
CONSORTIUM OF SOCIAL SCIENCE ASSOCIATIONS

COSSA WASHINGTON UPDATE

Volume VII, Number 17
September 23, 1988

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NIA COUNCIL HEARS SOCIAL SCIENCE RESEARCH PLANS ...

The National Advisory Council on Aging received a briefing on the Behavioral and Social Research (BSR) program of the National Institute on Aging (NIA) at its meeting on September 8. Dr. Matilda White Riley, director of BSR and past president of the American Sociological Association, noted the strong efforts underway in the seven major research areas covered by the program: personality and social psychology, older people in society, behavioral geriatrics, population epidemiology, cognitive functioning, demographics and aging, and health and retirement economics. Special reports on the last three were the focus of the briefing.

Council member Dorothy Rice, of the University of California-San Francisco, described the health and retirement economics program, declaring that it's time to move beyond the medical models of aging and examine the economic and social factors that also play an increasingly important role in the quality of life for the nation's elderly. The program is currently funding about 20 projects at a cost of about \$2.9 million. Rice also outlined the research agenda in this area.

COSSA Washington Update is published 20-24 times per year, normally biweekly, by the Consortium of Social Science Associations (COSSA), 1625 I Street, NW, Suite 911, Washington, D.C. 20006 (202/887-6166). Individual subscriptions are available for \$50.00; institutional subscriptions, \$90.00; overseas airmail, \$90.00. ISSN 0749-4394. COSSA Members, Affiliates, and Contributors are listed on the back. The Update is written and produced by the Consortium's staff: Howard J. Silver, Brian Daly, and Katrina R. Styles.

The Consortium represents more than 185,000 American scientists across the full range of the social and behavioral sciences, functioning as a bridge between the research world and the Washington community.

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It includes studies on: the economic costs of diseases and disability; the differential ability to pay for care; the economic exchanges between generations; the dynamics of impoverishment; the impact of the new catastrophic care law and its impact on long-term care issues; and the nature of transitions to retirement and living alone. Rice also called for greater utilization of cross-national data.

Richard Burkhauser, economics professor at Vanderbilt University and one of the speakers at COSSA's recent congressional seminar on "Older Workers in an Aging Society" (see Update, May 27, 1988), argued for funding a new Retirement History Survey (RHS). He asserted that basing social programs on a data base last collected in 1979 makes it extremely difficult to accurately examine labor markets for the elderly, pension program impacts, and the nature of retirement. The BSR program has held a number of discussions with other agencies and with social scientists to determine possible methods of obtaining new funding for the RHS.

The cognitive functioning program will focus on three major areas, according to Martha Storandt, a former member of the Council and psychology professor at Washington University at St. Louis. The first area will examine human factors in designing environments for the elderly. The program will fund a major new initiative on the effects of aging on driving. The second major area will promote research on how and why intellectual changes occur across one's life span, and how these changes can be affected. The third area will cover research on affect and motivation to determine how the elderly react to changes such as loss of memory.

The demography and aging program, described by George Myers, head of the Center for Demographic Studies at Duke University, will focus on the need for better data collection and cooperation across the federal government, the need for the collection of longitudinal data and international data, the enhancement of training programs, and a greater attention to aging members of racial and ethnic minority groups.

NIA director T. Franklin Williams said he is pleased with the continued good work of the BSR program, though he noted the difficulty of conducting such an important program at insufficient staffing levels. He also called for obtaining a clearer picture of data gaps and overlaps among federal agencies generating data on the elderly.<<

... WHILE HOUSE EXAMINES ISSUES OF AN AGING WORK FORCE

Before government or the private sector can successfully deal with the trends inherent in America's aging work force, there must be a more concerted effort to understand the social and behavioral dynamics underlying those trends. This was one of the

messages delivered by witnesses at a joint congressional hearing on September 14.

Members of the House Select Committee on Aging, chaired by Rep. Edward Roybal (D-CA), and the House Employment Opportunities Subcommittee, chaired by Rep. Matthew Martinez (D-CA), convened the hearing, entitled "State of Older Workers: Current and Future Needs." The joint hearing touched on many of the same issues presented at a COSSA-sponsored congressional breakfast seminar, "Older Workers in an Aging Society," earlier this year (See Update, May 27, 1988).

Labor Secretary Ann McLaughlin and other witnesses at the joint hearing described changes in the demographic landscape that will transform the face of the U.S. work force for decades to come. This transformation will occur in large part as the "baby boom" generation approaches retirement age and the "birth-dearth" children of the 1970's take their places in a shrinking labor pool.

Of particular concern to McLaughlin and others is not the prospect of an aging work force in and of itself, but rather the falling median retirement age, which many expect to continue sliding in the years ahead. Sara Rix, research director of the Women's Research and Education Institute, testified that some analysts are worried that this will quicken the projected deterioration of the ratio of workers to older non-workers as the overall generation of baby boomers retires. This, in turn, would tax the retirement income programs expected to meet the needs of the growing ranks of retirees, an issue that was also discussed at the COSSA seminar.

When asked how the government and private sector could induce employees to work longer, McLaughlin suggested several strategies beyond raising the social security retirement age, which has already been done. The private sector could work to produce a more flexible work atmosphere, expanding such employee options as flex time and job sharing. Business must also explore the creation of retirement and benefit packages that increase the attraction of staying on the job longer. She added that the federal government must be prepared to review all its programs and legislation with an eye toward reforming any policies that might encourage "opting out" of the job pool before normal retirement age.

Roberts Jones, the Labor Department's assistant secretary for employment and training, testified that while a great deal of research has focused on issues of youth employment, little has been done in the way of examining issues in the context of the older worker; he suggested that different approaches to topics such as re-education and training and retirement-postponement incentives must be more thoroughly explored. McLaughlin testified that until such exploration has

occurred, the federal government must concentrate on the more straightforward approach of reassessing legislation and programs as they relate to the older worker.<<

CAFLIS WORKING GROUPS MEET: A NEW NATIONAL ENTITY?

The Coalition for the Advancement of Foreign Languages and International Studies (CAFLIS) held a series of meetings on September 9 to help further its agenda of developing a consensus among many constituencies on how to generate greater support for improving the international competence of Americans.

Three working groups met to discuss how to structure that increased support in the federal government, how to ensure continuation of recent vigorous state and local efforts, and how to create interest and support in the private sector. Much of the discussion focused on whether a new national entity, modeled on a National Science Foundation, National Endowment for the Humanities, or some other grant-giving agency, is necessary to replace the myriad of federal programs currently funding international education, area studies, and foreign language training and teaching. Some participants defended the present system and argued for greater efforts to increase funding for those programs. Others claimed that only a new centralized agency could generate the increased funding in an era of budget deficit-induced limits on federal spending. Clearly no consensus has been achieved yet, but further investigation of possible alternative models will be explored for the next meetings on December 5.

Participants representing state and local efforts did make it clear that any new national entity should not hinder the increased activity spurred by governors' interest in international economic activity during the past few years. Developing anecdotal evidence and stressing the competitiveness argument will be the key to attracting private-sector support for the CAFLIS effort, according to attendees at the meeting. So far, it has been difficult to recruit people from corporations to participate, as corporate concerns are more directed toward basic skills improvement of the work force without acknowledging foreign language competency and international knowledge as part of a basic skills package.

The group heard from Sen. Paul Simon (D-IL), who has written books and introduced legislation concerning this country's deficiencies in international and foreign language education. Simon exhorted those assembled to work harder for this important cause. Barbara Burn, executive director of the 1979 President's Commission on Foreign Language and International Studies, discussed the difficulties faced by this earlier effort to arouse the nation and its government to the problem. Further information about CAFLIS may be obtained from Ms. Lillian Pubillones, Executive Director, CAFLIS, One Dupont Circle, NW, Washington, DC 20036; 202/778-0819.<<

VISA-REVISION LEGISLATION LIKELY TO BE SHELVED AGAIN

It is doubtful that H.R. 4427, a bill repealing the ideological exclusion provisions of the McCarran-Walter Act, will make it to the House floor before the close of the 100th Congress. Overshadowed by an unsupportive administration, gloomy prospects in the Senate, and the possible attachment of negative amendments on the House floor, the bill's supporters are considering re-introduction of the bill next year in what they hope will be a more amicable atmosphere.

The bill, formerly H.R. 1119, had made fairly good progress in the House last spring. Originally introduced by Rep. Barney Frank (D-MA) in April, it was shepherded through the House Subcommittee on Immigration, Refugees, and International Law (see Update, April 15, 1988) before going on to the House Judiciary Committee. It survived the Committee relatively intact, but not without first coming under attack from the Justice Department.

The provisions of the bill regarding the exclusion and deportation of foreigners on the basis of beliefs or ideologies supersede the McCarran-Walter Act. Since its passage in 1952, the Act's visa-denial provisions have been snaring artists, scholars, and other individuals of both high and low profile.

The visa-denial provisions of McCarran-Walter were temporarily repealed earlier this year by an amendment, initiated by Sen. Daniel Patrick Moynihan (D-NY), to the State Department Authorization Act. This repeal will remain in effect until February, 1989 (see Update, January 22, 1988). If passed into law, H.R. 4427 would make the repeal permanent. However, with H.R. 4427's expected demise, the likely strategy will be to secure an extension of the repeal until a new version of H.R. 4427 is passed.

On a brighter side of the free trade issue, President Reagan has signed into law a provision that overturns a long-standing government ban on free trade in publications and other information materials in the context of trade embargoes. The provision, originally opposed by the president, was included in the Omnibus Trade Bill, signed on August 23. The provision does not apply to classified materials. Under prior federal law, trade embargoes could include the banning of import and export of informational materials such as publications, photographs, microfiche, tapes, films, and posters. Such free-trade restrictions have applied to Cuba, North Korea, and other countries.<<

STATISTICS CONFERENCE: NOT FOR STATISTICIANS ONLY

The American Statistical Association has announced its 1989 Winter Conference, to be held in San Diego, CA, January 4-6, 1989. The Conference, which is tutorial and expository in

structure, aims beyond the Association's own membership; scientists interested in the statistical aspects of the social and behavioral sciences are encouraged to participate.

The program will feature invited paper sessions on specialized topics in business statistics, social statistics, and survey research methods; numerous contributed paper sessions, poster sessions, and other continuing education courses. The following are among the topics for invited sessions:

- multilevel analysis
- regression analysis and salary equity
- causal modeling
- cognitive aspects of survey methodology
- social experiments
- survival analysis: applications to economic problems
- application of time series methods to survey data

For further information and registration materials, contact the American Statistical Association, 1429 Duke Street, Alexandria, VA 22314-3402; 703/684-1221.<<

CENSUS BUREAU RESEARCH CONFERENCE ANNOUNCED

The U.S. Department of Commerce has announced that the Census Bureau's Fifth Annual Research Conference (ARC V) will be held March 19-22, 1989, at the National Clarion Hotel in Arlington, Virginia. ARC V will comprise a mix of topics, including nonsampling errors, new techniques in questionnaire design, analysis of complex survey data, and geographic systems. A complete agenda and registration fee have not yet been set for the event, which is expected to draw about 600 participants. For further information, contact Maxine Anderson-Brown, ARC Conference Coordinator, Office of the Director, Bureau of the Census, Washington, DC 20233; 301/763-1150.<<

PEACE INSTITUTE ANNOUNCES 1988-89 FELLOWS

The United States Institute of Peace has announced the appointment of 21 fellows for 1988-89 in its Jennings Randolph Program for International Peace. These appointments were the outcome of the first competition held for all three types of fellowship awards offered by the Program: Distinguished Fellow, Peace Fellow, and Peace Scholar. The fellowships, which usually span one year, will enable scholars, professionals, and university doctoral students to conduct research and education projects focused on international conflict and methods for achieving peace. The recipients represent such fields as diplomacy, law, political science, psychology, sociology, international relations, and economics.<<

SOURCES OF RESEARCH SUPPORT: DEPARTMENT OF STATE

COSSA provides this information as a service, and encourages readers to contact the agency rather than COSSA for further information or application materials.

Bureau of Oceans and International Environmental Affairs

The U.S. National Committee for Man and the Biosphere Program (MAB) seeks proposals for research and projects on one or more the following MAB orientations: ecosystems functioning under different intensities of human impact; management and restoration of human-impacted resources; human investment and resource use; and human response to environmental stress. The Committee recommends that all scientists who intend to participate review the Final Report of the General Scientific Advisory Panel, MAB Report series No. 59, before beginning work on proposals. The report can be obtained from the address and phone number below.

Preferences will be given to proposals which concentrate on one or more of the following target areas: biosphere reserves; biological diversity; global climate and ecological change; the biomes or ecotones of the arctic, arid lands, or tropics; and sustainable/integrated development. Researchers are encouraged to collaborate in developing new interdisciplinary proposals and to seek complementary funds from other sources.

Application Procedure: Proposed ideas must first be submitted as a two- to three-page prospectus. Researchers whose prospectuses are endorsed may then submit a full proposal. Approved proposals will then be funded in order of assigned rank according to available funds.

Restrictions on Awards: Priority will be given to projects requesting \$50,000 or less when endorsed by a single directorate, \$100,000 for a project endorsed by more than one directorate. Overhead fees will not be paid on grants of \$50,000 or less.

Budget: Contingent upon the availability of funding.

Review Process: Peer Review.

Deadlines: November 1, 1988, for prospectuses; May 1, 1989, for full project and research proposals.

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