

WORLD TRAFFIC IN EDUCATION

"THERE are 30,000 foreign students in the United States today, as well as thousands of mature leaders who are studying our techniques and society. Likewise, thousands of American teachers and students are abroad on educational missions."

Donald Jay Shank, executive vice-president of the International Institute of Education, made this statement to *The Listener* last week to give some idea of the network of educational exchanges which exists between the United States and other countries of the world. Mr. Shank has been visiting New Zealand in the course of a tour of countries connected with his organisation.

"A large proportion of these exchanges come under our care, the biggest number through the Fulbright scheme, for which we are the contracting agent with the United States Government," he said. "The Fulbright scheme, which operates among 40 nations, has been so successful that it may be extended beyond the 20 years planned under the original treaty agreement eight years ago, although in some countries it has expired already," he said. "We also handle a number of other schemes, such as Unesco Fellowships."

Mr. Shank explained that he was here to talk to universities and committees

handling the exchange of students, and would visit nine countries in the next eight weeks. After leaving New Zealand he would go to Australia, then on to the Philippines, Indonesia, Malaya, Burma, Pakistan, Iraq, Iran and Turkey.

Outlining the aims of the Institute of International Education, he said that Elihu Root and its other founders in 1919 were working a good deal on faith. They believed sincerely that exchange programmes could contribute to the raising of social and economic levels throughout the world, to improved understanding among nations, and to peace. This belief was shared by many national leaders, and President Eisenhower had written shortly before his election, supporting the aims of the Institute in the following words:

I firmly believe that educational exchange programmes are an important step towards world peace. Because of failures in human relationships, my generation has suffered through two world wars. The threat of another will not be removed until the peoples of the world come to know each other better; until they understand each other's problems, needs and hopes. Exchange-of-persons programmes can contribute immeasurably to such understanding.

Mr. Shank said that although he had quoted figures it was not the numbers of persons who participated in exchanges which was significant so much as the type and quality of the programmes which were developed. He stressed the

importance of careful selection of individuals, wise orientation, sound educational and training assignments, and a full and rich experience in the host country. Otherwise such exchanges might do more harm than good. He mentioned that there had been some such failures in the exchange schemes, for instance among some African students and other "men and women of dark or yellow skin." The always intangible and complex goal of international understanding would never be easy.

The Institute of International Education was one of those strange American organisations which he didn't think existed in other countries, he said. The British Council in England had similar aims, but it was supported by Government grants, whereas the Institute was supported by private organisations, which was of course more in the American tradition. Strongest support came from a dozen or so of the major foundations such as the Carnegie Corporation, the Rockefeller Foundation, the Ford Foundation, the Dodge Foundation and the Doris Duke Foundation. Cash grants were also received from American colleges and universities, from private corporations, from wealthy individuals, and from government contracts. The Institute had an income of one and a quarter million dollars and dispersed five million dollars a year in cash grants to

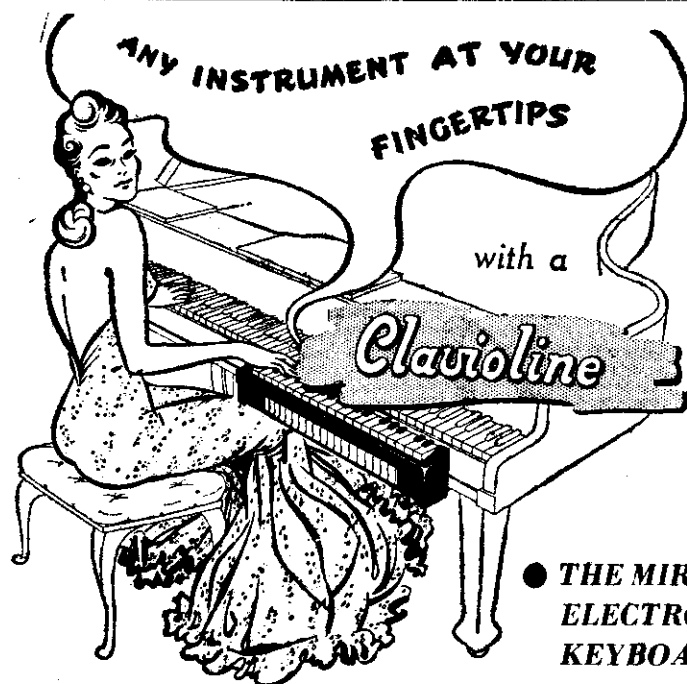
universities. It answered 100,000 enquiries a year about all kinds of exchange programmes.

The Institute had expanded five-fold since the Second World War, he said. Before the war it operated mainly through the six major Western European countries, though it also had a Latin American programme of educational exchanges before the American government adopted the Good Neighbour policy. For instance, in 1938 the proportion was 75 per cent. Western Europe and 25 per cent. Latin America, but now its activities were spread throughout the world.

Competition was toughest among American students to come to the United Kingdom, Australia, and New Zealand, he said, because these countries presented no language problem. As far as New Zealand was concerned, exchanges had been successful in both directions.

To study the long-term results of exchanges, a private research organisation called the Social Science Research Council had recently started on a five-year project, he said. It involved "a serious attempt to measure the impact of study experience at intervals of five years and 15 years after the experience." The Council was particularly interested in investigating the attitudes of students, first of all to the idea of international co-operation, and secondly to the country in which they had been studying, he said.

Donald Jay Shank was born in Barberton, Ohio, 44 years ago, and went to



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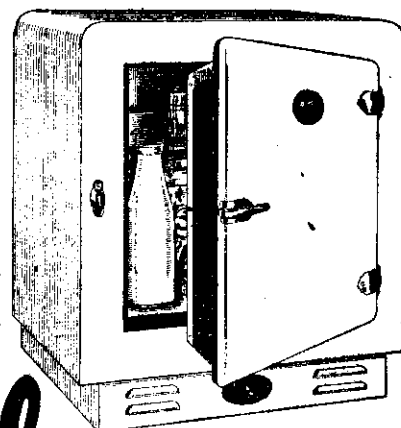
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