowed the Institute of Current World Affairs, with the understanding that Walter S. Rogers, his longtime associate—both in business and in his outside interests—would organize it, develop a program for it, and direct its activities.

Walter S. Rogers made his first important study of international communications shortly before the first World War, when he went to the Far East for Crane, to investigate the possibilities of building up a chain of American-owned newspapers there, to gather news for the American market and distribute American news in that part of the world. The project had to be abandoned because of the approaching war, but the experience showed Rogers what small success we were having in getting news of our government's policies and actions to the rest of the world.

At President Wilson's request, Rogers, soon after he returned to this country, arranged for world-wide dis-

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tribution of the President's next message to Congress. The success of this effort led to Rogers' being asked to set up and direct a government news service, which continued in operation throughout the war and the Paris Peace Conference. Rogers acted as advisor to the American Delegation to the Peace Conference, and later on was appointed one of the American delegates to an international communications conference. During the next few years he was involved in a number of other activities concerning the collection and distribution of news.

Institute of Current World Affairs

Since 1925 Rogers has centered his attention on the Institute of Current World Affairs, and, in the past 26 years, has sent out more than 20 young men to study contemporary forces in Japan, Manchuria, China, Russia, Mexico, Brazil, Argentina, Turkey, India, Africa, the Arab countries, and France. The Institute's associates include such men as Professor John N. Hazard of Columbia University, the only American yet to be graduated in Soviet law from the Moscow Juridical Institute; Thomas L. Blakemore Jr., the only American yet to be admitted to full practice before the Japanese bar; and several of those who will now take part in the AUFS program.

Most of these young men have been sought out and selected personally by the Institute in colleges and universities, from the field of journalism, and from other activities related to foreign areas. Each man goes through a rigorous training program. This is planned by consultation between him and the Institute, and often starts with a year or two at a suitable university in this country or abroad, where he studies the language, law and customs of the particular country he has selected.

The man then goes out to the country. For the first six months or so he is likely to live in one of the native villages. Later he moves on to a wider field and surveys the more general problems of the country. He sends back periodic reports to the Institute, which circulates them among a small number of persons who are interested in the area.

In general the Institute considers that it takes about five years to train a man to be an expert in his field. At the end of this time most of the men in the Institute Corps join university faculties, work for various governmental agencies, or go into journalism, the professions or private business. Only a few have remained with the Institute.

In recent years the Institute has been looking for a way to make this expert knowledge of foreign conditions both more useful and more available. The American Universities Field Staff plan is the result. Its original

sponsors include Brown University, Caltech, Carleton College, the Harvard Graduate School of Business Administration, the University of Kansas, Stanford, Tulane and the University of Washington—a group of educational institutions of widely varied interests, located in various sections of the country. Other colleges and universities will be admitted to the new organization by vote of the Board of Trustees. This board, elected at the organizational meeting of the AUFS on October 24, includes President Wriston of Brown University, Chairman; President Sterling of Stanford University, Vice-Chairman; President Gould of Carleton College, Secretary; and Phillips Talbot of the Institute of Current World Affairs, Executive Director.

To finance the AUFS program, each of the sponsoring institutions will contribute the equivalent of the average salary paid to an associate professor on its faculty. In addition, the organization will make its staff reports and services available to other institutions that can use such firsthand information—newspapers, magazines, business firms and the like. With the income from these sources, and the possibilities of endowment from other sources the program should be adequately financed.

In time, the field staff is expected to be built up to a strength of some 20 men. These men will prepare regular reports for the staffs of the cooperating institutions, and will be available for consultation by visiting professors and graduate students. Each man will return home every two years, and will visit the campus of each participating institution to take part in seminars, faculty discussions and conferences, give lectures and meet with local bankers, businessmen, and journalists.

As the plan evolves this will mean that four or five field men will be visiting each university each year, to expand and enrich the university's existing courses of instruction with their direct reports on conditions in various sections of the world.

The AUFS, an independent organization

As the AUFS begins to function under the control of its trustees, it will choose for its staff men who are highly skilled and fully trained in interpreting significant developments in important foreign areas. The Institute of Current World Affairs, which has assisted in the formation and organization of the AUFS, will continue to cooperate with it—and continue to train men in the contemporaneous affairs of significant foreign areas. These men will be eligible to be taken on to the AUFS staff, if they qualify. The AUFS will, however, be ready to draw highly qualified men from any source at all.

Obviously the development of the AUFS into a full-blown service is likely to take four or five years, since there is no short cut to the type of regional understanding its men are expected to have. It expects, at first, to concentrate on those areas which are relatively little known in American life, while gradually developing a service which will cover the major accessible areas of the world.