



INTERNATIONAL TRENDS

POLLING THE PROS ON MOVEMENT OF FOREIGN STUDENTS

Should U.S. institutions be looking to Eastern Europe for the next wave of foreign student applications? Are the historic events of the crackdown by China and the liberation of Eastern European countries related in terms of foreign student movement? And how--if at all--are U.S. institutions gearing up for anticipated changes in their foreign enrollments?

We sought answers to these questions recently by polling administrators at some of the U.S. universities which have the largest foreign student populations.

U.S. CAMPUS ADMINISTRATORS' ASSESSMENTS

At the University of Texas/Austin, Margaret Kidd, Director of International Affairs, expects that her institution's Chinese population will decrease. At the U of Texas, mainland Chinese constitute only seven percent, or 264 out of a total of 3,580 foreign students. But since her university is trying to lower their total enrollment from 50,000 to 48,000, any decrease in numbers would actually be welcome. Ms. Kidd said that while she would like more East European students "for the diversity," no scholarship money is available for them except for graduate school teaching and research assistantships. The university assesses each of its students a small fee to help finance study abroad, and provide scholarships for foreign students. "Hopefully," Ms. Kidd said, "some of this money will be used for East Europeans, but we have

nothing specific set aside."

At the University of Wisconsin, Michael Dean, Director of International Students, said, "I don't think we're going to see any volume from Eastern Europe. The biggest problem is that most East European countries don't have enough money. Until a country's government gets involved and makes a concerted effort, we're not going to see the movement we saw from China." With Chinese constituting 15 percent of his institution's 3,500 students, Dean feels "we're lucky to have a mix." He concluded, "I think education in Eastern Europe is very important, but right now they're absorbed in figuring out how to run a non-Communist government. It will take a while before they can start concentrating on education."

At the University of California/Berkeley, Theony Conbos, Special Assistant for International Education, said their number of Chinese students "...is down a little...not a lot. None of the Chinese students supported by the Chinese government has been cut off." The institution supports most of its approximately 500 Chinese students through research assistantships. Looking to East Europe, Ms. Conbos said there had been some contact with East European student associations, but no money is available to help them at the undergraduate level. "At the graduate level," she said, "there is money available, but it will depend on competitiveness."

At SUNY/Buffalo, Dr. Stephen Dunnett, Associate Provost for International Programs and director of the Intensive Language Institute, visited China in February. Although *The New York Times* had

reported that the U.S. government would withdraw funds as of April 1 from a co-sponsored China-U.S. MBA program offered in China by SUNY/Buffalo and divert the money to Eastern European countries, Dr. Dunnett said he would be "quite surprised" if this actually happened.

Dr. Dunnett added, "My intuitive feeling is there is already a decline in students from China. The Chinese government will not allow its faculty and researchers to leave, and our reciprocal agreements have been suspended since Tiananmen. But most large American research universities depend on foreign students to teach. We need a large number of teaching assistants in math, science and engineering, and Eastern Europe looks good to us--they're very strong in theoretical sciences.

"The question is, should we hang on and re-establish ties with mainland China,

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Foreign Student Movement *continued*

or should we look to Eastern Europe? We have slots to be filled, and we won't be choosing between China and East Europe. We won't be relying on students from any one country."

At the University of Chicago, Mary Martin, Director of International Affairs, believes the number of Chinese applicants will not drop significantly. Regarding Eastern Europe she said, "I have not heard of anyone seeing an influx of East Europeans. It has not started, and it may not. When I was in Germany in December, officials there said they expected East Germans to study in Western Europe so they could find jobs there."

At the University of North Carolina, Craig Calhoun, Acting Director of the Office of International Programs, said, "I don't think the Chinese movement is completely cut off. The Chinese situation is still fluid. But we have had an enormous number of initiatives on behalf of East European students—for example, we've had congressmen asking for Soviet student entries, and enquiries from German student associations. We're likely to see a substantial number of students from Eastern Europe, and the burden for financing their study will fall on individual institutions. We expect that more foundation money will be available for the Eastern European and Soviet students than has been available for the Chinese. And we shouldn't forget that even with as many economic problems as the East Europeans have, these countries are still richer than China."

RESEARCH EXPERTS LOOK AT THE BROAD PICTURE

The Institute of International Education's authority on China, Glen Shive, wrote recently, "the new rules are not so much a direct retaliation against youth for the spring demonstrations, but an effort to contain the growing escapism

among China's youth, who have lost hope for their lives in China and are pushing ever harder toward the exits via study abroad." (The Chinese government admits that of the 80,000 students who went abroad to study since 1978, only 32,000 returned.)

Mr. Shive said further that "even without Tiananmen, new stumbling blocks had emerged in the overall bilateral relationship" between China and the U.S. With both American businessmen and diplomats increasingly disillusioned with China, Shive suggests that the U.S. will now turn to Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union "where new doors are opening" and we share a "common rootage in European culture."

Allan Kassof, Director of the International Research & Exchanges Board (IREX), said "There is no way of knowing what will happen. East Europe has tremendous potential—it's so new." But he warned, "We're making a ragged beginning. The floodtide will hit in 1991. It could be a huge wave coming in."

Mr. Kassof believes the immediate needs of Eastern European countries will be for graduate studies in law, sociology, etc. He said, "One problem is that people don't know how to apply to our institutions. And they're coming from bankrupt countries, the same as the Chinese. Everyone is going to be lining up for scholarships."

FOUNDATIONS FINANCING PRACTICAL GUIDANCE

The Chronicle of Higher Education reported in February that several private foundations in the U.S., including the Soros Foundation, the Ford Foundation, the German Marshall Fund and the American Institute for Contemporary German Studies, were "pouring dollars" into Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union to help institutions and organizations provide practical guidance in management, en-

trepreneurship, the environment, and legal issues. In a few cases, foundations are supporting or expanding existing fellowship programs and providing grants for researchers here and abroad to seek to understand the changes across Eastern Europe. So far these projects deal less with basic research or general assistance to higher education institutions in East European countries.

U.S. BUSINESSES FUNDING RESEARCHERS OVERSEAS

Some American businesses already have moved in to make deals with academic institutions in Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union. *The New York Times* recently said that American companies are finding they can benefit by financing research in the East bloc where costs are one-tenth of what they would be for research of equal quality in the U.S. Among the arrangements cited were Monsanto's contract with the Semyakin Institute to support 10 Soviet scientists, Perkin-Elmer's long-standing support of a theoretical physicist at the Leningrad Polytechnic Institute, and Du Pont's recent overtures to Soviet scientists.

HOW WESTERN EUROPE IS REACTING

The European Community has created TEMPUS, a program of support for higher education and training for Polish and Hungarian students, with plans to bring 3,000 students and academics into EC nations in each of the next three years. First placements will be made in September. TEMPUS is intended to operate for five years, with an initial two-year pilot phase. Its budget is set to go from approximately \$24 million to \$56.6 million in three years.

While Western European nations are willing to help selected Eastern

FOREIGN STUDENTS

continued

European countries, they may be less hospitable if East European students flock in significant numbers to the West. Severe overcrowding in universities in Germany, France, Italy and Spain has already triggered student protests and intensified an urgent need to build more campuses and take on more faculty members.

Further, *The Financial Times* of March 12 reports that a "threshold of intolerance" is being approached in the European Community as non-EC immigrants flood their countries. In the case of West Germany, in particular, an influx of East Germans has displaced Yugoslav and Turkish immigrant workers, who are now migrating to the Netherlands and France. They will not be welcome.

SUMMARY

A Lack of Formal Policy

For some time, scholars have been lamenting the lack of any formal policy in the U.S. regarding foreign students. A 1982 report *Foreign Students and Institutional Policy*, published by the American Council on Education, said "Although the education of many thousands of foreign scholars, scientists, professionals, and other potential leaders clearly engages vital national interests, a national philosophy or policy on foreign students

scarcely exists."

In 1983 the Institute of International Education published *Absence of Decision* in which authors Craufurd Goodwin and Michael Nacht wrote: "One of the principal assumptions underlying this study was that there was no national policy concerning foreign students. Rather, the aggregate condition reflected thousands of decisions made by many individuals in colleges and universities across the country. In fact, we found the actual scene marked more by an absence of decision than by any distinctive pattern of decision making within or across institutions."

Seven years later, the same indecision seems to prevail on the U.S. institutional scene. Instead of thinking through in detail the economic, educational, political and organizational issues associated with large numbers of foreign students on their campuses, most institutions seem only to react belatedly to events.

Allen Kassof warns, for example, that "As Europeans become more Eurocentric, the U.S. must think about how we can remain players in Europe...American universities have just begun talking to each other about this--the U.S. has no program comparable to TEMPUS."

No New Money A Worry

It seems clear that those Chinese now safely ensconced in U.S. institutions will remain here for the immediate future. The Institute of International Education

reports that American universities spend about \$200 million each year to support Chinese students and scholars on their campuses. As long as the Chinese remain, this funding will be unavailable to students from other countries. Less than five percent of students coming to the U.S. are government-funded, and the U.S. government seems to have no new money for anything. A program such as TEMPUS seems out of the question.

Caliber of East European Students Untested

Students from East Europe will be seeking graduate education, and U.S. institutions are primarily interested in enrolling them as teaching or research assistants. Just how competitive will these students be? What kind of institutions are they coming from? Will they be ready to undertake advanced study and research?

As a service to our readers, the next issue of *World Education News & Reviews* will carry profiles of the education systems of Eastern European countries as well as a synopsis of the USSR article which we first printed in Fall 1987.

While administrators at U.S. institutions ponder the significance of the changes going on in the world, we should all be arming ourselves with relevant knowledge for the unknown times ahead. □ -Marilyn Umehara

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