

THE FULBRIGHT PROGRAM

A Report from Washington

By Dwight E. Gray

During the academic year 1950-51, over 200 United States citizens in the general category of "lecturers and research scholars" have been pursuing educational activities of various kinds in foreign countries as a result of having received Fulbright awards. At the same time approximately an equal number of foreign nationals have been assisted by Fulbright travel grants in carrying on lecturing and research in the United States. The purpose of this article is to describe the organization and operation of the Fulbright Award Program with special emphasis on those phases which may have particular interest for physicists.

Origin and Aims

The program established under the Fulbright Act of 1946 (Public Law 584—79th Congress) provides for the exchange with other countries, under certain specified conditions, of students, teachers, lecturers, research scholars, and specialists. Its fundamental objective is the promotion of good will between the U. S. and the participating foreign nations through the interchange of knowledge and ideas among educated men and women in the several countries.

With the end of World War II, large quantities of U. S.-owned goods scattered throughout the world, and originally intended for our own use, suddenly became "war surplus property". The Surplus Property Act of 1944 provided for the purchase of this material by the foreign countries where it was located with payment to be made in these nations' own currencies. The Fulbright Act of 1946, an amendment to the earlier law, designated the Department of State as the disposal agency for this surplus property and provided that a portion of the funds resulting from its sale be set aside for educational exchange programs with the countries involved. (Other uses being made of currency received in this manner include such things as the construction of embassies and other buildings and the support of U. S. Government missions abroad.) The Act specifies the limitations under which the Fulbright program can receive and expend funds and establishes a framework for its operation.

The ground rules, under which the program functions, fall rather naturally, at least for purposes of discussion, into three groups—those which have to do primarily with the establishment of agreements with participating countries, those concerned with awarding grants to U. S. citizens and, finally, those which apply to foreign nationals desiring to benefit from Fulbright funds. These are considered separately in the following paragraphs.

Agreements With Participating Countries

The regulations covering this phase of the administration of the Fulbright Act largely are specified in the law itself. All agreements are bilateral and may vary appreciably from country to country depending upon the special interests of

the particular nation and the opportunities available within it for lecturing, research, and teaching. To insure that the program remains one of educational exchange, the Act specifies that every Fulbright scholar must have, during his work under the award, an academic connection with an educational institution in the country to which he goes—where "educational institution" has been taken to include schools, colleges, technical institutes, universities and, in some instances, libraries and museums. A Board of Foreign Scholarships, created under the Act with members appointed by the President, is authorized to supervise the exchange program and to have final responsibility for the selection of the participating educational institutions in the various countries as well as of the individuals to receive the awards. (Preliminary screening of applicants is delegated to three other agencies as described later.)

Funds that can be expended for Fulbright awards are limited by the Act to a maximum of 20 million dollars per country to be used at a rate not to exceed one million dollars per year. In any given case, a joint Commission or Foundation, made up of foreign nationals and U. S. citizens resident in the foreign country, agrees upon a tentative program of projects for that country, on just what amount of money shall be allotted to it within the above over-all limitations, and upon how these funds shall be spread among the several categories of applicants defined below. When these agreements have been reached, the available opportunities for that country are advertised both there and in the U. S. and applications for awards may be made.

To date educational exchange agreements of this kind have been established with nineteen countries: Australia, Austria, Belgium and Luxembourg, Burma, Egypt, France, Greece, India, Iran, Italy, The Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Pakistan, The Philippines, Siam, Turkey, and The United Kingdom.

Awards to U. S. Citizens

Definitions of the several categories of U. S. applicants and the agency for each to which inquiries and applications should be sent are:

1. *Lecturers and Research Scholars at Post-Doctoral Level*
Conference Board of Associated Research Councils
Committee on International Exchange of Persons
2101 Constitution Avenue
Washington 25, D. C.
2. *Graduate Students at Pre-Doctoral Level*
Institute of International Education
Director of Fulbright Division
2 West 45th Street
New York 19, New York

3. Applicants for Teaching Positions in Non-American Elementary and Secondary Schools Abroad

United States Office of Education
Division of International Educational Relations
Federal Security Agency
4th and Independence Avenue, S. W.
Washington 25, D. C.

4. Applicants for Teaching Positions in American Elementary and Secondary Schools Abroad

American Council on Education
American Schools Service
744 Jackson Place
Washington 6, D. C.

In addition to meeting the qualifications implicit in the category definitions given above, the successful U. S. applicant must have whatever foreign language facility is required for carrying on his Fulbright activity effectively. Also taken into account are the value of the proposed project, the candidate's scholastic standing and personal qualifications, the opportunities offered in the participating country, the needs of that country, the requirements of the foreign educational institution with which the applicant desires to be connected, and whether he is acceptable to that institution. In other words, the selection problem in any given case is one of matching the applicant and his proposed work as completely as possible with what the particular foreign country wants and has to offer.

Grants usually are for one year, with a possible one-year renewal in exceptional cases. They vary in amount depending upon the applicant's professional level, availability of funds from other sources, cost of living, exchange rates, and so forth. Awards to Fulbright scholars from the United States may be used for maintenance, travel, incidentals, and educational materials. They are paid entirely, however, in the currency of the foreign country so that the candidate must make other arrangements for whatever continuing U. S. expenses he has during his stay abroad. Travel from and to the United States usually is taken care of by the foreign country purchasing a round trip ticket and mailing it to the grantee.

Awards to Foreign Nationals

Foreign scholars who are assured of funds from other sources to support them while in the United States are eligible to apply for Fulbright travel grants to cover transportation to and from this country. Because all Fulbright payments are in foreign currency, awards of this kind tend to be confined largely to citizens of countries which operate sea and air transportation lines to the U. S. Categories of persons benefiting from this provision of the Fulbright Act are principally exchange professors and teachers, outstanding scholars who have been invited to teach or lecture on a salary basis in U. S. colleges and universities, and research men of note who either have been invited to join the staff of an American establishment for a year or who have private funds sufficient to take care of their U. S. living expenses. Foreign nationals apply for Fulbright travel grants through the U. S. Educational Foundations or Commissions in their own countries.

An important by-product of this phase of the Fulbright program is the opportunity it gives U. S. educational institutions as a whole to profit from the presence in this country of these distinguished foreign scholars. In general they are available for consultation and lecture assignments at establishments other than those to which they are speci-

cally attached. Complete lists of such lecturers and research scholars who are in the U. S. at any given time can be obtained by writing to the Conference Board of Associated Research Councils at the address given previously. This agency also has available lists of other outstanding foreign scholars who have expressed a desire to teach or lecture in the U. S. and have been recommended for such an activity by the U. S. Educational Commissions in their respective countries. [See page 26, this issue]

Physicists and the Fulbright Program

Information presented in this section concerns only the "lecturer and research scholar" category of Fulbright grantees since this probably is the one of principal interest to readers of *Physics Today*. Here, as stated previously, the cognizant group through which U. S. citizens make application for Fulbright consideration is the Conference Board of Associated Research Councils—a committee composed of three members each from the National Research Council, the Social Science Research Council, the American Council of Learned Societies, and the American Council of Education. The applications are studied first by professional committees made up of scholars of repute in the various subject fields. Recommendations from this committee go to country or area competence committees who carry out a second screening. The Conference Board then prepares a panel of recommended principals and alternates which is sent abroad, via the Department of State, for assignment to foreign educational institutions. The final, official selection is made by the Board of Foreign Scholarships mentioned in one of the early paragraphs of this article.

Of a total of approximately 250 awards in the lecturer and research scholar group for the academic year 1950-51, ten are in physics. U. S. institutions represented by the physicist grantees are University of California, California Institute of Technology, Case Institute of Technology, Harvard University, University of Iowa, Loyola University (California), Massachusetts Institute of Technology, and National Bureau of Standards. Foreign countries in which these physicists have been working are Egypt, England, France, India, Italy, and The Philippines. Awards for 1951-52 have not been made as this is written but it is estimated that there will be approximately twelve in physics out of a total of between 250 and 300 in the lecturer and research scholar category. The over-all ratio of grants to applicants in this group is about one to six while that in physics has been running about one to four.

Foreign scholars awarded travel grants for work in the U. S. for the academic year 1950-51 total about 300 with just over 100 being in the physical sciences. Of these, 26 are lecturers or research scholars in physics and come from the following countries: England—10, France—6, India—2, Italy—4, and The Netherlands—4. They are distributed among some 17 colleges and universities in this country. The listing of these scientists, which can be obtained from the Conference Board of Associated Research Councils, shows for each his home country, host institution in the U. S., date of arrival, probable length of stay, and field of specialization.

Dwight E. Gray, of the Library of Congress' recently organized Science Division, has agreed to report for this journal events in the national scene likely to be of particular interest to physicists. In recent issues he has described the science activities of the Library of Congress, the scientific liaison offices maintained in this country by several foreign governments, and an experiment in standardizing document control by several government agencies. In future issues he plans to discuss the Science Office of the Department of State, the National Science Foundation, and other matters of importance to science and to scientists.