

# 'World-Wide Ideas Given by Foreign Students

## International Institute Receives Comments on 'Study Abroad'

The University of Oregon has this year played host to 102 foreign students—the largest number ever enrolled—under its foreign student program which is supervised by J. D. Kline, associate director of student affairs. Seven Oregon students have been approved by the Institute of International Education, a national organization dealing with a two-way exchange of students between the U. S. and 66 other countries, for study abroad next year, while four Oregon associated persons are studying abroad at the present time.

When a college student spends a year studying a country foreign to him, his opinions of that country and of his own home country are apt to undergo a change. The Institute of International Education through its contracts with students has obtained many student reactions to study abroad. In the columns below are the comments, as collected by the institute, of Americans abroad and by "foreign" students now enrolled in U. S. colleges and universities concerning their experiences and findings in their adopted countries.

An American student wrote from Switzerland that sometimes one reads articles that . . . give a romantic picture about what student exchange can accomplish in terms of solving world problems. I have a strong suspicion that those so-called world problems are a little tougher than we sometimes assume in proposing our solutions. Student exchange, like so many other human endeavors, would be a much more effective too if we didn't make such big claims for it.

"After almost a year in Europe, I haven't seen very much . . . but it has improved my perspective and cut through the haze of many a generalization. I have seen enough to know that Switzerland, for example, is something more than gingerbread houses and yodeling shepherds in knee-pants . . . that it is modern and industrial, thrifty and hard working, with more virtues and faults than one could ever find in a tourist folder . . . This year of travel and contact has put flesh and blood into the former 'oblong blur' of being a world citizen of the twentieth century. To chat in the strange little compartments of a train or to sit at the village water fountain somehow cuts the world down to a size where you can look it in the face.

### The World Is My Home

After having attended an American Friends Service International Seminar, another student from Germany wrote: "The whole time I spent in the U.S.A., and especially the Quaker Seminar, helped me to rid myself of a lot of prejudices, narrow concepts, and wrong ideas. All the enthusiastic and idealistic thoughts we all may have had at one point or another in our young lives were put right into action and into real life here. A bunch of some 30 people (members of 21 nations) brought together by the silent, quiet and steady light of

Quakerism . . . discussed the problem of war from every angle and in all aspects during the entire seven weeks under the leadership of seven very excellent faculty visitors.

"My new wider and less biased picture of the world and man is based not only on book-knowledge, but firstly on real experiences. And I think that counts most. The fraternity house, the classes, the many students, parents, storekeepers, laundrymen, mailmen, whoever it may have been, the student organizations, all helped me to find a better road to go on.

"Since that time I cannot tell you which is really my home. Perhaps the answer would be: the world. I must admit, it probably is easier to have a little cottage in some small village corner as your home. That you can occupy completely at any one time. If you say the world is your home, however, and if it really is so, you'll never quite escape the silent pains of not being here or there or some other place right now, of not meeting this or that good old friend.

### No 'Post-War' Greece

Another student abroad writes that when she reads in the papers that ERP is making slow progress in Greece, a country whose whole population is smaller than Greater New York, she remembers the words of a thirty year old business man who has never been able to go to the university "because he was drafted into the army three times—to fight the Italians, the Germans, and the guerillas: 'it is four years now that most other countries in the world have been able to use their efforts constructively . . . but we are still pouring all our energies into destruction. Why rebuild a bridge when you know it will be blown up a week later?' . . . she thinks too, "of the thousands of refugees crowding the streets and



**FOREIGN STUDENTS OBSERVE** a game of shuffle board at Mt. Hood's Timberline as part of an orientation tour earlier this year sponsored by the Foreign Student Friendship Foundation. Pictured from left to right are a lodge employee, Giesela Galliebe, Germany; Glory Galia, Philippines; and Mazharul Islam, Pakistan. The foreign students traveled to Salem, where they met Gov. McKay, and then to Portland, where they were honored by various groups and were taken to Mt. Hood.

cramping the houses of Athens . . . Studying in Europe, one is constantly rubbing shoulders with the reality of the existing human situations and their infinite complexity . . . In the United States, as a comparatively new country, we are comparatively free from ingrown tradition . . . It is hard for us Americans first to realize the influence of the past on Europeans, and even harder for us to sympathize with it, and take it into account in our relations with them."

### Parlez-vous?

"A few preliminary steps should have suggested themselves long before the Ambrose light is dropped," was the conclusion of an American while studying in Belgium. "No customs official on this side will demand a declaration of your knowledge of French, but all the same it will be well to possess one of these indispensable adjuncts to travel. As a language guide once issued by the Army soundly, if sententiously, put it: 'Knowing a little French will help you get along with the people, for they will naturally be pleased to see a stranger showing enough interest in them to try to learn their language.' School or even college French, especially when rusty, will hardly fill the bill. Learning on the spot is also to be

decried for several reasons. The linguistic ability of nearly all foreign nations puts us to shame, and Belgians like to practice their English. A good preliminary knowledge of the language is the best way to reduce, from infinity to reasonable figures, the number of occasions when one feels like an idiot (and these are bound to occur)."

### A German Meets the U. S.

In a talk to a university press club, a journalism student from Germany said that he wondered if we knew that "applauding a speaker, before even hearing from him, is strictly an American habit." "And," he continued, "I think it is a very fine and most characteristic habit. Does not it demonstrate what I would call an unprejudiced acceptance?"

"As a member of a nation which has brought so much harm, distress, and sorrow to this world, I feel especially moved by this. I feel that every German—no matter what his personal record of the past might be—has to bear his share of the common responsibility . . .

"Naturally you cannot measure experience and knowledge in concrete measurements. But to give you a comparison, I may tell you that during the seven weeks I have been here, I have gained 15 pounds

of weight . . . And I'm sure I am gaining much more rapidly as far as imponderables are concerned."

### The American Spirit in Italy

An American student in Italy, now on a Fulbright grant, wrote that "most Italians' hopes for the future of their country are not very bright, and when they come in direct contact with a few Americans, hear what they believe in, and actually see their confidence in these aspirations which have not yet all materialized, the Italians automatically inhale something of this encouraging atmosphere. Many have voiced the opinion that the American's presence raises their morale; in contrast, however, what the U. S. does as a country does not often correlate with the American spirit, but rather makes them feel how hopeless their situation is. Along with this, an American abroad cannot help suspecting that the action of our foreign policy is not always for the same reason that the American people themselves think it is. For example, in America, as an American, I thought we were being benevolent by sending all the manufactured goods that we could to Europe. However, from the point of view of the Italians, sending them manufactured goods just serves to push them lover into the pit of their hopeless situation. What they want are the raw materials with which to manufacture their own goods—NOT the goods themselves—because only thus can they decrease the number of unemployed, be able to do a little trading themselves, and stand, at least, on their own heels."

### Parisian 'Neutralisme'

A Fulbright grantee, a graduate of Duke University and of the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, has sent from Paris a description of life in the Latin Quarter, and his impressions of the present-day political scene in France. Part of his letter reads as follows:

To the average Frenchman (not even counting the communists, of course), MacArthur is an over-ambitious American general who obeys no orders but his own; the Republican surge in America was a return to the ostrich-days of the nineteen-twenties; and Dean Acheson is now a symbol whose departure will signalize our desertion of Western Europe. The communists know how to fill a vacuum. Are we going to continue to create one? Perhaps we can continue to carry on in our muddled way, or even retire to our shell, but while we do, we shall be losing more of our friends to the 'neutralistes,' and more of the 'neutralistes' to the strong men who claim they have history on their side."



**BEING HONORED** at a pioneer dinner held by the Quota Club, a Eugene women's group, are University of Oregon foreign students. The dinner, held earlier in the year, featured pioneer food, the women members of the club wore pioneer clothes, and pioneer lamps were used. Purpose of the dinner was to show some features of American

pioneer life to foreign students at one of their activities while they are attending Oregon. The University of Oregon, through foreign student advisor J. D. Kline, attempts to acquaint students from other countries with American customs and traditions.