

Educational Research in Germany

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I. The Institute for International Educational Research

THE INSTITUTE for International Educational Research (*Hochschule fuer Internationale Paedagogische Forschung*) in Frankfurt illustrates that a dream, with planned and persistent pursuit of an idea, can develop into reality.

Forty years ago, Erich Hylla, a young elementary school teacher in Breslau saw the need for educational research in Germany. He kept developing the idea of an institute for further advanced educational study all during his graduate work, high school and college teaching, secondary school administration, and scientific research, writing and publication.

His *Intelligence Testing*, published in 1927, is still recognized as a standard work. Aptitude and achievement tests, developed in 1926 and 1932 in collaboration with Dr. Otto Bobertag, were republished in 1945 and used subsequently in 70,000 cases in the state of Hesse.

In 1926, Mr. Hylla spent a year in the United States at the International Education Institute of Columbia University. In 1928, he published his book in German, *Schools in a Democracy*, a description of the American school system. He also translated into German John Dewey's *Democracy and Education*.

HIS DREAM was rudely shattered by the Nazis in 1933, when he was summarily dismissed from his position as head of the department of elementary education and teacher training in the Prussian ministry of education, a position he had held since 1922. He had also been appointed in 1930 professor of psychology and education at the Teachers College in Halle.

Although driven by the Nazis into private life and study, he was allowed to go to the United States as guest professor in comparative education at Columbia University from 1935-1937 and at Cornell University in 1938. This experience was to pay off during the postwar years in the joint American and German efforts to modify some German educational practices and to give Americans a better understanding of these practices and problems.

The war prevented Mr. Hylla's returning to the United States in 1939, finally drawing him into German military service in 1944 and landing him in a nominal American imprisonment in Landsberg, where his old friend Prof. Thomas Alexander, then chief of public school affairs in the Education Branch, OMGUS, found

him and took him on the Military Government staff as a German consultant.

Mr. Hylla, serving as consultant in higher education in Frankfurt in 1947, met Dr. William L. Wrinkle, then chief of the secondary education section in the Public Education Branch, OMGUS, and now HICOG's educational affairs adviser. Before coming to Germany, Dr. Wrinkle had been professor of secondary education and director of the campus experimental high school at the State College of Education at Greeley in Colorado, having served that institution for 23 years. Through his experience in administering educational programs in Germany, Dr. Wrinkle arrived independently at the same conclusions about educational research in Germany as were entertained by Mr. Hylla.

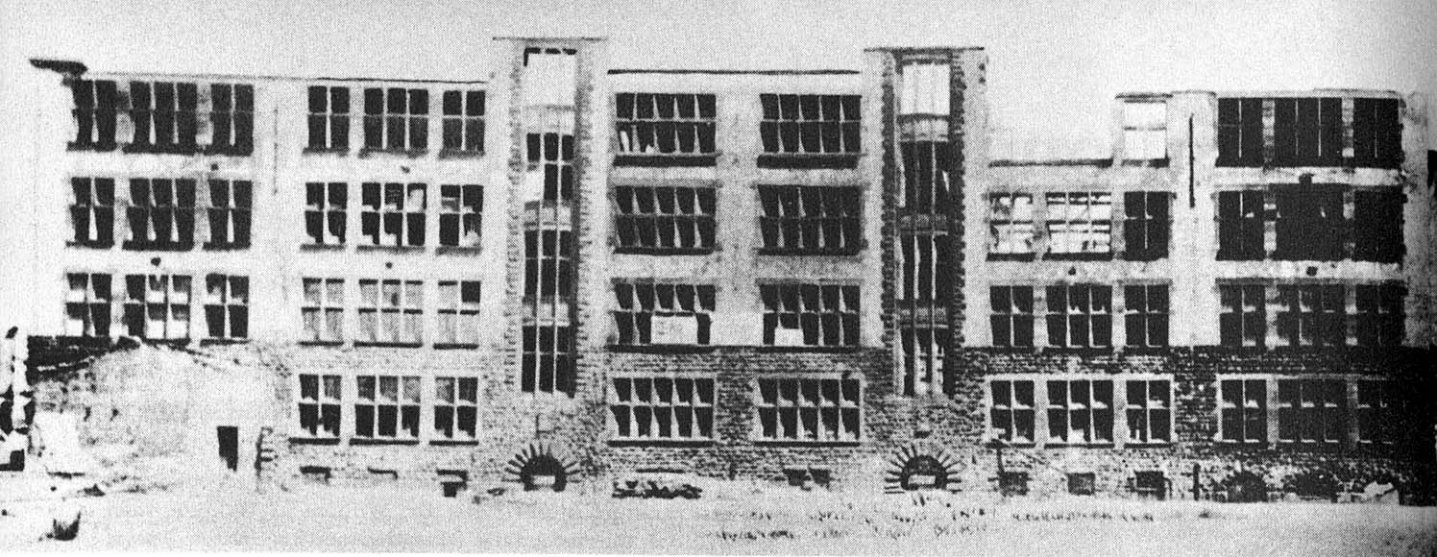
THIS MEETING brought reality to the old dream, now shared by both men, resulting in the association which was to gain the necessary support from German and American sources for the creating of the Institute for International Educational Research. The development of the idea of a graduate school of this type in Germany could never have proceeded to its present successful conclusion without the close cooperation and teamwork of these two educators.

The chance to win German sponsorship came when Dr. Erwin Stein, then minister of education and culture in Hesse and now a judge on the Federal Constitutional Court in Karlsruhe, proposed that an international institute for educational research and advanced studies in education be established in Hesse, a legislative

Discussing plans for the international summer educational workshop are (left to right): Dr. Wrinkle, Mr. Hylla and Dr. Schultze.

(AMCONGEN photos by Hopp)





Rear view of the war-wrecked building before reconstruction but after accumulated rubble had been hauled away.

proposal included in the draft of a teacher education reform bill which never became law.

Professors Hylla and Wrinkle, sensing official German interest in such an institution, approached Dr. Stein in Wiesbaden. As a result, the Society for Educational Research and Advanced Studies in Education was organized, with Dr. Stein as president and Mr. Hylla as executive secretary. This society, which was composed of Hessian educational leaders interested in this movement, sponsored the Institute.

Heinrich Seliger, Frankfurt city superintendent of schools, assisted the group in search of a building. The city donated a bomb-damaged, five-story building, with an adjoining gymnasium, which had formerly been an elementary school. At the time the building and site were valued at DM 1,200,000 (\$285,600).

The State of Hesse agreed to maintain the Institute permanently and to date has made two appropriations totaling DM 400,000 (\$95,200) for operating expenses.

IN AUGUST, 1950, a grant of DM 800,000 (\$190,400) was made from the HICOG Special Projects Fund for the reconstruction and adaption of the building and in January, 1951, another grant of DM 336,000 (\$79,968) was made for operations and equipment. Later, as building costs rose, the city of Frankfurt donated DM 150,000 (\$35,700), matched by a like further amount from the HICOG Special Projects Fund. Had not an old building been reconstructed, the building costs would have been three times as high. In November, 1951, a HICOG grant of DM 177,000 (\$42,126) was approved for equipment and operations.

The building, now fully equipped, is a monument to joint American and German efforts to encourage research in specific educational fields that have been neglected and undeveloped, not only because of a totalitarian regime and a devastating war, which sealed off Germany from the rest of the Western world for more

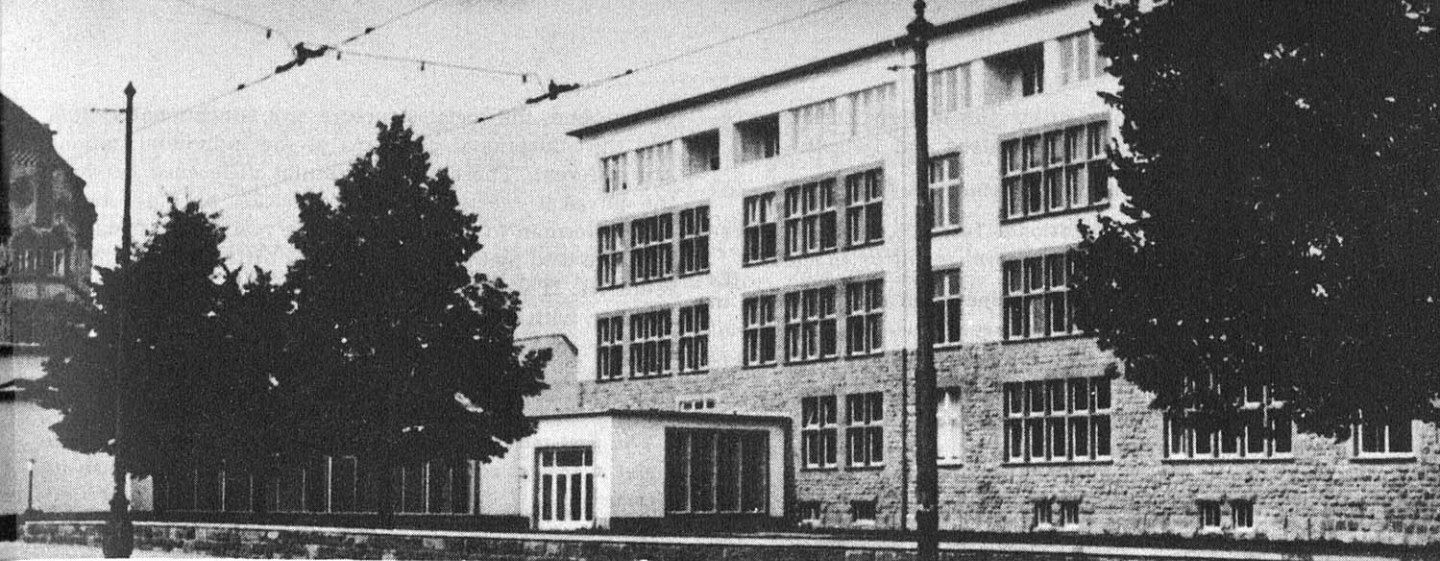
than a decade, but also because of the resistance of traditional outlooks and procedures

The physical properties of the new institution are modern and complete. In addition to lecture and class rooms, libraries, staff and administrative offices, there are 28 rooms for students and apartments for professors. The former gymnasium has been remodeled into an auditorium seating 240 persons, with modern technical facilities and film equipment. There are two libraries, one to serve the research needs of the institution, and the other, subsidized by the city of Frankfurt and administered by the Institute, to serve the teachers in Frankfurt who wish to consult and borrow materials related to their interests and work.

AS A CORPORATE foundation under public law, the International Educational Research Institute enjoys an enviable legal position for a public institution in Germany. Except for the financial support of the state of Hesse for its maintenance and the single representative of the Ministry of Culture and Education on its board of trustees, the Institute is independent of governmental control. Only a few institutions in Germany enjoy this favorable position.

Not an integral part of any university, the Institute has university standing, although it grants no degrees or diplomas. The students are mainly graduate students, usually for in-service training for a period of one year, such as 8 teachers to whom the state of Hesse has agreed to grant leaves of absence at full pay to attend the Institute. However, students from universities may also use the facilities for advanced degrees.

All students are allowed to publish their findings under their own names. Such relationships are expected to develop with the University of Frankfurt, which is only a few blocks away, and with the University of Marburg, the other university in Hesse, both of which are represented on the board of trustees. Germans from outside Hesse will be included in the student body, as



Street side of the same building after reconstruction had been completed and it had been opened for research work.

well as students and teachers from foreign countries, who meet the requirements for what in the United States would be called graduate studies.

AT THE MOMENT, a plan is afoot to prepare research projects that will appeal to the German state educational ministers, who in turn will be asked to send competent people to the Institute for a year's work at problems of practical interest and value to school administrators. In this way, the student body will be built up and maintained, and the work of the Institute, though on the highest academic level, will be applied to practical problems in German education.

Teacher training in Germany is carried on by the numerous teachers colleges scattered throughout the country, and for secondary schools, by the universities, which do little for empirical research, but usually emphasize philosophy and the history of education. The Institute, on the other hand, concentrates on empirical research, which means going out and getting firsthand facts about schools, school children and students. It is this type of research that has been seriously lacking in Germany.

Admission is also possible for teachers of all school types and school administrators who have completed their preservice education and have had successful in-service experience.

Administration of the new institution is democratic. The senate is made up of the three full professors, one of whom is at the same time director of the Institute, and the associate professors. The lecturers and scientific assistants elect two representatives to this body.

THE DIRECTOR has indefinite tenure, a provision which is unique in higher German educational institutions. He can be removed only after two years by his own resignation or by a two-thirds vote of the senate. The usual practice in German universities is for presidents to be elected by the faculty for a term of one year.

A board of trustees and an executive committee govern the Institute. The board, in addition to the Hessian Ministry of Education representative, includes five representatives of the Society for Educational Research and Advanced Studies in Education, Inc.; one from the philosophical faculties of the Universities of Frankfurt and Marburg appointed for a two-year term; one from the Teacher Institutes and the Institute for Education of Vocational Teachers in Hesse; one each for the two central organizations of Hessian teachers appointed for two-year terms; and two representatives appointed by the US High Commissioner for Germany.

The executive committee is composed of the director as chairman, the president, treasurer and secretary of the board of trustees.

In addition to the American representation on the board of trustees, the appointment of faculty members and the election of the director are subject to the approval of the representatives of the US High Commissioner.

THE STAFF currently consists of two full professors and two research assistants. Mr. Hylla, in addition to his duties as director, is head of the department of educational psychology. Dr. Hans Heckel, formerly a member of the state ministry of Lower Saxony in charge of school legislation, recently joined the staff to direct research in school legislation. The Executive Committee has unanimously requested the Board of Trustees to appoint Dr. Walter Schultze, at present director of the In-Service Teacher Institute in Hamburg, as a third full professor for research in curriculum instruction and learning materials.

Rolf Bargmann and Dr. Hans H. Anger are research assistants in the department of educational psychology. Mr. Bargmann is also the school's statistician. Both Mr. Bargmann and Dr. Anger spent a year in the United States on Rockefeller fellowships studying American testing and sampling methods with leading testing or-

ganizations and testing authorities in New York, Princeton, Washington, Chicago, Stanford and Detroit.

The statute creating the Institute cites its purposes:

1. To engage in educational research, publish its results and use them for the improvement of education.

2. To promote advanced preparation of specialists in educational research and to prepare persons for special tasks in education, school administration and supervision.

3. To advise and assist educators and educational organizations in the conduct of educational research studies as well as in the utilization of the results of such studies, and to cooperate with other German, foreign and international agencies and organizations in the conduct of comparative studies in education.

4. To promote the theoretical and practical introduction of teachers in all types of schools to the methods of educational research.

IN AN ADDRESS entitled "The Need for Research in German Education," made at the foundation day celebration of the Institute, Mr. Hylla noted some of the gaps in German education. Quoting the words of Johann G. Herder, one of Germany's great educators, that "education is self-discipline, example, and in addition nothing but love," Mr. Hylla stated these qualities of a teacher, essential as they are, are not enough, for "they must be supplemented by deep insight into the individuality of each student, and by a clear understanding of the social task of the school and education in general."

Though insight and understanding are lacking everywhere, they are certainly lacking in Germany, he stated, adding that "without clear understanding of the functions which education should serve, the ends to be achieved, and the way children learn, his (the teacher's) efforts may be only partially effective and of doubtful value."

Insight and understanding are based on pertinent facts, and in too many cases these pertinent facts are not known, he continued, declaring "what is needed to discover these facts in the field of education is educational research." Pointing out "there is almost no research of this type in German education," Mr. Hylla listed the reasons for the lack of this kind of research as the limited finances of the universities, the Hitler regime which deprived Germany of free and unprejudiced contact with other countries, a negative attitude toward empirical research as a valid basis for the solution of educational problems, and the cultural differences between nations.

AMPLIFYING HIS fourth reason, Mr. Hylla explained the essential tasks of the Institute. The results of research, especially in the fields of education and social science in general, reached in one country may not be applicable to another country because the historical

background, the social structure and educational system and the educational problems of the individual nations are different. There is no essential difference between the physical reaction of an American, an Englishman and a German to penicillin, but the reaction to pedagogical facts and methods is often very different in different countries. It is, therefore, necessary not only to become familiar with the results of educational research reached in other countries; it is necessary to examine them critically in view of the German situation before they are applied in Germany.

The first major task of the Institute is to discover facts about German education and methods for their use in Germany.

The second important task of the Institute is the teaching of research and the making known through publications the results of research.

The international character of the Institute is found in its activities in the field of comparative education. German knowledge about education in European countries is so "incomplete, theoretical and subjective that it is neither of any practical use nor of value in the development of a common European understanding." Studying the educational systems of other countries should lead to this kind of understanding and to an improvement of German institutions.

ANOTHER PROBLEM of basic importance is educational guidance, especially the development of methods of discovering and describing individual differences. Objective and reliable methods for this purpose are almost wholly lacking in Germany. The last somewhat standardized German revision of the Binet test was made 20 years ago and is now out of date. Cultural autonomy of the German states leads to variations in the German school systems. For this reason group tests for measuring achievement at all levels of the schools are more indispensable than ever. Such tests, with the exception of very modest beginnings, do not exist in Germany today.

The Institute is also to carry on research in the field of curriculum and textbooks, examining the subject matter offered and the methods which are used in German schools, and determining which no longer have the values they once may have had and which should be replaced by other subject matters and methods better adjusted to present and future needs.

The Institute of International Educational Research is the answer to the desire for some changes, providing at the same time a scientific and democratic method in bringing them about. The Germans now have the materials and resources to select objects for study and to find the facts about these objects; they now have the means and equipment to examine critically and test objectively the suggestions for changes and the claims for alternatives. The Germans may now find out for themselves the validity of a more democratic approach to ed-

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