



The Sower

THE AMERICAN FARM SCHOOL

THESSALONIKI, GREECE

Number

63

1966

GRADUATION PLANNED FOR EVENING OF JUNE 12

The colorful graduation pageant, an annual feature of the American Farm School, has been scheduled for the evening of Sunday, June 12, 1966. While the central theme is a carefully guarded secret, visitors can be assured of an inspiring program and a stimulating show by the boys.

This year is special in many ways. The new U.S. Ambassador to Greece, the Honorable Phillips Talbot, has indicated his plan to attend. While not his first visit to the School, it will be his first graduation. In addition more than a dozen Trustees of the School expect to be present. They will be going to Greece for a meeting of the Board of Trustees on June 13-14.

Accompanying the Trustees will be numerous friends of the School from Rochester, N. Y., California, Connecticut and Massachusetts. Those from the Bay State will have a particular incentive in attending the dedication of Massachusetts Hall, the recently completed classroom building. A highlight of this event will be the unveiling of a handsome portrait of the late President Kennedy, hopefully by a representative of the family.

For the members of the graduating class, June 12 will live long among their most favored memories. It is a day that comes only once in a young man's life, symbolizing both an end and a beginning. We hope as many friends as possible, from America and from Greece, will plan to visit the School on this important day.

MORE THAN FIFTY JOIN AFS GROUP FLIGHTS TO SCHOOL LEAVING NEW YORK JUNE 9

Though a few more eligible members can still be accommodated, the two group flights to Greece sponsored by the New York Committee of Friends of The American Farm School are now adequately subscribed. They are scheduled to leave New York on June 9, arriving in Athens the following afternoon. The four-week group returns on July 7 and the eight-week on August 4. The fare is \$528.80.

Graduation at the American Farm School is planned for the evening of June 12 and the students and staff are looking forward to the arrival of so many Trustees and friends of the School from abroad. Various special programs are planned including the dedication of the new classroom building, Massachusetts Hall.

Some additional seats can be made available but reservations should be made immediately.



American Farm School Director Bruce Lansdale greets King Constantine of Greece on his arrival for graduation in 1965. Other celebrities are expected this year.

A WORD OF THANKS

Many persons who contribute regularly to the American Farm School never receive a letter of acknowledgement or an official receipt for their gift. All they do get back is their cancelled check with the words "Thank you for your kind contribution to the School and the people of Greece" stamped on the back. Is this any way to treat a contributor?

We hope you understand that the failure to write a personal letter or send a receipt for every gift is just one more way to assure your money being used most effectively in Greece to help the students at the School. While letters are appreciated, they do cost something to write, type and mail, particularly as the cost of postage keeps going up. Receipts, too, require extra processing.

But this lack of response in no way lessens our deep appreciation for your interest and for your generous, regular support. Every gift, whether it be \$1.00 or \$1,000, directly helps to provide an education for a deserving Greek youngster. So, if you should not receive a receipt for your gift, we hope you will understand and accept this substitute word of thanks from the students, staff and Trustees.

The inside two pages of this issue of The Sower are devoted exclusively to excerpts from the Planning Survey recently completed for the School. A 48-page printed report is available, with all the findings of the survey and will be sent to any friend of the School. Please be sure to include your complete name and address when requesting copies from the Office of the Trustees, 36 East 61st Street, New York, N. Y. 10021.



PLANNING SURVEY CHARTS

The American Farm School in Thessaloniki, Greece, celebrated the sixtieth anniversary of its official founding by Dr. John Henry House during the academic year 1964-65. However, a school cannot adhere to a system established sixty years ago, based on the needs of that time, without regard for the changing conditions. Neither, however, should it separate itself from its history nor look ahead without recognizing its vital heritage.

In recent years and particularly since the end of World War II, conditions in the Greek village have begun to change rapidly. Relationships and interdependence between village and town, and town and city, have increased. Agriculture has become more specialized and more technical as farms have become less self-sufficient and more commercial. Necessarily, many changes have been incorporated into the School's program better to serve the Greek village and to meet the requirements of a developing agricultural economy and the changing needs of a modern society.

Clearly, the time had come for a comprehensive review of changing Greek agriculture and rural life. And a new evaluation of the School's program, organization and accomplishments was needed to provide objective information on which to base recommendations for desirable modifications of the objectives of the School and appropriate adjustments in program to meet future needs. (A similar survey completed in 1955 charted the direction of the School during the previous decade.)

The American Farm School has graduated more than 1,000 boys. Not all have returned to their own farms. Many have entered occupations related to agriculture in their villages, while some have followed different paths. The great majority, however, have developed the character and the spirit of community service which lies at the heart of the School. In the past 16 years, the School has trained, in addition to its graduates, nearly 9,000 out-of-school youth and adults in intensive specialized programs of varying length.

The graduates have made a significant contribution to the development of agriculture and to social and economic progress of the rural areas of Northern Greece. They have introduced new farming techniques, improved seeds and livestock, and instituted new cultural practices. In addition, whether working on their home farm, in government, cooperatives, or in other occupations related to agriculture, they have demonstrated that they have acquired more than just skills and received more than just technical knowledge. The Christian atmosphere of the School, the emphasis placed on the dignity of manual labor and on the responsibility of leadership have inspired graduates to contribute to the progress of their communities.

Broadly interpreted, the School's philosophy embraces any effort to contribute to the technical, social, and economic development of rural life. Changes are occurring, however, in the villages of Greece, in agricultural customs and technology, in the educational level of the villagers, and in the aspirations of both parents and students.

Despite increasing industrialization, for the foreseeable future Greece will continue to be an agricultural country deriving a third of its national income from the soil. The ravages of World War II, coupled with internal strife in the succeeding years, had a disastrous impact on Greek agriculture. Production was slow in returning to pre-war levels. However, in recent years, through government assist-

ance and improved practices, the agricultural sector has made remarkable strides in raising production. Some crops such as citrus and cotton have shown a 500 to 600% increase above pre-war levels, while others such as wheat, tobacco, sugar beets and fruits have also shown dramatic improvement.

There will be an increasing need for well-trained farmers in Greece. Though the number of persons entering farming will decrease, those remaining will face more complex technical and managerial problems. Adjusting to these changing social and economic conditions will require enlightened and selfless leadership.

RECOMMENDATION NUMBER ONE: That The American Farm School retain its broad objective of agricultural training and leadership development for the social, economic and technical improvement of rural life.

In view of the increasing industrialization in Macedonia, particularly Thessaloniki, the need for intensively trained technicians for the various occupational areas will be great. It is assumed that the existing vocational schools or returning workers from Europe will provide a manpower pool sufficient to meet the needs for skilled and semiskilled workers.

RECOMMENDATION NUMBER TWO: Since many unmet needs still exist for the training of farm youth, it would appear that the emphasis of the School should continue to be focused on agricultural occupations, unless distinct, continuing financing of both the capital needs and program for training industrial technicians is made available from government or private sources.

Historically the School has served youth who have completed six grades of elementary education and reached 14 years of age. This was appropriate as long as the opportunity for education beyond grade 6 was limited in most villages. However, a new national education act requires education through grade 9 (Gymnasium) for all Greek youth. Implementation of the law will undoubtedly require several years, particularly in remote villages. In the interim those entering the Farm School after completion of grade 6 should have the opportunity to satisfy the curriculum requirements of the first three-year Gymnasium cycle during their four years at the School. This curriculum will provide a better base of general education on which to build a stronger vocational agricultural program and will not bar those who qualify from entrance into the upper cycle (Lyceum) of the secondary schools, or even eventual admission to the University. To meet the Gymnasium requirements will require a substantial modification of the School's existing curriculum. On the other hand, the continuation of the present four-year training period provides time for inclusion of the various agricultural courses which will continue to constitute a major share of the curriculum.

RECOMMENDATION NUMBER THREE: That the level of the content of the general education courses taught at The American Farm School be raised to satisfy the curriculum requirements of the three-year Gymnasium cycle and further that these be achieved during four years at the Farm School.



COURSE FOR SCHOOL

The School has always assumed that knowledge of English was of great help to the graduates who enter other occupations, as well as for those few who go abroad to continue their studies. Apparently, however, while they value English highly, 82% of those in farming indicated that they did not learn a sufficient amount.

RECOMMENDATION NUMBER SIX: That the time allotted to the teaching of English be increased to five units throughout the four years, that the teachers be employed for longer periods and that a language laboratory be installed to provide facilities for the practice of the language.

Many applications are received annually by the School, often from distant areas. Applicants, especially from Macedonia and Thrace, are visited by members of the Farm School staff.

In July, staff members visit villages to meet the community secretary, extension agent, school teacher, graduates living in the village, School students on vacation, and others in the village who might be of help. The best ambassadors of the Farm School are the successful graduates and students.

RECOMMENDATION NUMBER SEVEN:

1. That the recruitment of students should become primarily the responsibility of the graduate follow-up staff.
2. That village visitation and recruitment start in the early fall.
3. That revised procedures be developed to provide a more efficient and effective program to reach qualified village and farm youth.

The American Farm School has been fortunate in having a consistently strong and dedicated staff. This, more than any other one factor, has been responsible for the contribution the School has made to its students and to Greece. However, because the School is neither able to offer sufficient opportunities for promotion nor salaries and benefits equal to those available in Greek Government service, it is becoming more difficult to attract new teachers possessing the necessary training and experience.

At present, classroom instruction and practical work are separate. However, further background in the principles, methods and techniques of teaching vocational agriculture would enable the staff not only better to organize and coordinate the courses of study, but also to teach more effectively. In-service training of the teaching staff in educational methods and in principles and techniques of teaching vocational agriculture is one of the most important problems with which the School is faced.

International training is conducted in cooperation with the Extension Service of the Greek Ministry of Agriculture and the Technical Assistance Service of the Ministry of Coordination. The School serves as host to groups of extension workers and rural leaders who are participating in programs organized by governments of Middle East, African and Mediterranean countries in cooperation with A.I.D., the U.N. Food and Agriculture Organization and other international organizations. The geographic position of Greece, the people and their institutions and the level of development achieved in the rural areas, are the three main reasons for selecting Greece as a training ground.

RECOMMENDATION NUMBER THIRTEEN:

That international training be further strengthened and expanded so that the School may make a more significant contribution in this field in cooperation with the Greek Government, and further that if adequate financing should become available the Board of Trustees act favorably on the establishment of an International Center, to be located at the School.

When founded in 1904, The American Farm School was located "in the country" several miles from downtown Thessaloniki. Since the road leading to the School ran parallel to the Aegean shoreline with exciting views of the sea and neighboring Mount Olympus, it became a natural location for extension of the city. There was a steady but gradual movement into the area preceding 1940. The population explosion of metropolitan Thessaloniki since World War II, coupled with the expansion of the airports and other facilities, has been accompanied by an increased acceleration of population growth in the area surrounding the Farm School.

While there will be increasing operational difficulties due to a heavy population concentration in the area, a change in location would not appear desirable in the foreseeable future,

RECOMMENDATION NUMBER SEVENTEEN:

1. It is recommended that the present site be continued as the most appropriate location for the Farm School for the foreseeable future.
2. It is further recommended that the administration and Trustees carefully assess the potential impact of further suburbanization of the area to assure adequate protection of the program and facilities but at the same time to take fullest advantage of the possible benefits that would accompany such population growth.

It is not unreasonable to suggest that if there were no American Farm School in Greece today, one would have to be founded by the country itself, or the United Nations, the U.S. Government, a major foundation or private interests, to carry out a program similar in most respects to that being offered by the School.

The advantages of a private, as opposed to a public, institution's conducting such a program are many. Private efforts can afford to experiment—even to make occasional mistakes. They tend to be better suited to experimentation and retain greater flexibility. Their existence does not rest on political favoritism or support. Because they are usually more stable and offer greater opportunity for individual initiative they often attract personnel of high caliber. Some of these advantages are offset by recurring financial insecurity, but on balance it would seem desirable for the continued progress of Greek agriculture to retain the basically private character of an institution such as The American Farm School.

The Board of Trustees of The American Farm School doubts that the concept of education for rural life and community leadership will ever become obsolete, though the character of the education, and indeed of the life, will certainly change. The Farm School has not outlived its purpose, and surveys such as the one just completed are designed to assure that its program will not fall behind the times.

FARM SCHOOL NEWS AND NOTES

King Constantine Presents Scouting Award

Recently King Constantine of the Hellenes visited the School to open the National Boy Scout Conference. At the end of the ceremony, he presented Director Bruce Lansdale with the Medal of the Friends of Scouting, expressing his appreciation for all the School has done over the years to help scouting. The King's father, the late King Paul, presented a similar medal to Charles House in 1951. Bruce Lansdale said that this medal was an expression of gratitude to the School staff and to the Board of Trustees, and the hundreds of contributors in the United States who make the work of the School possible. He quoted the inscription on the rock which was set up as a memorial to Theo Litsas, late Associate Director of the School and long-time scouting leader: "He dedicated his life to bringing joy and inspiration to young people." Mr. Lansdale emphasized that this was in fact the aim of both the Boy Scout movement and The American Farm School.

Solar Still Distills Water

Capitalizing on a system developed by the E. I. DuPont Company for converting sea water into fresh — a system which has been applied on two Greek islands — the School has built a small solar still to convert well water, which contains many salts, to distilled water for use in the pasteurizing boiler. Although a goodly supply of water is provided from the rain, recent dry summers make it necessary to augment the supply. All that is necessary is to put water in the still and the sunshine, of which there is plenty in Greece, does the rest.

Chickens Act as Teachers

In the village of Plevroma it was the chickens that came before the teachers. Two years ago a group of village leaders attended a short course at the Farm School on starting a village poultry flock. In almost no time they were in the poultry business themselves and what is more,

they were making money. The problem of convincing farmers that there is value in a new project at an institution is not always easy. But the Farm School has solved it by turning the poultry men of Plevroma into teachers. Each farm group that comes to the School takes a field trip to talk to the villagers there themselves, and it is their enthusiasm for village poultry flocks that convinces the trainees that there is a future in such business. The Plevromites are proud to play the role of teacher and the trainees have the privilege of learning from their experience.

Spartans' Pocket Money

The proof of the pudding is in the eating and at the Farm School the pudding appears to be very good. Two students spent last summer trying out a bit of what they had learned while back in their village and found that when their knowledge was put into practice it made even more sense. By applying what they had learned in gardening, two brothers from Lakonia, Christos and Soterios Petrakis, earned 10,000 drachmas (\$333) raising tomatoes and other vegetables.

Community Development Sparks Projects

"Community Development isn't building roads, it's changing people." This was the comment of the Prefect of Thessaloniki, Nicolaos Kounavos, to Ambassador Phillips Talbot when the latter asked what kind of projects were being planned in the Community Development Program. Through conferences, meetings and local visits the program attempts to inspire the villagers with how much they can do themselves to solve their own problems rather than wait for outside assistance. With the assistance of the School's Stavros Androulidakis, the Prefecture Committee has scheduled a series of conferences for the fall and winter period. Projects are a means and not an end, but they are a tangible evidence of success. All one needs to do is see the new roads, water systems and school houses built through village initiative, to understand how much this program has meant to the people.

The Sower

FROM

The American Farm School

Thessaloniki, Greece

ΑΜΕΡΙΚΑΝΙΚΗ ΓΕΩΡΓΙΚΗ ΣΧΟΛΗ

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THE AMERICAN FARM SCHOOL

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