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Report on the 1947 Salzburg Seminar.

1.) General evaluation.

A "Seminar in American Civilization" meets an urgent need in European intellectual life. There have already been organized many international meetings and camps of students all over Europe, but until now no attempt has been made by American scholars to give European students, future intellectuals and teachers a systematic scientific interpretation of American civilization. At the same time when the American nation plays an important part in all the affairs of the continent, the picture of the U.S. in the minds of almost all of the Europeans is very superficial, having been built out of different sources, f.i. newspapers, magazines, movies, plays, fiction, allied and nazi war-propaganda, letters from emigrants reflecting their personal experiences, impressions of the American army and so on. There are, as far as I know, no scientific institutions in Europe dealing entirely and thoroughly with American problems. The educational system and the methods of scientific research used in U.S. universities are only known by reports in Europe and have become ideas without life.

On the other hand, the American scholar who addresses an audience of European students and has to answer their questions and to make clear his point of view, will not only get an impression of the European way of thinking about the States, but also a deeper understanding of European problems which he may use in the benefit of his students in his country.

For these reasons the topic of the Salzburg Seminar is well chosen and shall not be altered. But this topic has in itself a second merit, because it favors the mutual understanding in the group of students by giving them the feeling of - being non-American - as a first common basis. The overcoming of the different nationalisms is one of the main problems of our time. The impression of being held by Americans primarily for a European and not for native of this or that nation is an important psychological factor.

2.) Academic program.

I do not want to enumerate the problems the Staff must have faced when choosing the disciplines to be covered and the members of the faculty. It is, and will be impossible to meet the demands of students with that various interests. The selective work out of which the actual series of lectures and seminars has eventually emerged must be considered as very successful. The program has fundamentally been fulfilled, disadvantages resulted mostly out of the fact that members of the faculty could not stay the scheduled time and that many students arrived much too late. The main problem for the future is that of either specialization or more general introduction in different disciplines. The problem can only be considered in connection with that of the homogeneity or heterogeneity of the body of students. There were students already trained in the fields that were dealt with in the seminar, students of English and American literature, economics and some

of history. On the other hand, there were students trained in the fields corresponding to those dealt with. By selecting students from all over Europe a group with a comparatively homogeneous scholarly background will only be found in the fields first mentioned. It is obvious that a student of political sciences or law, and probably each openminded student, will be reluctant to spend most of his time in specializing, say in political theory, thus losing the opportunity of attending other lectures and seminars, an opportunity he knows to be unique in his university years. One of the aims, as Clemens Heller put it, is to help future teachers on American subjects. But these men will probably have to lecture on the topics, which, in Leopoldskron as in U.S. colleges, were covered by several professors. And even when you get a student who specializes f.i. in diplomatic history, he will certainly be interested in the other fields. In my opinion a way to intensify the work in future seminars would be to select the applicants as early as possible, to ask them in which field they intend to specialize and then ask them to read this or that book and if those books are not available in their country, to send them. The effect would be that the seminars could count on members with a certain common knowledge, who will be able to do more valuable work than the 1947 members. This would, to a certain degree, solve the question of reading. It can probably not be expected that very much reading will ever be done by students who want to get the most possible out of their Leopoldskron weeks. Another point is that students whose native tongue may be everyone but English, will sooner become tired when specializing in a restricted discipline. It cannot be expected that in these fields, a summer school of foreign students will produce a research work of considerable scientific value. The main value will consist in the exchange of ideas, in progressive mutual understanding and in giving the basis for future work by progressing to and analyzing basic essential ideas on which the student can rely. This end I consider as satisfactorily reached already this year.

But when the emphasis should be laid on specialization, the schedule must be altered. Overlapping would be inevitable, and it would be better to stress the seminar work by putting it in the morning schedule. But I think that a schedule similar to that of this year would be of more value for the students. I do not think that it will be an ideal to get a homogeneous body of students, even if it would be possible which I doubt. The first obstacle will again and again be the different degrees of command of the English language, the second the technical impossibility of previous evaluation, the third the existing differences in the various European countries which cannot be forced to fit in a pattern. I agree with the proposal to exclude students who only want to improve their English (and those who do not want that, too!) and I suggest that undergraduate students who are only in their first or second year of university study should better not be invited. But a general pattern the students should comply with cannot mechanically be established. The students should be personally selected by staff members or by people of their confidence. The selection by European professors, at least in my country, has been proved as very unfortunate, and the selection by any organization will tend to be biased.

Some more remarks on the subjects to be covered: The principle should be not to give the most of information, but to stimulate students to look at the U.S. from various points of view, I do

not believe that it would be favorable to enlarge the program by including natural sciences and technics, but I would think it valuable to have lectures in fine arts and music and to choose some students of these disciplines to participate, which would also contribute to the vitality of the body of students. I would like that future students of my own faculty will be given an opportunity to specialize in one part of American law or legal theory. I know that it will be difficult to choose the subject to deal with and I do not think it appropriate to deal with cases or details of procedure. Something like analyzing labor legislation or administrative law could be taken in consideration. A seminar in international law would certainly be interesting, but I think it exceeds the subject of American civilization and is very often discussed in other international meetings.

In general I suggest to go further on in the direction taken in 1947, at least for next year. But I wish the Leopoldskron Summer School will develop, in the course of some years, to a real College in American Civilization on European soil, where students of all European nations will congregate and work for a half or one year on different subjects of American civilization.

3.) Community life.

In the benefit of its aims, the Salzburg Seminar has to create an atmosphere of mutual understanding, tolerance, and the sense that members of the seminar, faculty, assistants and students, are a body with a common task. When leaving Leopoldskron every member shall refer to it as to "his" (or "her") seminar. Every means to reach this end must be employed.

Some remarks and suggestions: It is of the greatest importance that all members arrive in time and stay for the whole session. When you want to start the work on July 15, try to have all the members in Leopoldskron on July 10. - The first thing to do is to give members the opportunity to get used to each other and to make friends. The first step is to split up the national groups, at the very moment of their arrival, and this is true as well for the Europeans as for the Americans. This year the relations between faculty members and students were better and closer than those between assistants and students. (With exceptions, specially I would like to mention Mr. Jeremy Blanchet as the unanimously best-liked assistant in the Seminar.) This year there were members of different nations in each dormitory, but mostly no American. I would suggest not to invite couples, who tend to stick together, especially if the wives are not greatly interested in the ends of the seminar. (Again exceptions, as Mr. and Mrs. George Ritter). I would favor the participation of a group of at least seven unmarried female American students. In the whole I think that the percentage of female students should be somewhat increased. I admit that the experience of 1947 will make this proposal incomprehensible, but I am convinced that the participation of female students is of great importance for the mood of the seminar and that there will be found many girls or women who comply fully with the scientific demands of the seminar. Specially in the first weeks, informal "extracurricular activities" should be favored. F.i., start the program with a bus trip to the Glockner or a Salzkammergut lake and let the members have a picnic. People will feel less embarrassed afterwards and will participate more cheerfully in the common work.

As at the festivals, I do think that having them at the same time

with the seminar is a lucky coincidence. The proposal to hold the seminar at a time before the festivals begin, so that only two weeks of the festivals would coincide with the seminar, is 1) unworkable, because most of the European universities end their activities only during July, 2) because during those two weeks the festivals would really endanger the program. I think it would be valuable if a small group of 1947 seminar members would again participate in 1948. The end of that measure would be to carry on the already established tradition.

Extracurricular activities in the castle: give the members a chance to chat in the evening in two or three smaller rooms, and an opportunity to dance if they like to do so. Two or three concerts on the terrace or in the hall will be appreciated, but take in account that the program should last for an hour and not much more, the experience proves that only a small group of the members is really interested in serious music. In the dining hall I think it better to remove the big table and put some small tables in its place if possible.

I suggest to follow the practice of hotels and provide the members of the seminar with notepaper and postcards with a head reading "Salzburg Seminar in American Civilization" and maybe a small drawing of a corner of the castle or something like that, as a valuable measure for publicity.

4.) My own experience.

I believe that the Leopoldskron time is much too recent as to evaluate objectively what I got out of the seminar.

As a student of law who probably will enter the Austrian diplomatic service when graduated, I did not intend to do a very specialized work in a certain field, but to get a general (which does not mean superficial) survey of American civilization, with the emphasis on public life. This should enable me in the future to evaluate American problems and the problems of America's position in the world in unbiased, scientific terms. I believe that I have succeeded in this far better than I expected. The picture of this part of American civilization, which resulted for me out of the lectures and seminars of Prof. McDonald, Prof. Wright, Prof. Leontief, Prof. Rostow, Mr. Bryson, Mrs. Dr. Mead and Mrs. Davies could be compared with a radiograph I exchanged for the photo I had before. The seminar of Prof. McDonald, by dealing for a long time with questions arising out of the two-party-system, has been immensely instructive by leading in the very heart of this for the European very intricate problem. In general, I feel now able to improve my knowledge by reading without the difficulties in understanding I had before, f.i., when reading Beard's Republic two years ago. It is obvious that my command of the English language has greatly improved. As a footnote: when I arrived in Salzburg, Americans said I had a Limey accent, on the other hand, Englishmen I met in Tyrol at the end of August told me that I have a nasty American accent.-

I greatly enjoyed the opportunity to meet natives of so many nations in Leopoldskron, and I am glad that tensions which were to be felt in the first weeks have almost disappeared. In the intricate position of son of an Austrian official put in a concentration camp by the Nazis and member of one of the oldest underground antifascist groups in conquered Europe on one side, and on the other as former soldier in the German occupation army of France, and American prisoner of war, I am entitled to know the feelings

of both sides of former belligerents. The feeling of distrust and even of hatred against a human being as member of a collective is, and I think it natural, still very deep in the minds of most of our students. It is therefore valuable, that by contemplating fellow-members of the seminar as human beings as such, by making exceptions of an accepted rule (or bias), the way is open, not to make the exception to a generalization, but to eliminate generalizing prejudices and biases. Personally, I can say that I made friends with boys and girls of various countries, got concrete invitations to stay in Italy and Denmark, and was told not to forget to see them when coming in their country by some 30 or 40 seminar members. I think that I have also been able to make foreign students familiar with problems of my country. I was told that one of my fellow-countrymen (I do not know who) has felt depressed by somehow being a guest in his own country and "at the mercy" of the Americans. I want to state that my impression was even contradictory, and I think that my other countrymen of Leopoldskron will agree with me. Whenever there was a situation which could create a psychological difficulty, it was mastered by the American members with a tactful easyness which I really admired.

I want to conclude with the expression of my thankfulness for having had the opportunity to participate in the Salzburg Seminar 1947, and of my admiration for the job which has been done under so difficult conditions, and only could be done by men with both idealism and skill combined.

Signed: Felix Pronay