

Notes on the Director's Fund

The Trustees of the Institute for Advanced Study established the Director's Fund by a grant of \$120,000 at a special meeting of the Board on December 16, 1947. The relevant portion of the minutes reads:

"There are many fields, in the Director's opinion, in which a beginning could be made. He pointed to two main classifications of effort: (1) the application of scientific methods to fields in which there is really pioneering, and (b) the encouraging of work by men to whom experience in the creative arts has brought deep insight. The Director outlined no specific program for such efforts. His suggestion was that there would be opportunity for exploring new fields outside and beyond the specific areas of the Schools, which in some cases have narrow interests. For this purpose the Director asked that there be members who are not members of the Schools. To accomplish his plan, he asked the Trustees to establish a General Fund of \$120,000 on a five-year basis. This should be used for stipends, memberships and work not at present part of the activities pursued at the Institute. He suggested an Advisory Committee for the use of the fund. The Director expressed the hope that in this way the Institute may carry out its functions in a more experimental way; and thus a coordinate community of scholars may be created.

"This plan was strongly commended and Dr. Fulton suggested that the motion of acceptance of the Director's plan be a vote of confidence in the new Director. On Dr. Weed's suggestion, the fund was designated the Director's Fund.

"The motion was unanimously carried that \$120,000 be appropriated to the Director's Fund from surplus over the next five years; that \$20,000 be made available for the year 1948; that the Fund be used as the Director sees fit.

"In thanking the Trustees, the Director expressed the hope that if any areas of work suggested themselves for this Fund, that the Trustees would discuss them with him."

A brief report on the use and value of the Director's Fund has been published in the Director's Report of March 10, 1954; and reads:

"There are many fields in which we could well be active, but which happen, for reasons of history or accident, not to be represented on our Faculty. It has been the continuing policy of the Institute, where possible without interference with its other programs, to support such undertakings. Where the Institute's funds are not involved, the Faculty has been glad to vote membership to obviously competent and distinguished men from fields of true scholarship.

"From 1948 on, however, we have had, in the form of the Director's Fund, a means of providing grants from Institute funds, grants which would not be directly competitive with the stipend funds of the schools. In this way some twenty men have been brought to the Institute in the intervening years: in biology, in philosophy, in the history of ideas and literary history and criticism, in law and in contemporary history.

"Members whose work is supported by the Director's Fund, or by foundations (we have found the foundations, particularly the Ford, Carnegie, Guggenheim and Rockefeller Foundations, most helpful indeed in supporting these undertakings), are elected to membership by the Faculty of the school in which they work. Such members have written, among many others, at least a few books of relatively wide interest and circulation. Examples are Herbert Feis' 'The China Tangle'; George Kennan's 'American Diplomacy'; Francis Fergusson's 'The Idea of a Theatre'. These appointments have served not only to extend, but to add coherence to, the work of the schools, in particular the School of Historical Studies.

"In some cases, we have found it desirable to appoint an advisory committee to consult with us about the qualification of members. This we have done in psychology*. In other fields our own Faculty and those whom we can readily consult provide counsel. The Director's Fund has also made possible a few preliminary conferences--in law, in contemporary history and in psychology, for instance--which were helpful in determining our proper course.

"* E. G. Boring, Harvard University; J. S. Bruner, Harvard University; H. S. Langfeld, Princeton University; P. E. Meehl, University of Minnesota; G. A. Miller, Massachusetts Institute of Technology; E. C. Tolman, Berkeley; and R. S. Tolman, Pasadena."

It will be observed that the initial expectations have been largely fulfilled, but that the Fund has provided support for seven years rather than the initially contemplated five; that in all cases members who have been supported by the Fund have been elected to membership by the relevant Faculty; and that we have resorted to a formal advisory committee only in the field of psychology. At the present time there remains an unexpended balance of some \$8,500 in the Director's Fund. Past expenditures have been for seminars and for grants to members primarily in the fields of literature, philosophy, psychology, law, contemporary history, the history of science and biology. A large part of the support for many of these members has come from outside sources. Thus Kennan and Feis have been supported by the Ford and Rockefeller Foundations, Palfrey by the Carnegie Corporation, Guerlac by Cornell University, White, Miller, Bruner and Wald by Harvard University.

Operations based on the Director's Fund cannot continue beyond 1955 on the basis of the appropriation made in 1947. It is my belief that this Fund has made it possible for the Institute to support worthy, interesting, relevant undertakings which have added greatly to the vitality of our program and community, and that means should be established for continuing these operations on a modest scale.

1. Literature

Francis Fergusson, 1948-49
Kenneth Burke, 1949
E. R. Curtius, 1949
A. Chakravarty, 1951
E. Auerbach, 1949-50
Perry Miller, 1953-54

2. Philosophy

Jean de Menasce, 1951 and 1953
Morton White, 1953-54

3. Psychology

Planning Conference on Methods of
Psychology, 1949-50
Jerome S. Bruner, 1951-52
E. C. Tolman, 1952
David Levy, 1951-52 and 1952-53
J. Piaget, 1954
Hans Wallach, 1954-55

4. Law

Max Radin, 1949 and 1950
Conference on Legal Problems
(John Lord O'Brian), 1949-50
Conference on Legal Problems
(Edward S. Greenbaum), 1949-50
John Palfrey, 1950-51 and 1951-52
Mark DeWolfe Howe; expected for 1955-56

5. Contemporary History

George Kennan, 1950-51, 1951-52, 1953-54, 1954-55
Herbert Feis, 1951-52 and 1952-53
Seminars on Problems of U. S. Foreign Policy-1949-52
(Dean Acheson), 1953-54

6. History of Science

Chauncey D. Leake, 1950 and 1952
Henry Guerlac, 1954-55

7. Biology

A. Szent-Gyorgyi, 1950
George Wald, 1954