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October 30, 1979

TO: Mrs. Mary Farrens, Librarian
FROM: K. C. Nobe *KCNobe*
SUBJECT: Remarks presented at the 1979 AAEA meeting

In response to your request for a copy of my remarks presented at the 1979 AAEA meeting, I must point out that they were made as part of an organized symposia and therefore will not be published. Perhaps you will be interested instead in my outline of these comments (copy of which is enclosed).

Outline of Comments - K.C. Nobe

AAEA/WAEA Meeting, Pullman, Washington
July 30, 1979

Symposia: Needs and Strategies for Improving U.S. Graduate Training
for Work in International Agricultural Development

Topic: Implications for U.S. Universities and International Agencies

1. With particular reference to Africa, but applicable to a degree elsewhere; e.g., the Near East and South-east Asia, our recent survey shows clearly that there has been a decided shift away from a strong relative demand for university employees (research/teaching) along with a tendency toward rapidly increasing demand from public agencies; e.g., Ministries of Agriculture, Central Planning, etc., for employees with needed skills in policy analysis, program evaluation and sector planning, over and above expected proficiency in traditional economic theory, quantitative methods and agricultural economics.
2. Further there is a shift away from the need for a large number of Ph.D. trained LDC nationals toward Master's and B.S. levels--but at the same time there is an increasing demand for U.S. students with Masters Ph.D. level training in these same areas of expertise, both for employment in LDC's and as faculty at U.S. universities to support LDC training.
3. At the present time most U.S. Departments of Agricultural Economics continue to turn out many foreign nationals and U.S. students at both M.S. and Ph.D. levels who make good employees for U.S. and LDC universities and the USDA, but they don't fit all that well as employees of LDC Ministries of Agriculture or Central Planning, or even of international agencies; e.g., USAID, UNDP, FAO, etc.

Specifically, our departments tend to be quite rigid in our degree requirements which include U.S. oriented agricultural production, marketing, agricultural finance, and policy courses--while being deficient in course offerings such as small farm credit, international trade, development policy analysis, project evaluation, public finance, sector planning and public administration of natural resources, and in a lack of focus on LDC problems in conventional courses, e.g., Agricultural Policy.
4. Since the course work deficiency areas are usually both subject matter and geographic specific, it is difficult and expensive for most departments to retool, not to mention finding a use for all the sunk capital in faculty geared to teach only the traditional courses that are institutionalized in our degree requirements. The real issue is we likely will still need our total traditional delivery capacity while "adding on" new programs to service emerging new needs.

5. The problem is not readily solvable either by simply adding on these new speciality course areas--few funding agencies or students are willing to have to invest another year in, say, a Master's degree training program.

6. But--some possible "partial solutions" to consider include the following:

A. A resurgence of LDC based educational institutional building via Title XII; e.g., the "Cornell model" at Las Banos in the Philippines.

B. Establishing non-degree, short-course training institutes within LDC Ministries of Agriculture or Planning--can be staffed with recently trained Ministry employees and with U.S. and other foreign expatriates employed in-country--a "USDA Graduate School model."

C. Teaching of formal courses in-country by U.S. university employees staffing AID-funded projects in the LDC's, to be credited to the degree requirements for the LDC student back at the home U.S. institution--tried that in Lesotho but doesn't work well because of work and training time conflicts for the employees.

D. A variation of a joint U.S.-LDC university degree program where an LDC student, say, would come to the U.S. for a one-year intensive program in courses not available or of comparable quality in-country--will work best if the LDC institution grants the degree while some U.S. professors serve on the thesis committees (being seriously investigated at the moment by the University of Cairo in Egypt and at Roarke University in India).

E. Preparation of "Mobile" short courses, say in development planning or international marketing by U.S. institutions that could be taken on a road show; e.g., a central location in Africa.

F. A serious effort by selected U.S. universities to supplement their traditional degree programs with non-degree programs that focus heavily in some add-on aspects; e.g., CSU is working with Ford Foundation to offer such a program in development policy analysis and program evaluation--could be either year-long or special summer session programs.

One variation would be to let students enrolled in some U.S. traditional programs move for a semester or a summer session to where such programs are offered and then transfer the credits back to their home institution. (For example, one Basotho Master's student enrolled at Michigan is enrolled this summer in CSU's International Marketing School, but the credits will be used to fulfill his MSU degree requirement--a "specialization of labor model."

G. Finally, a few departments may be willing and able to actually modify their degree requirements so as to accommodate students with these new skill requirements--will work best in combined Departments of Economics/Agricultural Economics which generally have greater flexibility in course offerings anyway, and in some few agricultural economics departments that have long-term programs in one or more developing countries, say, under Title XII--the emerging 10-year CID project in

Yemen or the CID project in the Sudan--which will necessitate more sunk capital in development oriented faculty in any case.

In summary, I think that the catch phrase for accommodating the changing needs of students interested in international development is that some major changes in operating procedure will necessarily have to be the order of the day, at least when viewed for the system as a whole. Nonetheless, the overall demand for the outputs of traditionally oriented departments also likely to continue--they too will continue to have LDC students.