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LEADERSHIP TRAINING IN MICHIGAN

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During the past year, the first group of students in Michigan's Kellogg Farmers Study Program completed the three-year study-travel curriculum. This report will review the purpose, the implementation, and some of the results of this experimental program in leadership training which was made possible by the Kellogg Foundation. A recent report to the Foundation said:

Now, more than ever, the need for informed, enlightened leadership in rural America is apparent. Many of the changes in the organization and industrialization of agriculture are continuing at rapid rates. The recent focus on rural poverty has made more visible a long-standing, but not well-understood problem. Changing political structures, urban housing, the struggle for civil rights by minority groups, and increasing U.S. involvement with and commitments to other countries of the world are all situations for which understanding and workable solutions can be obtained only through the efforts of aggressive, well-informed leadership.

These are not problems of *only* rural people *or* urban people *or* a single state. They are problems of our society and the world. This, precisely, is what is least well understood by many citizens—leaders and followers alike.

Against this background, an experimental program was begun three years ago. Financed by the W. K. Kellogg Foundation, the Kellogg Farmers Study Program is designed to help develop and encourage capable leadership for Michigan's agriculture and rural communities. In the program, a select group of young, potential rural leaders engage in a broadening educational experience. The two main objectives are: (1) to build a better understanding of the economic, social, and political framework of our society, and (2) to use this framework to analyze the complex problems facing agriculture, rural communities, the nation, and the world.

The Foundation grant calls for three groups of 30 individuals to be selected in three consecutive years, and for each group to participate in a three-year program of study and travel. Each first-year participant spends approximately 25 days away from his farm business to attend study institutes and a state-wide traveling seminar. Second-year participants spend approximately 33 days in study and travel, including a two-week national traveling seminar. In the third year, participants spend about 45 days in activities which include a four- to six-week international travel experience.

Each year over a thousand individuals and organizations were invited to nominate candidates. The principal eligibility criteria were

that participants should be successful farmers, approximately 25 to 35 years of age, who are committed to farming as their chief means of livelihood and who have demonstrated some leadership ability and shown definite signs of further leadership potential.

In the three years, 881 young farmers were nominated and 371 applications were returned (108 of these were renewals from previous years). Visits by our staff were made to 266 farms. Each year about 50 candidates and their wives were invited to a two-day seminar at Michigan State University for final interviews and orientation. From these, 30 were selected each year.

These 90 young farmers ranged from 24 years to 39 years of age and averaged 31 years. Twenty-nine had a college degree, 12 others had one to three years of college, and 34 a year or more in short courses at Michigan State University. Only 15 had not gone beyond high school. An effort was made to make sure that all sections of the state and all types of farms were represented.

A summary of activities for 1967-68 will give a reasonably good picture of the nature of a full three-year program.

GROUP III: YEAR I

The first year of the program for Group III included three week-long study institutes in December, January, and February, and a one-week traveling seminar in March. These activities required participants to be away from their farm business for a total of 21 days. Two two-day study institutes, which included the wives, were held in July and August. The attendance of Group III participants was nearly perfect.

Curriculum

The subject matter areas and the number of classroom hours devoted to each topic during the first-year program for Group III are summarized below:

ECONOMICS

Elements of the Pricing System	5½ hours
Review of the Pricing System	1½ hours
Money and Banking	4½ hours
The Federal Reserve System	1½ hours
Review of Money and Banking	1½ hours
State and Local Finance	5 hours

POLITICAL SCIENCE

American System of Government	5½ hours
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Michigan State Court System	1½ hours
State and Local Government in Michigan	5 hours
Look at Michigan Government	1½ hours

COMMUNICATIONS

Reading More Effectively	5 hours
Development of the Individual for Communications	10 hours
Group Communications	10 hours
Role of Mass Media in Society	2 hours

SOCIOLOGY

Changing Composition of the Population	1 hour
Problems and Prospects of Farm Organizations	1 hour
Personal Dimensions of Poverty	2 hours
Problems of the Inner City and Their Relation to Rural America	2 hours
The New Mood in the Black Community and the Role of Whites	2 hours
The People Left Behind	2 hours
The USDA Interest in the Development of Rural Areas	1½ hours
America as a Mass Society	5 hours

APPLIED PHILOSOPHY

Ethics vs. Morality in Society	2 hours
Values and Beliefs in American Agriculture	4 hours

THE ARTS

Understanding Ballet for Enjoyment	1½ hours
National Ballet of Canada: <i>Swan Lake</i>	

NATURAL RESOURCES

Water Resource Development and Use	1½ hours
The Challenge of Recreation Resources	1½ hours
Farm Recreation Enterprises	2 hours
Michigan's Timber Economy	2 hours
Fish and Game—Potential Income Producing Enterprises	2 hours

State Traveling Seminar

The day spent with state legislators proved to be the highlight of the state traveling seminar. Legislators were eager to participate, and several legislators attended a special luncheon with the partici-

pants. Each participant attended either a House or Senate session, and many were able to attend a morning committee meeting with their senators or representatives.

The sessions in Detroit were modified from previous years to cover more adequately the problems of the inner city. At the Brewster-Douglas Housing Settlement the group met with 30 to 40 people from the housing project. Two of the program participants and two people from the housing project made ten-minute presentations on (1) health and medical services and (2) education and youth opportunity. Small discussion groups were formed in which honest and direct questions were asked without embarrassment by either of the groups involved. This session was rated very high by the participants. The people in the housing project have requested that this be included in any future visits by such groups.

GROUP II: YEAR 2

The second year of the program included three week-long study institutes on the Michigan State University campus, a two-week national traveling seminar, and two two-day summer institutes in which the wives participated. Participants were away from their farms a total of 33 days to attend these sessions. Every participant attended at least a major part of every scheduled activity, and all 30 participants took part in the national traveling seminar.

Curriculum

A heavy emphasis on communications skills was continued in the second year. In other subject areas, the focus was primarily on national problems and policies. Participants were told about the possible international travel opportunities during the last year of the program because each participant will be paying approximately one-half of the travel cost.

Group I and Group II were on the MSU campus at the same time during January. This provided an excellent opportunity for them to get better acquainted and to share ideas. All meals were eaten together, and some of the sessions designed in preparation for international travel were attended by participants from both groups.

Subject matter areas included in the second year program for Group II and the number of classroom hours devoted to each topic are given below:

ECONOMICS

Background on Structure and Characteristics of
American Labor

1½ hours

Some Current Issues in Labor-Management Relations	1½ hours
Visits with Labor and Management	5 hours
U.S. Monetary and Fiscal Policy	4½ hours
Sources and Uses of Agricultural Data	2 hours
Michigan Property Tax—Eliminate or Reform?	2 hours
A Case Study of the Milk Industry	2 hours
A Case Study in Market Performance and Group Action—The Tart Cherry Industry	2 hours
Marketing Cost Studies (participants were divided into five groups to research a case study problem in advance of the study institute, prepare a presentation with the aid of a staff consultant, and conduct a 1½ hour seminar on the topic)	15 hours
An Exercise in Decision Making for a Producers' Marketing Organization	3 hours
U.S. Agricultural Policy	5 hours

POLITICAL SCIENCE

The Federal Executive Branch: How Does It Really Work?	5 hours
Comparative Political Systems	5 hours

APPLIED PHILOSOPHY

Attitudes and Values in Modern Society	5 hours
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COMMUNICATIONS

Communications in Large Group Settings (participants spent 1½ days during one of the week-long study institutes in a concentrated communications session)	14 hours
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THE ARTS

Cultural Expressions in Art	2 hours
Background for a Symphony	1 hour
Royal Philharmonic Orchestra	2 hours

SPECIAL TOPICS

Triple A to Triple F—The Challenge of World Hunger	3 hours
A Visit with Mr. Glenn Lake, President, Michigan Milk Producers Association	2 hours
A Visit with Mr. Robert Eggert, Marketing Research Manager, Lincoln Mercury Division, Ford Motor Company	2 hours

Technological Change in American Agriculture	2 hours
A Visit with Mr. Elton Smith, President, Michigan Farm Bureau	2 hours
In Search of the American Dream: A Geographer's Commentary	5 hours
A Visit with Mr. Glen Utley, Board of Directors, National Farmers Organization	2 hours
Long-Run Future of Food Marketing in the United States	2 hours
A Visit with Dean T. K. Cowden and Director George McIntyre	2 hours
Photography with a Purpose	1½ hours

National Traveling Seminar

The national traveling seminar consisted of three separate parts. In Washington, D.C., the group had contact with the legislative, judicial, and executive branches of government as well as with representatives of the American Farm Bureau Federation, the National Grange, and the National Farmers Organization. Each participant had an opportunity to spend time with his Congressman. Each Congressman met at least briefly with his constituents and also arranged for guided tours of the Capitol area and attendance at various hearings.

In the South, the focus was on seeing first hand some of the plans, projects, and results of TVA. Participants had a chance to visit with TVA personnel from various areas and to visit farms, fertilizer plants, and watershed projects.

The California portion of the trip was designed to provide a balanced look at agriculture, industry, education, and government. Participants had opportunities to meet with agricultural growers in various types of enterprises and also to visit grower organizations and processing and marketing facilities. The stop in Sacramento included a one-half hour visit with State Assembly Speaker Jesse Unruh and sessions with the chairmen of both the Senate and Assembly Agriculture Committees.

GROUP I: YEAR 3

The third year of the program for Group I included two three-day summer institutes during 1967, two week-long study institutes on the MSU campus, a five-week international traveling seminar, a one-day seminar on the MSU campus, and a three-day summer institute in 1968, in which wives participated. These activities required participants to be absent from their farm businesses for 50 days. There

was perfect attendance throughout the year. Two dairy farmers officially dropped from the program at the end of the second year because of the difficulty of obtaining competent labor so they could attend institutes. Twenty-seven participated in the international traveling seminar which lasted either 33, 34, or 37 days depending on their itinerary.

Curriculum

The third-year curriculum for Group I drew heavily from the international trade and economic development areas. The curriculum also concentrated on the cultural heritage of vast groups of people through the avenue of religion. Considerable time was also spent in orientation sessions on the particular countries to be visited. The subject matter areas and the number of classroom hours devoted to each topic are shown below:

ECONOMICS

World Trade Issues	1½ hours
International Trade	5 hours
Economic Development	10 hours
Industrialization of American Agriculture	1 hour
The European Economic Community and U.S. Agricultural Policy	3½ hours

POLITICAL SCIENCE

U.S. Foreign Policy	5 hours
European Policies and Institutions	1½ hours

COMMUNICATIONS

A Universal Communications Problem	3 hours
How to Organize an Effective Meeting	1½ hours

SOCIOLOGY AND RELIGION

The World of Islam	3 hours
Hinduism	3 hours
Current Religious Trends in Christendom	1½ hours
Communism as a Religious Force	1½ hours
Buddhism	3 hours

EDUCATION

European Educational Systems	1½ hours
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INTERNATIONAL TOPICS

European Farm Organization	1½ hours
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South America—Its People and Problems	1½ hours
Land Reform in South America	1½ hours
An Overall Perspective of Asia	2½ hours
A Geographer Looks at Asia	2½ hours
European Group Orientation (an orientation to France, Germany, or Italy for the participants of the traveling seminar)	3½ hours
South America, Africa, and Asia Group Orientation (an orientation to the continental areas for the participants of the traveling seminar)	12½ hours

GENERAL TOPICS

Triple A to Triple F	3 hours
Taking Informative Pictures	1 hour
The Michigan Farm Bureau	1½ hours
Sensitivity Training	3½ hours

ART FORMS

Shakespearean Theater	2 hours
<i>Romeo and Juliet</i>	
Background for a Symphony	1 hour
Royal Philharmonic Orchestra of England	

Summer Study Institutes

One one-day institute was held soon after all groups returned from the international traveling seminar to exchange slides and to verify facts and information obtained during the trip. A three-day summer institute, in which wives participated, completed the third-year program for Group I. This institute was utilized for the exchange of information between groups and to crystallize the participants' thoughts concerning international trade and political issues in light of their overseas experiences.

International Traveling Seminar

The international traveling seminar was a program in which each participant spent approximately a week and a half in Europe and then approximately three weeks in developing countries in Asia, Africa, or South America. Each of the groups was exposed to traditional agriculture, marketing institutions, United States Agency for International Development personnel, government officials in the respective countries, and Foundation and University personnel. Each group had a cross section of experiences involving agriculture, agricultural life,

government institutions, educational institutions, and industry in each of the developing areas.

Contacts for all of the programs were arranged by mail and turned out to be extremely good. In many cases MSU staff personnel or former staff members on location were able to make local arrangements. In other cases, Foundation personnel were available and did an excellent job in providing appropriate experiences and contacts for the group.

Undoubtedly, the high point of the participants' total experiences in the Kellogg Farmers Study Program has been the international traveling seminar. One participant summed it up succinctly in the middle of the rural areas of West Pakistan when he said, "You can talk about Pakistan, we can read about Pakistan, but we can never really believe or understand it until we see, feel, and smell it."

The participants were surprised not only with the friendliness with which they were received throughout the world but also with the frankness and willingness of people to criticize actions and motives of the United States. Their exposure throughout the world has increased their awareness of the position of the United States in world affairs and their responsibility as U.S. citizens.

Evidence of Change

One of the most apparent changes within the group during the three years was their ability to raise relevant questions. They appear to have a much greater willingness to listen to and evaluate another's point of view and refrain from making snap judgments. Group I had individuals at both extremes of the liberal-conservative spectrum. This helped compel the other participants in the group to consider every angle on any question. The participants seem to have recognized the complexity of many of the problems facing society and the fact that there are no clear-cut answers that satisfy everyone.

Above all, there appears to be more concern for others in the world and a willingness to consider participation in community activities. One participant has become very active on the agricultural committee of one of Michigan's political parties. As individuals, they have developed a more acute awareness of the "city," the "South," and the countries that they visited.

The 30 participants are as fully committed to agriculture as when they began. Of the 30 original participants, 28 are still farming full time—in almost every case, with a larger business than three years ago. Two participants have decreased their direct farming activities.

One has become an agricultural banker, yet continues the farming partnership with his father. The other now puts a major portion of his time into farm real estate sales.

The Group I participants wish to continue the study interests that have been generated by the program. They are considering a meeting once a year similar to the three-day summer institutes. These will be conducted at their expense. The group is also planning to develop some system of distributing relevant materials in the areas that have been studied.

FUTURE PROGRAMS

The original project proposal to the Kellogg Foundation provided for three groups of 30 farmers each to participate in programs of three years' duration, a new group beginning each of the first three years of the project. On the basis of the success of this project during its first three years of operation, it seemed desirable to continue the effort beyond the original three groups.

By preserving as much of the budget from the Kellogg Foundation grant as possible for direct support of the fellows, enough grant funds were available to anticipate financing a portion of the program for at least one more group. After discussing various alternatives with Kellogg Foundation personnel, it was decided that a fourth group of 30 Michigan farmers should be selected in the fall of 1968 to participate in the Kellogg Farmers Study Program.

While the general format of the program for the fourth group will remain similar to those for the first three groups, several changes are contemplated. One is to ask Group IV fellows to contribute to general program costs at the rate of \$150 per year. This is partly to help finance the program, but also to provide additional incentive for participants to work toward receiving maximum benefits from the program. Fellows will also be asked to contribute toward the national and international traveling seminars, with the amount dependent upon how extensive a traveling program is mutually agreed upon. A modest program contribution toward travel is contemplated. Finally, in order to motivate fellows to participate more strongly in the home-study phase and to use more effectively the library-by-mail, a more highly directed, more tightly structured home study program is planned.

The extension administration in Michigan is now laying the groundwork for carrying the Kellogg Farmers Study Program out to the farmers. Several county agents have requested such a program—partly in response to urging on the part of present Kellogg fellows

who see the need for making it available to more young farmers in their own communities.

A state committee is now planning such a program to begin in the fall of 1969 in perhaps three areas of the state and involving three to six counties in each area. The program will be patterned after the one in progress on a state basis. Since it will be self-supporting, it will be modified accordingly.

Those who have been closely associated with the program strongly feel that through this process it will be possible to develop a farm leadership that can adequately come to grips with the farm problems of the future and hold their own with the leadership of other segments of our society.