

UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT

Memorandum

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TO : Mr. Thomas C. Lyons, Jr.

DATE: November 2, 1972

FROM : Steven W. Sinding SS

SUBJECT: Review of AID/csd-2515, "Situation Reports on Population Problems, Policies and Programs" (Caltech) and Recommendations Regarding Extension of the Contract

The central and nearly unique activity carried out during the first three years of this contract has been support for the writing of population reports by the American Universities Field Staff (AUFS). This support has been provided through the mechanism of a contract with the California Institute of Technology which, in turn, purchases finished reports from AUFS. A second activity, largely subsidiary of the first, is the publication of most of the past year's reports in a single volume. Two such volumes have been prepared to this point.

A number of other activities anticipated by the original contract have not been carried out, or have been carried out only superficially. One example is the provision of support for scholars in less developed countries to bring them to the United States for teaching and research. A second is the provision calling for the participation of LDC scholars at the annual conference. Finally, the contract anticipated that the Caltech Population Program would be a much more active organization, in general. To date, it has proved chiefly to be a clearing house for purchase of (and some editing of) the population reports prepared by AUFS writers.

A one-day formal review of the project was held in Washington on July 25, 1972. Most of those who served as members of the review committee felt that the project should be continued but that it needs far clearer focus and statement of purpose than exists at the present time. Specifically, the committee was virtually unanimous in its agreement that AID must specify who the audience for the reports is and what purposes are expected to be served by making the reports available to that audience.

In August a conference of AUFS and Caltech attempted to address problems regarding the future of Caltech-AUFS relations. Among the issues settled at that time were the following: a) only a "core group" of AUFS writers would continue to concentrate on population matters, owing largely to the uneven quality of the population reports and the clear correlation between interest in population on the part of the individual writer and the quality of the report; b) Caltech would not exercise additional editorial oversight but would make an effort to remain in closer contact with the staff writers in order to facilitate the flow of information to them and to provide substantive inputs prior to the writing of reports.



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A continuing problem is the following: AID believes that Caltech has provided very little under the contract apart from support for the AUFS reports. Indeed, Caltech's role could be characterized as that of a "conduit" of money. Since such an arrangement is the only way in which AID could continue to purchase the reports, it might be argued that the conduit role of Caltech is acceptable as is. However, understandably Caltech (particularly Harrison Brown and Alan Sweezy) are unhappy if that is all their role is to be. They want the contract to reflect a number of other activities that are independent of the AUFS activities. Yet, the existing contract provides considerable opportunity for them to develop other activities in both teaching and research. They have failed to develop any significant activities of these sorts. The question is: should a renewed or revised contract anticipate additional Caltech activities on the basis of past performance? If not, can AID expect Caltech to sign a contract which more accurately reflects present activities?

It seems that the burden of the answers falls on Caltech. If they want to do more, they should specify what the additional activities will be, and they should provide arguments as to why AID should believe they can do them. It may be that their failures to date result from Harrison Brown's overcommittedness and subsequent inability to devote anything approaching full time to the development of Caltech's program. (Brown will be leaving the Foreign Secretaryship of the National Academy of Sciences next year and may, as a consequence, be able to devote more time to the population program.) One explanation of failures to date may lie in the shortage of top-level staff. With no one devoting a major proportion of his time to the Caltech end of the project, it was simply not possible to establish the institutional basis of a teaching and research program in population there.

Recommendations are as follows:

1. The AUFS reports, although of mixed quality, are generally useful and ought to be continued. AID and Caltech ought to make an effort to improve the distribution of the reports, both in terms of quantity and in terms of specific audience.
2. Prior to the drafting of a new contract, Caltech should be challenged to specify the activities they wish to carry out in addition to a) the purchase of fieldstaff reports, b) the nominal editing of the reports, c) the convening of the annual conference and publication of the annual report and d) the provision of basic bibliographical services for the fieldstaff. The present contract is very loose with respect to Caltech's non-AUFS activities. A revised contract should reflect the specific activities Caltech might propose.