

# Planning Observation Programs for Foreign Welfare Personnel

by ANNA W. SCHNEIDER and MARY S. LABAREE\*

*The Welfare Fellowship Program of the United Nations, under which war-torn and underdeveloped countries may send their social welfare experts abroad to gain knowledge helpful to their home countries, is now in its third year. In 1947, when the program began to operate, 44 holders of these fellowships were assigned to the Social Security Administration—most of them to the Children's Bureau and the Bureau of Public Assistance. The first year's experience is summarized here as illustrative of the general scope of the program and also for its historical value. Moreover, since the UN program is only one of several similar programs in which these Bureaus have cooperated, the summary also serves as a general illustration of the Administration's participation in training programs for foreign welfare personnel.*

THE training of professional people from foreign countries has become an established function of the Federal Security Agency and its constituent organizations. Persons employed in other countries in public and private health, rehabilitation, and welfare agencies, in schools of social work and other educational institutions, and in social insurance and employment service agencies are coming to the United States to observe our programs as a means of strengthening their own. The number of such persons visiting this country has increased greatly since the establishment of the United Nations and related international organizations.

Observers in the welfare field are now coming to the Federal Security Agency under varied auspices: the Welfare Fellowship Program of the United Nations, now in its third year; the Scientific and Cultural Cooperation Program of the United States, which is at present limited to the American republics; the Cultural Exchange Program for Germany, as planned by the United States Office of Military Government for Germany; and private foundations and agencies. Some people also come sponsored by their own government or as independent observers.

Up to the present, most of these ob-

\*Miss Schneider is in the Office of the Director, Bureau of Public Assistance, and Miss Labaree is a member of the staff of the Social Service Division, Children's Bureau.

servers have come to this country under the UN Welfare Fellowship Program. In a special way, therefore, experience in this program has value in illustrating the way service is provided by constituents of the Agency to foreign welfare personnel observing in this country.

The fellowship program is one of five types of service available under the UN Advisory Welfare Service Program. Fellowships designed to permit observation of other countries' experience are awarded for a maximum of 6 months to individuals in responsible positions in social agencies and schools of social work. The first year the program was available chiefly to war-devastated countries, but it is now available to others in the process of major development. The United Nations provides a monthly stipend (\$300 for Fellows observing in the United States) and transportation to and from the country of study if the home government is unable to provide it, and meets the costs of travel connected with the program in the country of observation (an average of \$50 a month in the United States).<sup>1</sup>

The Federal Security Agency, through the Office of International Relations,<sup>2</sup> is responsible to the United

<sup>1</sup> For discussion of the general coverage and plan of the fellowship program, see Elma Ashton, "United Nations Welfare Fellowship Programme—1947," *Public Welfare*, April 1948.

<sup>2</sup> Formerly the Office of Inter-Agency and International Relations.

Nations for the placement of all Fellows assigned to the United States, delegating to its constituent organizations and other agencies of the Federal Government detailed responsibility for planning programs for individuals. Fifty-three Fellows<sup>3</sup> in 1947 and 32 Fellows in 1948 came to this country and were assigned by the Federal Security Agency as follows:

Agency	Number assigned	
	1947	1948
Total.....	53	32
Federal Security Agency.....	53	29
Social Security Administration.....	44	25
Children's Bureau.....	21	13
Bureau of Public Assistance.....	19	12
Bureau of Employment Security.....	2	.....
Bureau of Old-Age and Survivors Insurance.....	2	.....
Public Health Service.....	2	.....
Office of Vocational Rehabilitation.....	7	3
Office of Education.....	.....	1
Veterans Administration.....	.....	2
Department of Labor.....	.....	1

The two bureaus—the Children's Bureau and the Bureau of Public Assistance—to which most of the Fellows have been assigned have used similar methods in providing a program-planning service to foreign welfare observers. These methods were crystallized in the 1947 UN fellowship program, at the end of which each of the bureaus developed an analytical report of their experience as a basis for later administrative planning and for limited interpretive use. Since that time (June 1948), the second year of cooperation in the UN Welfare Fellowship Program has been completed, and the bureaus have had additional experience with other foreign observers. In general, the basic approach and the methods evolved in the first UN program have

<sup>3</sup> Including three who came on the UN 1948 program but who were considered by the Children's Bureau and the Bureau of Public Assistance to belong administratively to the 1947 program.

proved sound, although there have been some changes and refinements in methods. The volume of experience of the two bureaus, as well as the historical values in the first year of a program, makes it appropriate to use that experience to illustrate the participation of the Social Security Administration in training programs for foreign welfare personnel.

### The 1947 UN Fellows

The governments of countries that wish to have UN fellowships assigned to them have, in general, been able to select persons of mature years, whose education or experience and current employment would enable them to use an observation program profitably. This was the case even in 1947 despite the fact that the governments had to act quickly after the UN General Assembly authorized the fellowship program in December 1946.

Almost all the 1947 Fellows were still suffering from the hardships and tragic experiences of the war and early postwar years. Some had a limited knowledge of English; a few had some familiarity with the structure of American social work.

Since the 1947 program the United Nations has refined its forms and procedures and governments have improved their selection process. Only a few of the Fellows selected since then have not had a working knowledge of English. Many of them have been even better equipped than the first year's Fellows to carry on an observation program.

### Fellows Assigned to Bureau of Public Assistance

The 12 men and seven women assigned to the Bureau of Public Assistance<sup>4</sup> in the 1947 program came from seven countries: China, five; Czechoslovakia, two (women); Finland, one; Greece, one; the Philippines, six (three women); Poland, two (one woman); and Yugoslavia, two (one woman).

In general, they had good educa-

<sup>4</sup>Includes one Fellow from Poland whose program began under the 1947 program and was completed under the 1948 program.

tional backgrounds. Of the 13 who had a bachelor's degree, eight also had graduate degrees. Several had done their major work in the social sciences. Of the six Fellows without degrees, two were attorneys, and the others had some type of education beyond elementary schooling, including two who had 1 and 2 years respectively of specialized training in social work. Two Fellows had received degrees and two others had taken short-term work at universities in this country.

All the Fellows had some and many had long experience in welfare work. Five had spent all or practically all their working careers, ranging from 4 to 20 years, in social welfare. Of the 14 with other types of experience, seven had less and six had more than 5 years' experience in the welfare field. One had had special training but no experience in social work, her experience having been in genealogy and in the field of labor. Seven Fellows had previously taught, some in social sciences in colleges. One physician had been a public health officer; the other had experience in industrial medicine. One attorney had been secretary to a legislative body. One Fellow had been previously employed in market research and public relations.

Seventeen of the 19 Fellows were currently employed in social welfare agencies—16 in public agencies and one in a national private agency. One was employed in a ministry of education, and one was an unpaid officer of a national private welfare agency. Of those in public welfare, 13 were in national and two in State agencies, and one—though appointed by and administratively responsible to the national welfare agency—was under the technical direction of a school of social and political science in which she supervised field instructors.

The positions held by the 18 Fellows currently employed may be roughly classified as follows:

Director of social research.....	1
Research assistant.....	2
Administrative officer.....	1
Director of finance (State).....	1
Director of public assistance.....	1
Field supervisor.....	3
Supervisor of field staff.....	2
Senior social worker.....	1
Consultant.....	1

Director, metropolitan public assistance agency.....	1
Director, supervisor of resettlement and housing of refugees.....	1
Director, national community chest.....	1
Supervisor of field instructors, medical social work.....	1
Supervisor of vocational schools in nursing, health, welfare, and dietetics.....	1

### Fellows Assigned to Children's Bureau

The Fellows in the 1947 program whose major interest was in social services to children or related fields were assigned to the Children's Bureau. These 21 persons<sup>5</sup> came from nine countries: Austria, four (two women); Czechoslovakia, one (woman); Finland, one; Greece, three (two women); Italy, one; India, one (woman); the Philippines, six (five women); Poland, two (one woman); and Yugoslavia, two (women).

All 21 had high educational and cultural attainments. All but four were graduates of institutions of higher learning usually corresponding to our colleges or universities; 13 had graduate degrees in law, medicine, or education. Several had studied at one or more universities or specialized schools outside their own country, two previously in this country.

The interrelation of the fields of nursing and social work in most European countries frequently results in a combination of education for these two fields, and two Fellows from two countries had this type of education. Only the one from India had attended a school of social work that closely resembles such schools in this country and was thoroughly familiar with American concepts of social case work, the literature of social work, and the content of specialized programs such as medical and psychiatric social work.

Contacts in some countries with American social workers employed by UNRRA and the United Nations had previously introduced a few members of the group to new ideas in the field of case work and had prepared them to a certain extent for their contacts in this field.

<sup>5</sup>Of these, 18 arrived before December 31, 1947.

The experience and professional responsibilities of the Fellows in their home countries varied greatly. The governmental agencies with which most were connected do not correspond in kinds of service rendered to the more specialized public agencies in this country. Few departments of social affairs abroad confine themselves entirely to the administration of what in this country is called welfare service. Health centers, nursery schools and kindergartens, school lunches, and milk stations are often responsibilities of these departments. Supervision of institutions for the blind, deaf, and otherwise physically handicapped and for the mentally defective is also frequently placed in ministries of welfare. The representatives of these organizations had therefore generally had experience in fields that are not always part of the public welfare programs here.

The 21 Fellows assigned to the Children's Bureau had varied backgrounds. Three were heads of national child welfare divisions in government agencies; four were directors of general welfare departments or relief organizations, both public and private, which were also concerned with child welfare programs; and one was in charge of a juvenile delinquency program in a national department of justice. One of the group was a psychiatrist and university professor of pediatrics; another was principal of vocational schools; and another was a nutritionist in a group of public institutions for dependent, neglected, and delinquent children. One Fellow—a professor of child psychology and child development in a public university—was interested in methods of field practice for her students; four were supervisors for a Nation-wide public welfare agency having specialized programs of child health and welfare; one was supervisor of 34 public health centers, her staff providing whatever social service was available to the patients; one was director of a highly technical department of social work in a private institution for mothers and infants (one of the few Fellows who had utilized foster family care); two were on the staffs of institutions for children—a public hospital for malnourished children and a public institution provid-

ing nursery school and kindergarten experience; and one was a qualified psychiatric case worker in a private clinic connected with a hospital for children.

## Programs

Responsibility for planning programs and for counseling individual Fellows has been accepted as a training or educational function in the Federal Security Agency and its constituents. Each Fellow is assigned to a professional staff member, who serves as his adviser throughout the program. The relationship thus established is considered a cooperative one. The program adviser acts as counselor, discusses possible content of the program, makes joint decision with the Fellow about it, counsels him in preparation for and after he has made his observations, and provides consultation about personal or professional problems with which he wishes help.

## Orientation

After experience with a few of the 1947 UN Fellows, the Bureau of Public Assistance and the Children's Bureau, working with the Office of the Commissioner for Social Security, jointly developed a basic orientation program for groups of observers arriving together. During the Fellows' first week they attend a series of lectures giving general background information on Government structure and function and on social security, education, and welfare services in this country. During the week also, the program advisers become acquainted with the individuals, learn more about their education and experience and the organization for social welfare in their countries, and begin to plan their programs.

In 1948 the orientation period was extended to include limited observation. Four local agencies in three States—the Dauphin County and Chester County Boards of Assistance in Harrisburg and West Chester (Pennsylvania), the Richmond (Virginia) Area Community Council, and the Baltimore (Maryland) Council of Social Agencies—served as orientation observation centers. One staff member in the center provides continuous guidance as the Fellows ob-

serve one of each of the major types of social service facility to obtain a bird's-eye view of social work structure and process and at least some understanding of the philosophy underlying our social services. They also have opportunities to learn about the American way of life.

## Program Planning

Whenever possible, an attempt is made before the Fellow's initial placement to plan with him the general coverage of his program including tentative planning of many of the resources to be used. This plan is based on discussion with the observer of his functions in his home country, his needs, and the specific aspects of our welfare programs in which he is interested. In some instances, no attempt is made at the beginning to plan the total program. Letters and reports from the observers and reports from cooperating regional offices and agencies provide bases for additional or revised planning. In a number of instances, at his suggestion or that of his program adviser, the observer returns to Washington after completing part of his program for discussion of what has been observed, consultation regarding problems he may have met, and new or revised planning.

Before the UN Fellows' program planning begins, a number of steps have been taken. They report to the United Nations at Lake Success where they are oriented to the program and their responsibilities as visitors in this country. A staff member of the fellowship office discusses with them their background and areas of interest, which he summarizes for the Federal Security Agency. In some instances in the 1947 program, observation trips were arranged to selected agencies and institutions in or near New York City.<sup>6</sup>

The Fellows next report to the Office of International Relations of the Federal Security Agency, where the work of the Agency as a whole is outlined. They are then assigned to constituent units. Those assigned to the

<sup>6</sup> In the 1948 program, the stay in New York was shortened and the entire observation program was planned by the United States agency to which the Fellow was assigned.

Social Security Administration report to the Office of the Commissioner for Social Security, where they get a brief orientation to the Administration; the Fellows then report to the Bureaus to which they are assigned.

### ***Bureau of Public Assistance***

The UN Fellows assigned to the Bureau of Public Assistance in the 1947 program were those interested in public assistance administration, in any aspect of welfare administration other than child welfare and vocational rehabilitation, and in general education for social work. Many maintained broad interests in the general welfare field throughout their programs; others identified specialized interests in that field after broad observation. From the beginning, however, some had limited interests; several were interested primarily in public assistance administration, one was interested only in community chests and councils of social agencies, three were interested in different aspects of education in the social welfare field, and one had a broad interest in both labor affairs and the general welfare field.

In providing observation opportunities, the Bureau followed two patterns. For Fellows observing in specialized fields, contacts were made directly with Federal and local agencies in Washington, except the local public welfare agency, and with schools of social work and a few other specialized agencies outside Washington. However, for those interested in the general welfare field, with emphasis on public assistance and other public welfare programs, the Bureau's regional representatives developed detailed plans within a general framework outlined by the Bureau after discussions with the Fellows.<sup>7</sup> The regional representatives called on State public welfare agencies, which in turn used State and local resources, to provide observation opportunities.

*For Fellows in general welfare administration.*—In general, for Fellows

<sup>7</sup> Since the 1947 program, more detailed planning has been done in Washington, and observers have in many instances observed in State and local public welfare agencies without prior or subsequent contacts with the regional office of the Federal Security Agency.

interested in either the broad field or specific areas of general welfare administration, the programs were planned to provide general information about the scope and philosophy of welfare services, the way public and private resources are organized to provide such services, and the methods used in administering and coordinating the services. The program of most of these Fellows was therefore related to four of the "basic eight" in the curriculum of schools of social work—public welfare, social case work, community organization, and administration of social agencies.

With two exceptions, these Fellows had some initial orientation in the Bureau to public assistance programs under the Social Security Act. Through individual or group conferences with selected staff members, supplemented by reading, most of the Fellows learned about State plans and the plan-review process, the procedures in making grants-in-aid, methods used in maintaining Federal-State relationships, statistical reporting and research in program planning, policy formulation, and the concept of "need." Conferences on such specialized subjects as staff development, financing and fiscal procedures, and fair hearings were arranged with Bureau staff to meet the needs and interests of individuals or groups.

Arrangements were also made for conferences and observations in the Children's Bureau and other Federal and local agencies in Washington in whose programs the Fellows were interested—for example, the Federal Housing Agency, the National Capital Housing Authority, and local private agencies and institutions. The Department of Labor provided extensive observation opportunities for two Fellows interested in public employment services and other government functions in the field of labor.

Each Fellow next was assigned for several weeks, usually 7 or 8, to a regional office of the Social Security Administration,<sup>8</sup> where the public assistance representative or associate representative assumed responsibility for his program. Usually the Fellow

<sup>8</sup> Now Federal Security Agency regional offices.

first devoted some time to learning about the operations of the regional office, frequently visiting private agencies and institutions in the city in which the regional office is located. Next, unless his program was otherwise delimited, the Fellow was assigned to a State public welfare agency, where he learned about the organization and functioning of a State welfare department, usually with emphasis on public assistance.

Observations in the State agency varied in length and usually covered two or more programs, as well as the specialized aspects of State agency administration—policy formulation, statistics, field supervision. Additional opportunities for observing methods of maintaining State-local relationships were provided by placements in area or district offices of the State agency, and by visits to local public welfare agencies with State field representatives. In the local agencies the Fellows observed the ways in which service is provided to people, where the vitality of programs is most evident.

Local public welfare agencies also arranged desired visits to other agencies and institutions. Visits to homes for the aged, institutions for children, child guidance clinics, community planning agencies, social service exchanges, and community chests by practically all the Fellows enabled them to see how public services fit into the community's total social welfare program and are coordinated with other welfare services. Most of the Fellows in general welfare administration visited one or more schools of social work, had a brief conference about the school's organization and administration, and often attended one or more classes. Two Fellows attended an institute on staff development conducted by one school.

Attendance at one or more meetings of the American Association of Social Workers or one of the committees of that organization was usually arranged. Locally sponsored conferences were attended by a few Fellows. Five attended regional conferences of the Child Welfare League of America, and two attended the annual meeting of the National Social Welfare Assembly and the Workshop of Citizen's Groups, sponsored by the

Assembly and the Community Chests and Councils' Advisory Committee on Citizen Participation.

Staff of the American Association of Schools of Social Work, the Family Service Association of America, the Community Chests and Councils, and the American Friends Service Committee conferred with Fellows especially interested in their programs. The American National Red Cross provided a 2-week observation program for one Fellow in the national and eastern area offices and in a local chapter.

*For Fellows in education for social welfare.*—The three Fellows in the 1947 program who were interested in education for social welfare had widely varying backgrounds and needs. All began their programs with some orientation to public assistance, with emphasis on underlying principles. Two also had intensive orientation to child welfare. In the Bureau of Public Assistance, too, they learned something of the general pattern of education for social work, the relationship of public welfare agencies to schools of social work, and the principles and content of current staff development programs. The American Association of Schools of Social Work and eight schools of social work and one college cooperated in their programs. At the schools the Fellows had opportunities to confer with individual faculty members, attend classes, visit field-work agencies, and observe other aspects of school administration. Visits to agencies and institutions were also arranged on request.

The Fellow primarily interested in training for case work had intensive observation in public and private case-work agencies, with a 10-day visit to one school of social work and a briefer visit at another. The Fellow who was chief of nursing, health, welfare, and dietetic schools in a ministry of education required a more varied program. In addition to having conferences in the Children's Bureau, the Office of Education, and the American Council on Education, she visited local child care facilities in Washington, and had 3 weeks and 10 days respectively at two graduate schools of social work and 10 days at a college in a State university, where her study em-

phasis was on preprofessional education. She also observed in dietetics and in specialized facilities for child care, with emphasis on educational aspects of their programs.

The Fellow interested primarily in graduate education for social work had conferences with the Children's Bureau, the National Conference of Catholic Charities, and national professional membership associations. A 5-week observation period in a school that had only a 1-year program but was planning to add a second year was followed by 4 weeks at a 2-year graduate school, and 1 week each at three other schools.

*For Fellows in other specialized fields.*—The Fellow interested in labor law and its administration and in general welfare administration was first assigned to the U. S. Department of Labor, where he learned about many aspects of the field of labor. He next observed in a State labor department and attended a series of university classes on labor relations. Observations in the general welfare field were made later in the Bureau of Public Assistance and one of the regional offices.

The Fellow interested in community chests and councils of social agencies had previously corresponded with many people he wished to see here. At the Bureau's request, Community Chests and Councils provided initial consultation to this Fellow and suggested community chests and councils of social agencies to be visited. Fortunately, the timing of his program permitted him to observe community chests during fund-raising time. He also visited the Tennessee Valley Authority.

### *Children's Bureau*

In the Children's Bureau the training program for international Fellows and trainees is a function of the International Cooperation Service, which since 1942 has had experience with trainees under the Scientific and Cultural Cooperation Program. All technical divisions of the Bureau and the regional consultants participate actively in the program. In 1947 the Social Service Division carried special responsibility for the 21 UN Fellows.

Some of these Fellows were inter-

ested in observing in such broad fields as administration of public child welfare programs; the scope and administration of comprehensive child welfare programs under public and private agencies; crippled children's services and institutions; programs for the prevention and control of delinquency, including probation and parole, court work, and State training schools; and work for blind and deaf children. There were many other areas in which observation was requested. Some of these were mental health, child psychology and development, vocational training, nursery schools and kindergartens, rural work, group leadership, nurse-midwife training, public health nursing, and nutrition. Interest was also expressed in legislation, staff development and supervision, methods of publicity and interpretation of child welfare work, and the organization and curriculum of schools of social work.

Consultants from the departmental staff of the Children's Bureau explored with the Fellows their wishes and needs and recommended specific placements to the program adviser. Plans were then developed with the cooperation of the regional staff and often other departmental staff.

The widely differing interests of the Fellows necessitated wide use not only of welfare agencies and institutions but also of other types of resources both in Washington and in the field. Flexibility was essential, as Fellows became interested in additional observations in new programs they had not known existed but that often represented exactly what they needed. As a result, quick changes and adaptations of schedules were necessary.

The programs frequently covered several types of related child welfare programs. Since these were often best observed in more than one community, travel over a considerable area was necessary. One man, for example, visited institutions for dependent or delinquent children in six States, vocational high schools in at least five States, and community schools, resembling European folk schools, in several States in the South. Another Fellow visited several States, from Connecticut to Texas, to observe juvenile courts, probation offices,

juvenile-aid programs in police departments, and public welfare departments. Still another spent 2 months in the Colorado region and devoted her time to observation of health and welfare services; she later supplemented this experience with shorter visits to Chicago, Cleveland, and South Carolina to observe programs of a similar nature in both urban and rural settings.

A few Fellows were interested in the basic organization and administration of the child welfare programs in this country. For them broad observation programs were planned. For instance, the chief of a bureau of child welfare in a national commission of social welfare wanted to learn as much as possible of the methods by which local services could be developed in the provinces of her country with general supervision from the central national agency. She visited divisions of child welfare in several State departments of public welfare to study their form of organization, the methods of supervision of local agencies, the relationship of public child welfare services to juvenile courts and to private agencies, and programs of staff development for State and local staffs.

Fellows from war-devastated countries, even those as dissimilar as Poland and Italy or Greece and the Philippines, had some common interests. There was interest, for example, in ways of enriching community (chiefly village) life, and in ways of utilizing schools as centers from which health and welfare services can radiate.

Such interests required the use of programs quite outside the various fields covered by the Children's Bureau, and the Bureau turned to the Department of Agriculture for assistance. The Department's Bureau of Human Nutrition and Home Economics and Office of Foreign Agricultural Relations provided opportunities for consultation and for field contacts of a specialized nature. The Extension Service, with its varied programs of parent education, home improvement, youth groups, and 4-H clubs, met a particular need of many Fellows. For some, many of the most rewarding field experiences were developed through the Extension Service. In fact, from these experiences

several Fellows gained deeper appreciation of one of the principles underlying social work in the United States—that of working *with* rather than *for* people.

Another group of Fellows responsible for institutional management and delinquency programs obtained help from the Bureau of Prisons in the Department of Justice. Some European ministries of social welfare administer, in addition to child welfare services, a variety of welfare institutions, women's prisons, and reformatories for older youth. For representatives of such ministries, visits were arranged to the Federal Women's Prison at Alderson, West Virginia, the National Training School for Boys in Washington, and the Forest Camp for Boys at Natural Bridge, Virginia.

The Office of Education of the Federal Security Agency provided helpful cooperation to Fellows from countries whose welfare programs are related to schools or have educational aspects. For example, one Fellow early expressed an interest in "vocational training." As principal of a vocational school connected with several institutions for dependent and delinquent children and youth, he needed to observe the use of modern methods of vocational education in child care institutions. His program involved consultations with specialists in both the Office of Education and the Children's Bureau and a field experience that showed him all types of services in these two fields. Similar satisfactory joint observation periods were possible for several others.

Private national agencies also participated in the programs of Fellows assigned to the Children's Bureau. Chief of these was the American Red Cross. A few visitors consulted with staff in the National Red Cross office in Washington and observed services in chapters in other parts of the country. For a number of Fellows interested in the leadership given by private national groups in the development of their special programs, interviews with such agencies were arranged.

### **Concluding Phases of Programs**

All UN Fellows and other observers spend from a few days to a week or more in Washington at the end of

their programs for discussions and evaluation of their experiences, drafting of final reports, and working out other details connected with their return home. Some Fellows have additional technical conferences or observations in Washington. All have final conferences with their program advisers, some of which are on a group basis.

During the 1947 UN program a particularly valuable conference was held with five Fellows from the same agency in their home country—four of whom had been assigned to the Children's Bureau and one to the Bureau of Public Assistance—to discuss their observations and conclusions, to focus their thinking on the needs of their own organization, and to direct their final observations in such a way as to round out their study to the best advantage. These final conferences, individual and group, enable the program advisers and the Fellows to review jointly the program content, the information and impressions obtained, and the general pattern followed in the program planning, and to stimulate suggestions for improving methods and procedures.

As a final step in the Federal Security Agency program, the UN Fellows have brief conferences with the Commissioner for Social Security and the Director and Assistant Director of the Office of International Relations, and receive a certificate from the Federal Security Administrator attesting to the satisfactory completion of the program.

### **Evaluation of the Programs**

The United Nations recognizes that an observation program cannot compare with professional education as a method for developing qualified, disciplined welfare personnel with a broad base of theory and supervised application of theory. Yet it feels that a few months spent visiting selected social agencies and institutions, accompanied by related reading, must contribute significantly to the competence of an experienced person and the improvement of his country's welfare services. Experience shows that benefits also accrue to the individuals, agencies, and countries providing ob-

ervation opportunities. In addition, international relations are undoubtedly strengthened through the relationships established and the mutual sharing of professional experience.

### *Values for the Fellows and Their Countries*

Time alone will tell how effectively the fellowship program contributes to improvement and development of welfare services in beneficiary countries. The United Nations has asked each 1947 fellowship holder to submit reports by the end of the second month after his return home, in July 1949, and in January and July 1950, covering the general and specific values of the observation program for himself and his country's welfare program. The home governments have also been requested to submit reports about the value of the fellowships. Meanwhile, conferences with the Fellows and their final reports provide some basis for evaluating the results of this educational program in a field of professional practice. The values to the Fellows can be considered in terms of their acquisition of information and their professional growth.

The professional equipment of every Fellow was enriched by considerable information about the scope and variety of our social work services, the philosophy underlying them, and administrative methods and standards. The depth of their understanding of the basic philosophy of the programs and the points that made the deepest impression depended partly on the Fellows' backgrounds and philosophies. All were interested in adapting to the needs in their countries some of our programs and services. Some were discouraged at first by the complexity and apparent adequacy of our social services, but additional observations and greater understanding of our programs often led them to discover what could be useful in their countries.

Most of the Fellows were greatly interested in and impressed by the coordination of public and private efforts in councils of social agencies, and they obtained information about the structure and basic purpose of such agencies. They may not have obtained sufficient information about methods of operation, however, to

enable them to carry out effectively their intention to encourage establishment of similar agencies.

The place of a community chest and a social service exchange in the social work structure of large communities was appreciated. In fact, there was almost universal interest in establishment of an exchange in their own countries to prevent duplication. The question may be raised, however, as to whether the need for preventing duplication of assistance is so serious in the Fellows' countries as to call for such a resource, or whether the tangible nature of the exchange has influenced the reactions of the Fellows.

A few Fellows made intensive observations of the structure of public welfare and other agencies. One Fellow became aware of the value of integrating all public welfare services at the local level. Many gained considerable information about child welfare services and about the Federal, State, and local administration of public assistance. Interpretation of the history of the categorical approach to public assistance doubtless was understood in varying degrees.

Practically all who observed the process of policy formulation in State public welfare agencies were impressed with the care taken in this process and the extent to which staff in different positions in local and State agencies participated in it. That we have broad social policies to which government activities in labor, social security, and related programs conform was noted by the Fellow who had extensive observations in the field of labor. The Fellows who observed the merit system at any length were favorably impressed. Financial planning and accounting were not explored by many of the Fellows, but one thought that the device of earmarking taxes for welfare purposes might be of value in educating the public as to the necessity of such services.

The Fellows almost unanimously commented on the mutual respect and acceptance of one another that they noted among all groups. Many also commented on the give and take between staff members, the easy relationship between the supervisor and those supervised, and the fact that people enjoyed their work, as well as on the integrity, earnestness, and de-

sire to serve that were characteristic of staff members of public and private agencies and institutions.

The importance of the case-work method in administering various types of services to persons in their own homes and in institutions was evident to all. The basic principle of the recognition of the dignity and integrity of the individual was rather generally appreciated from even limited observations of case-work process and record reading. One Fellow noted that women and girls in correctional institutions "are treated as patients in need of therapy, not as delinquents who have to be punished." Another who attended a case conference about an individual child in difficulties interpreted effectively the concern for the individual and a procedure for mobilizing public and private resources to serve the individual.

The concept of the right to assistance had apparently been unknown to some of the observers. By the time they left this country, however, all who observed in public assistance seemed to understand the importance of this concept in our programs, in spite of its incomplete implementation. The importance of providing assistance in cash was also generally accepted.

Philosophy and practice in the hearing process in public assistance administration were understood best by the few who observed a hearing, for they were impressed with the respect shown the person claiming his right to assistance and with the results of the hearing for the individual concerned. Whether the obligation to safeguard information about individuals served was effectively explained is not clear.

Only brief information about the content and methods of social work education was obtained by observers not specializing in that field. However, many who attended one or more class sessions at a school of social work commented on the use of the discussion method. Some obtained brief information about the organization and administration of such a school, as interest in this type of education in their countries was developing. Although our level of professional education for social work may not be attainable soon in most of the coun-

tries represented in the 1947 program, the brief contacts with schools of social work made a deep impression.

Those whose major observations were in education for social welfare obtained widely differing informational values. The one interested primarily in field instruction in case work was impressed with the philosophy and methods of case work, the schools' establishment of criteria for selection of field-work agencies, and the number of cases assigned to students and the method of selecting the cases. The Fellow interested primarily in undergraduate education for social welfare functions probably obtained more general information because of the spread of her interest and the wide differences in education in the social welfare field in this country and her home country. The Fellow interested primarily in graduate education for social work obtained detailed information about administrative and organizational aspects of schools of social work, the pedagogical principles used in professional education, the content of courses, and the place of field work in professional education.

The Fellows realized the need for training in professional schools but also developed appreciation of the need to give training to untrained staff members and thought our methods of in-service training would be useful to them. Many had not previously recognized the educational and developmental aspects of supervision. The continuing need for stimulating staff members to a better job was frequently mentioned in final interviews and reports as a valuable discovery and a topic that would receive attention in their own countries. One Fellow said, "If we can only change our own attitudes and help our staffs back home change theirs towards the children we serve, the whole United Nations fellowship program will be worth while." Another Fellow said:

I am aware that services to children require competent personnel. Along with this has come the realization that to attain their maximum competence and to be able to make a creative contribution to agency services, staff members must have stimulation and continued opportunities for professional growth. Providing these op-

portunities is a responsibility of the agency. In our country, we have no Schools of Social Work, nor State educational grants. However, it behooves upon us to devise other means to develop the workers in our agency, and for this purpose we may put up in-service training and institutes to acquaint the child welfare workers with the modern trends, theories and philosophies regarding children's fundamental needs and guidance. Staff meetings with carefully planned and purposeful subject matters may be held regularly to stimulate the workers' interest in their work.

Another Fellow made the comment:

One thing we need badly . . . is to have in our departments, institutions and agencies well-trained social workers with an understanding of the responsibilities of their work. At the present time I do not see how it would be possible to organize a school of social work. It is necessary to think about this and plan the basis of such an establishment, so that when happier times come . . . we will be ready to organize such a school. However, the fact remains that we need social workers now, much more than ever before. My observations helped me to understand how we could organize a training in-service, of the personnel of agencies and institutions who are under the Ministries of Justice, Welfare and Health.

Though the observation programs are not designed to give individuals opportunities for practice to develop skills, a major aspect of professional education for social work, professional growth may be furthered by other means. Because of the stage of organization of social work in some countries from which the Fellows came and their own limited experience, the observation program gave some of them an insight into their own potentialities. One who became especially interested in the subject while here was described as a "natural" in community organization by the council of social agencies where he observed for several weeks. Another, formerly in research, developed considerable interest in child welfare programs, particularly institutional care, as he thought the institutions in his country could be helped to improve the quality of their service. These two Fellows may be expected to im-

prove their professional abilities, for natural interests are usually an indication of potential skills.

The contribution of the program to developing himself professionally was appreciated by the Fellow who wrote: "As a means of developing the personality of the individual, the program has been excellent. The contact with different people under varying circumstances sharpens a person's ability to adjust, to accept with discrimination, increased tolerance."

Another, less experienced person commented on the values in meeting and discussing programs with persons in supervisory and administrative positions. One Fellow commented on the salutary disciplinary effect of preparing a monthly report for the United Nations.

Many Fellows realized increasingly their need for professional education. One applied for a scholarship from a school of social work while here. One wished to stay for professional education at her own expense, but the regulations of the program did not permit it. Several others indicated interest in returning to attend a school. This recognition of the importance of professional education should enable these Fellows to contribute to appropriate development of professional education in their own countries.

### *Values to Cooperating Agencies*

The Fellowship program has been a means of staff development and thus of enriching the cooperating agencies. Agencies reported that the horizons of their staff had been enlarged as they learned about the welfare needs and programs of other countries, and that they had benefited from looking objectively at their programs and interpreting them in simple terms, understandable to a foreigner. One agency said that foreign visitors had "stimulated some rather interesting discussions and results, as far as relationships are concerned" with agencies with which it was accustomed to work. Others, to plan effectively for the Fellows, contacted agencies and institutions with which they had not previously had working relationships. Many agencies commented that close contacts with a program of the United Nations gave reality to the international aspects of welfare services. One

wrote: "In spite of our problems we feel that we learned a great deal from him . . . and I hope that he learned something from us also. It was a rare privilege to discuss international problems with [him] . . . We want to thank you whole-heartedly for sending him to our institution as we feel that it was an experience worth while for all involved."

One agency commented on the results for the agency: "There were certain intangibles—in the sense that it is salutary for us to get the reactions of foreign visitors to our wealth of resources, specialization, complexity, and perhaps over-organization in contrast to the European situation."

Another agency said that a Fellow's "spirit, courage, enthusiasm, and her will to work against tremendous obstacles helped to make our staff more ready to work against lesser hardships and to accept lesser limitations."

The Fellows realized that their presence had value to an agency. One wrote:

I felt that it is my responsibility to discuss with the agency the things I thought differently about . . . without being critical about them.

This program is mutually beneficial to the Fellow and the agency in which the Fellow observes. First, the advent of a Fellow in an agency always offers a challenge and a stimulation to the staff. It gives the staff an incentive to do well because it wants to show well.

The exchange of ideas which of course is inevitable is also enlightening. An outsider's point of view gives the insider a different and fresh angle.

Areas for further work on welfare programs in this country were suggested by a number of comments by the Fellows. There was, for example, criticism of the categorical approach to public assistance; surprise that Federal grants to States are based on a formula rather than the need of the State, that there was apparently competition between some public and private agencies, and that a person with Federal civil-service status was not thereby eligible for appointment under a State civil-service system; and a feeling that the Federal Government needed to be closer to the local agencies.

One Fellow commented that, after listening to interviews in a local public assistance agency and a social insurance agency, he was impressed with the difference in approach. He thought the public assistance worker seemed intent on finding the applicant ineligible, while the social insurance interviewer seemed intent on determining objectively whether the individual qualified for benefits and, if so, the amount. One Fellow provided food for thought to American social workers in her final report when she said, "There seems to be a healthier attitude towards service in the staff of poorer agencies than in those of the wealthier ones. Can it be because there is less challenge for those in better circumstances?"

One Fellow was not favorably impressed with the pretentious institutions for children, with buildings in which huge sums had been invested, while the quality of personnel and the provision of natural home surroundings for the children had been ignored. Another recognized the necessity for better trained probation officers in this country if the juvenile courts are to fulfill their functions adequately. She also wrote:

In many of the institutions one encounters such highly trained workers with specialized qualifications that I was surprised to find that no special standard of education or training is required among cottage parents. On the whole these are good-natured people with a love of children, but in view of the special kind of children that are placed in institutions I feel that they should have special courses to facilitate their better understanding of the development, personality and needs of the children. This would also promote better understanding with the trained social workers and a better relationship with the children themselves. It seems to me strange that in a country where parent education is on a very high level there is no minimum standard for cottage parents.

Some Fellows were surprised that in a country as wealthy as ours there could be such differences in resources for the care of dependent, mentally ill, or sick people. It seemed to them incomprehensible that there was not more interest in the various forms of social insurance and that the Federal

Government was not able to equalize the services available to all people regardless of place of residence.

The Fellows did not discover any conditions unknown to the cooperating agencies, but awareness of situations that can be improved may be intensified by seeing them through the eyes of foreign visitors.

### *Evaluation of Process*

Evaluation of the methods and procedures used in the observation program for the 1947 UN Fellows must be made against a number of factors, some of them negative. American social workers and social agencies had limited previous experience in using observation as an educational method. The program was launched so quickly that there was insufficient time to develop as good standards and methods as might otherwise have been possible, and the pressure of time remained an element throughout the program. Many Fellows had no clearly defined goal of their own at the beginning of their program or had no clear understanding of the purposes their countries wished to achieve through the program, other than the general one of strengthening the welfare services.<sup>9</sup> In a few instances, as was to be expected, adjustment to conditions in a country spared the ravages of war was difficult. For a few, particularly those who had to study English after their arrival, language difficulties created emotional tensions as well as problems of communication.

On the positive side, the psychological equipment and the attitudes of most of the Fellows were generally excellent for a learning experience in which they necessarily carried heavy responsibilities. Too, American social workers and social agencies were eager to be of service as well as to learn.

*Resource selection and use.*—The fact that the Fellows were initially assigned to a Federal agency probably conditioned program planning to some extent. For instance, persons

<sup>9</sup> Revised standards for selection of Fellows, improved application procedures, and improved methods at the beginning of the programs made possible earlier definition of goals by the Fellows in the 1948 program.

interested in administration of general welfare, public assistance, and broad child welfare programs usually observed successively in Federal, regional, State, and local units. Thus, there was probably less flexibility in developing programs according to the natural learning abilities of these Fellows than was desirable. One Fellow asked for a local placement before observations at the Federal level, and this was arranged. Those who requested observation in Federal agencies first had decided by the end of their programs that the choice had not been a wise one. Another thought, after State and local observations, that his program could have been limited to those in Federal agencies. In general, plans for persons in specialized fields—such as education for social work and particular aspects of child welfare—could be made with a little more recognition of the persons' preferences as to the order of specific placements. Moreover, at the end of the 1947 program there was rather general agreement that the orientation at Lake Success and the initial stay in Washington should be reduced and that observations of operating programs should be planned for early in the schedule.<sup>10</sup>

It is difficult to select for an individual Fellow the regions, States, and localities where the general characteristics of the community, the social work resources, and the types of observation opportunities available will best meet his needs. It may seem wise theoretically to place persons from countries with very limited resources and great need in States where the situation is similar. However, some of the 1947 UN Fellows from countries with great needs and limited resources found most valuable their placements in urban areas that are highly industrialized and have a variety of resources.<sup>11</sup>

*Procedures.*—Procedures can affect

<sup>10</sup> Observations of programs in an urban area are now usually arranged for within the first 2 or 3 weeks after the observer's arrival in this country.

<sup>11</sup> Continued experience has resulted in accumulation of considerable information about local social work programs and institutions that provide good observational opportunities as well as a more discriminating use of available resources.

a program, and in this instance the requirement of the United Nations that the issuance of travel authorizations be centralized in Washington resulted in complications, particularly after the Fellows were assigned to a region. The time involved in obtaining reimbursement for cash expenditures for travel militated against widespread use of cash for travel except by Fellows with regular income other than the fellowship stipend. The fact that mail from their home country sometimes had to be forwarded two or three times probably affected morale. Overestimating the ability of the Fellows to understand spoken English probably resulted in too limited use of written instructions by those responsible for program arrangements. Inexperience of the program advisers doubtless resulted in inadequate preparation of the Fellows for some of their observations. In some instances a Fellow's program was slowed up by the fact that detailed information about him and about the preceding parts of his program was not made available to all persons in State and local agencies participating in his program.

*Kinds of learning experiences.*—The Fellows' programs were divided among listening, reading, and seeing. The "hearing" or "listening" process was probably the base of most programs. Lectures, used largely in the basic orientation in Washington and in some group conferences in the Bureau of Public Assistance, appealed to some Fellows more than conferences conducted on a discussion basis. The difficulties of adapting either lectures or group conferences to the needs of a group of individuals from one or more countries were recognized. Some Fellows preferred individual conferences.

Reading also bulked large in most of the programs, particularly in the beginning, when many Federal publications were provided. Some thought that reading pertinent materials in preparation enhanced the value of conferences. Many Fellows spent most of their week ends and evenings reading technical material avidly collected. Although published materials will doubtless be very useful to them in their own countries, the concern of the Fellows about sending all their

materials home, and the size of their collections, suggested the desirability of increased discrimination in providing materials. More coordination of reading with other aspects of the program also seems wise.

Decision on the number of States and localities that should be included in an individual's program also presents difficulties. Many of the 1947 Fellows thought their programs had included too many placements, and some recommended a long stay in one locality with shorter periods in one or two more.<sup>12</sup> There were values in repetition, but numerous placements proved wearing to many, and some participating agencies felt they had little to offer the Fellow that he had not already learned. Narrowing the focus of observation in some places was also suggested as desirable.

Understanding of the social work structure and programs is enhanced greatly by cultural and social opportunities. Many of the 1947 UN Fellows commented at the end of their program that they were unable to see much of American life, for their programs required long hours of work. Those who had opportunities to learn about American family life and culture obviously thought their programs had been enriched thereby.<sup>13</sup>

Reading of case records was a valuable method for interpreting social case work when accompanied by discussions with the case worker or a visit to the client with the case worker.

"Observation" proper was carried on in many activities. Fellows watched staff at work at their desks, and a few agencies arranged for observations of interviews, with the consent of the persons involved, thus adding vividness to the program. Initial reluctance on the part of some clients to this process was apparently dis-

<sup>12</sup> Experience in the 1948 program indicated that considerable flexibility in the duration of any one placement is desirable. Some Fellows found a lengthy first major placement longer than they needed. Others found shorter placements not long enough.

<sup>13</sup> The values of nontechnical experiences in helping a Fellow become oriented to this country became even clearer when experiences in orientation observation centers in the 1948 programs were evaluated.

pelled by the Fellows' friendly approach. Perhaps additional attention needs to be given to the possibilities of observation of interviews and methods by which a client's free consent can be obtained in advance.

Attendance at various administrative meetings seemed to provide one of the most natural and valuable resources to enable Fellows to observe day-to-day processes in social agency administration with a minimum of advance planning. Discussion with the Fellow before the meeting as to its nature and purpose and brief discussion afterwards enhanced the value of the attendance. Desirable as they are, opportunities for observation of other day-to-day working processes of an agency have apparently been more difficult to arrange.

Attendance at meetings outside the agency—chapter meetings of the American Association of Social Workers, for example—made less impression on some Fellows than other experiences did, though theoretically such meetings should be a valuable source for learning about American social work and social workers. Attendance at an institute under the auspices of a school of social work was greatly appreciated by two Fellows, one of whom was most interested in observing the reactions of others in the group. Local and regional welfare conferences of from 2 to 3 days seemed particularly valuable to Fellows who attended them.<sup>14</sup>

The intense interest of many of the 1947 Fellows in attending schools of social work and the great values derived from even brief observations at schools were outstanding and pointed to one way of strengthening the Fellowship program.<sup>15</sup>

<sup>14</sup> Obtaining from national agencies their advance conference schedules for 1948 facilitated planning for Fellows to attend regional conferences of national agencies in the 1948 program.

<sup>15</sup> A revised policy of the United Nations made it possible for the Fellows in the 1948 program to attend short-term courses and institutes related to their program. Three Fellows took from two to five courses for credit at a school of social work during 1 quarter; one of them had a concurrent broad observation program in a State public welfare agency and a few local agencies. A fourth Fellow audited classes in a few subjects for 3 weeks while observing in a State public welfare agency.

## Summary and Conclusion

Increasingly, foreign welfare workers are seeking opportunities to observe our welfare programs in order to strengthen their own. In providing the requested opportunities to these persons, this country's social workers and social agencies are being enriched. In the 1947 United Nations Welfare Fellowship Program alone, the Children's Bureau and the Bureau of Public Assistance, as well as the regional offices of the Social Security Administration, had the cooperation of approximately half the State public welfare departments, many local agencies, and almost one-third of the member schools of the American Association of Schools of Social Work. Many of these, a considerable number of additional agencies and institutions, and several additional schools of social work participated in the 1948 UN program and in the programs of other observers assigned to the Children's Bureau and the Bureau of Public Assistance.

Experience in the first UN program has suggested ways the observation programs can be improved and enriched. The importance of the Fellows' having facility in English before coming; the value of school attendance for short periods; the importance of limiting the program so it is less taxing on the physical, mental, and emotional energy of the Fellows; the need to allow time for preparing reports and to plan travel so that the Fellows will not have to report to an agency on the day of arrival in a city; and the necessity for the Fellows' early observation of welfare programs at the point where services reach the people for whom programs exist—these were some of the lessons learned in the 1947 program, both from evaluation by staff working in the program and from the suggestions of the Fellows. The need for more flexibility in program planning and the desirability of developing among agencies a greater informality in accepting Fellows and in permitting them to observe a wide variety of day-to-day operations became clear also, but these objectives have been more difficult to attain.

There is need for further analysis

of observation programs as an educational experience and of the responsibilities of the program-planning agency, the observer, and of cooperating agencies. Obviously, the agency that plans an individual's observation program with him is responsible for facilitating opportunities for him to "see" social work operation, for helping him prepare for the separate parts of the program so they will have meaning, and, if necessary, for helping to clarify the meaning of the experiences. The agency cannot be expected, as is a professional school, to present a well-organized body of knowledge and help the individual integrate it. Neither should the agency supervise the individual in the use he makes of his opportunities, his application to the program, or his writing of reports required by the sponsoring agency or his home government. Further clarification of agency responsibility should hopefully include consideration of the possibility of including more opportunities for the observer to be a participant in activities rather than merely an onlooker or listener.

It is apparent that the Fellow in an observation program carries a maximum of responsibility. He must be constantly alert so he can help the agency select the most meaningful types of observations. He must be able to evaluate and select what will be useful for adaptation in his home country, with its own political, social, and other characteristics. He must be careful not to attempt to use the agencies primarily for consultation on the problems of his own agency or country. He must be selective in accumulating materials, and he alone can determine to what extent the program provides opportunities for him to develop the self-discipline necessary for effective professional relationships.

Observation programs for foreign welfare workers are a means of establishing international friendships and of exchanging information about welfare needs and the ways they have been met. They thus, it is hoped, contribute to improvement in the quality of services in all countries taking part in the program and perhaps to a limited extent to understanding and world peace.