Point IV Showing Results in Latin America

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THE INSTITUTE OF INTER-AMERICAN AFFAIRS
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President Eisenhower enjoys a hearty laugh with a group of 23 Latin American home economist trainees from 14 countries as he receives them at the White House.
On Pan American Day, The Institute of Inter-American Affairs, Technical Cooperation Administration, pays tribute to the Organization of American States, the oldest and most successful international organization in the world. Through the cooperation of its 21 member Republics, it has led the way toward strengthening the peace and security of the Americas.

The observance of Pan American Day is an appropriate occasion on which to review the progress of the cooperative technical assistance programs of The Institute of Inter-American Affairs, which is in charge of the Point 4 programs in Latin America. March 31, 1953, marked the eleventh year of technical cooperation between the Latin American Republics and the Government of the United States.

The United States shares with its Latin American neighbors the firm belief that great strides will continue to be made toward the mutual strengthening of the economic and human resources in the Hemisphere—objectives which are in harmony with those shared by the great leaders of the Americas when they united in 1890 to form the organization which became the Organization of American States.

**Broader Concept Now**

Over a year has passed since the inception of a broader concept of cooperative technical assistance encompassing new fields of activity designed to make a greater contribution to economic development. Looking beyond traditional programs of health and sanitation, food supply and education, the cooperative program aims toward developing assistance to industry, labor and government, the provision of technical and scientific services, the development of natural resources and the improvement of social welfare and housing.

Training of Latin American nationals continues to be one of the most important responsibilities of each of the cooperative programs. Seven hundred and seventy-four technicians have been provided with opportunities for advanced technical training in the United States during 1952. Local training is provided to Latin American nationals through seminars and workshops, demonstration projects, adult education courses, on-the-job training within industry, summer schools, normal school training of teachers, and day-by-day association with their United States colleagues working in the cooperatively financed programs in Latin American Government agencies, generally known as "Servicios."

The Servicio is an agency set up by the Latin American Government as a bureau within a ministry to carry out a given type of technical assistance in which the United States Government participates, through The Institute of Inter-American Affairs, by supplying technicians and part of the program funds. Operations are cooperatively planned, directed and administered by United States and Latin American technicians. Projects completed by a Servicio are ultimately turned over to an appropriate agency of the Latin American Government for operation. Servicios have been generally free from political pressures and other influences.

The key to the success in carrying out a plan for economic development—and there have been many plans proposed in the past—is a reservoir of available Latin American technicians who are trained to do their jobs. After eleven years of progress, competent Latin American technicians are becoming increasingly available to carry through programs successfully.

**Activities Expand**

During 1952, the participating governments have expanded considerably the activities of these cooperatively financed programs, most of which are of the Servicio type. Today there is a total of 44 cooperatively financed programs in operation; 18 in the field of health, welfare and housing; 14 in agriculture and the development of natural resources; 10 in education; and 2 which provide assistance to industry and government services.

Approximately 650 United States technicians are participating in the activities of these programs, working with over 14,000 Latin American nationals. The United States Government made $18,000,000 available for this program during the fiscal year which ended June 30, 1952. A conservative estimate of funds contributed by the 19 Latin American Governments participating in the program, for the same period, amounted to more than $32,000,000.
Health

The health and sanitation program of The Institute of Inter-American Affairs dates back to the third meeting of the Ministers of Foreign Affairs for the American Republics held in Rio de Janeiro in 1942. This meeting was an outgrowth of events affecting Latin America as a result of World War II. During the past 11 years, great achievements have taken place.

In 1952, active projects in the 18 Latin America countries numbered 609. Included among these projects are the construction of 72 water supply systems and 8 sewerage systems; construction of 26 hospitals and operation of 27; construction of 21 health centers and operation of 69; construction of 1 nursing school; operation of 26 mobile health units, 69 local training courses, 24 health education projects, 12 malaria control projects, and assistance to industries to improve industrial hygiene in five countries.

A significant phase of the health and sanitation programs has been the emphasis on training Latin Americans to assume complete responsibility for each project as soon as possible. The figures for 1952 show 119 United States technicians working with 2,535 Latin American doctors, nurses, sanitary engineers, and other professional personnel; 1,183 sub-professional and administrative personnel; and 3,416 unskilled workmen.

An outstanding example of what has been accomplished in the health and sanitation programs is to be found in Brazil. In the Amazon River Valley, 56 health centers and their sub-posts minister to 2 million people scattered over an immense area. Efforts have been concentrated on eliminating malaria and intestinal diseases that affected almost the entire population. As a result of the cooperative program, these diseases have been sharply reduced in the towns and areas wherever the program is in effect in the great Amazon Valley and the Rio Doce Valley.

Another major activity has been in the field of sanitary engineering. The Institute, through its Servicios, has done much to improve public water supplies and provide safe water in Latin American countries. It has done so by training sanitary engineers in the United States, through the granting of public health fellowships to doctors holding key positions in health departments, and by building a number of potable water supplies as demonstration projects.

Estimates vary and are difficult to obtain, but some observers believe that more than 25 million people, or one out of approximately six Latin Americans, have benefited from the cooperative health and sanitation program during the past eleven years. Under it, diseases have been checked by extending controls over the environment, thus providing the stimulus to improve human resources. These, in turn, are opening new vistas to the development of the great natural resources of Latin America.

United States and Peruvian experts are also waging a strenuous battle against silicosis and other occupational diseases contracted by high altitude miners in Peru.

The United States looks to Peru for copper, vanadium and other strategic minerals found in the Andes Mountains 14 to 16 thousand feet above sea level. Only the Indians who are native to the high altitudes can work in these mines, but this labor force is a diminishing one. Occupational diseases, particularly silicosis, draw off men and there are none to replace them.
The Governments of Brazil and the United States of America have actively cooperated in the field of Public Health through the Ministry of Education and Health of Brazil and The Institute of Inter-American Affairs, representing the United States. Efforts have been concentrated on eliminating malaria and intestinal diseases that affected almost the entire population. As a result, these diseases have been sharply reduced in the towns and areas wherever the program is operating. When the program began 11 years ago, there were 40 United States technicians cooperating with 500 Brazilians. Today not a single United States technician is in the Amazon Valley. Over 1,000 Brazilian, most of whom were trained as part of the program, are continuing the work there. This cooperative program not only serves over two million people in the Amazon Valley, but it is also in effect in the Bahia, Sao Francisco, North East and Minas Gerais areas.
In 1947, the Peruvian Government passed a law making an industrial hygiene program mandatory. It was to start in the high mining areas, and industry was to be taxed to pay for it. The Point IV staff was requested to accept responsibility for the program.

The Institute of Inter-American Affairs borrowed the best available industrial engineer and an industrial chemist from the United States and sent them to Peru. A Peruvian physician had already been sent to the United States to study industrial hygiene as applied to mining.

These three, and assistants whom they trained, went to work early in 1949 on what is considered one of the most significant undertakings in the history of industrial hygiene as it has to do with high altitude mining.

Beginning early in 1949 in the three mines of the Cerro de Pasco Copper Co., 14,000 feet in the Andes, physicians examined 1,113 workmen and found 19.3 per cent with presilicotic conditions, 8.7 with silicosis, and 2.4 with other ailments. Engineers went underground and thoroughly checked the conditions under which the men worked. Out of the survey came specific recommendations to the mining industry for protecting workers against illness and accident. Many corrective measures already have been brought into effect.

Recently a similar team was sent to the Mina Rogna mines, at 15,000 feet altitude, to study the health hazards in the vanadium mines, the world's most important source of the strategic mineral.

Although silicosis is the leading occupational disease and dust in the mines must be controlled to eradicate it, the Peruvian industrial hygiene program has as its goal the protection of workers from other conditions such as poisons in the materials they handle, vapors that cause stomach ailments, excessive heat, excessive noise, slippery floors, dangerous machinery, and other industrial hazards.

**Agriculture and Natural Resources**

When The Institute of Inter-American Affairs was first established in 1942, a Food Supply Division was set up to assist in meeting emergency wartime food production problems in Latin America. At about the same time, the United States Department of Agriculture began setting up field stations for research in Latin America. Training and extension-type activities were carried on—all aimed toward stepping up the supply of strategic products.

During 1952, cooperative programs have rendered technical assistance in agriculture and natural resources development under agreements in Bolivia, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Cuba, the Dominican Republic, Ecuador, El Salvador, Guatemala, Haiti, Honduras, Mexico, Nicaragua, Panama, Paraguay, Peru and Uruguay.

In the agricultural field, the projects operating have as their objectives: research, aiming at improvement in various food crops, fiber plants, or livestock; teaching, providing education and vocational training of Latin Americans in agriculture and home economics; extension work, bringing the results of teaching and research to the farm families; and rural development, encompassing land clearing, forest utilization, colonization, irrigation and drainage, land classification, soil conservation, road building, storage and drying facilities, marketing, food processing, supervised credit, insect, disease and weed control, machinery-pool operations, fertilizers, range and livestock management, and seed and nursery production.

In the natural resources fields, the activities point toward development of natural resources—land and water resources, forestry, fisheries, and minerals.

Plant insect and disease control programs have proved particularly effective in many Latin American countries.

The most important factor in the success of an insecticide-fungicide program is the Servicio rural extension agent, equivalent to a county agent in the United States. In practically every agricultural area of Peru the success or failure of the program depends upon the efforts of the agent in placing emphasis on this type of work. In one area, 90 per cent of the agent's
time was spent on this activity. Cotton, which had not been grown there for 20 years, because of red stainer, is now being planted. The Servicio agent had shown that the red stainer could be controlled. By 1950, 3,000 hectares (7,500 acres) had been planted and treated with benzene hexachloride where necessary.

Since the program began in Peru in 1943, Servicio technicians have carried on many insect control projects. They include control of: fruit fly on tomatoes; late blight on potatoes; cotton insects such as bucculatrix, thrips, boll worm, red stainer, boll weevil and soil worms; soil worms and cut worms on corn; insects in stored grains; snails and ants. They have also demonstrated the use of 2.4.D to control weeds in wheat and corn.

Education

The cooperative education programs began in 1943. Today there are education programs in nine Latin American countries with special activities in two additional countries. These programs are designed to assist in improving public elementary school systems and vocational education on a national scale. The principal aim in all instances is the building of a modern efficient system of teacher-training, both in-service and pre-service. Elementary education programs are currently operating in Bolivia, Ecuador, Honduras, Nicaragua, Panama, Paraguay, and Peru. Vocational industrial and, in some countries, vocational agricultural programs are currently in Bolivia, Brazil, the Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Honduras, Nicaragua, Panama, Paraguay and Peru, and special activities in vocational education are being conducted in Chile and El Salvador.

In the elementary education programs, the chief efforts have been directed toward the improvement of rural education since most of the people live in rural areas and they are the areas least adequately provided with schools and teachers. In many of these rural areas, not more than half the school-age population is enrolled in school at any time. Of the 50 per cent who do attend, the majority receive only a maximum of two years of schooling, a very few as much as four, while even fewer young people have access to a secondary school.

Methods of Production

One of the more important phases of technical assistance lying outside of the basic fields of health, education and agriculture, is that of industrial development. At present, programs are operating largely in the field of industrial productivity, since a program in this field should begin with the already existing industries and should be directed toward helping them to improve methods, cut costs, increase quality and lower prices. This, of course, is only one phase of a total industry program, but it is an excellent place at which to begin making efforts toward industrial development.

The organizational pattern which has been adopted in the field of industrial productivity is to establish cooperative technological and investment advisory centers for small and medium industries. This program is also concerned with technical assistance in the field of handicrafts, such as weaving, ceramics, leather working and carving.

Public administration consultative services have been made available to Latin American countries requesting
U. S. technician instructs a weaver at Otavalo, Ecuador, in the use of an improved hand loom.

them. In addition, a regional public administration pool, made up of specialists who are available for short-term assignments, support the individual consultants.

In terms of the greatest needs and based on requests from host governments, specialized assistance is furnished to insure that there will not be a lag between advances in other fields and the fields of industry, public administration and other important technical services. This type of activity makes possible a balanced and well integrated program of technical economic assistance to Latin America.

Point 4 is a quiet, long-range constructive effort of one neighbor helping others. By its very nature it creates closer bonds of human relations. The thousands who come to our shores to study and the hundreds of good workers who go abroad build better understanding and closer friendship. It is a different kind of war. It is freedom's fight where the battleground is in the hearts and minds of men. Communism wins amid ignorance, disease, hunger and despair. Freedom wins where confidence, hope and enlightenment prevail.