

Class A binational centers are eligible to have American personnel assigned from Washington, they may receive cash grants from the local USIS post, and direct media support from USIA. In 1965 there were 76 class A centers throughout the world, 61 of them in Latin America. Ordinarily, a center of this type has only an executive director assigned, although in special circumstances directors of courses or activities may be included. A recent development in the Latin America areas has been the assignment of student affairs specialists to binational centers located in important university cities.

Class B binational centers are not afforded American personnel, but may receive cash grants from the USIS post and direct media support from USIA. In 1965 there were 56 class B centers throughout the world, 51 of them in Latin America. Class B centers are obliged to hire teachers and administrative personnel locally, and to pay them from center funds.

Class C binational centers receive neither personnel, cash grants, nor direct media support. All were founded by the initiative of their local citizens—people willing to lend their prestige and often give their time to an institution which identifies them with the United States. While most persist stubbornly despite the lack of practical U.S. support, some are short lived.

ACTIVITIES

The teaching of English is the biggest and best known of center activities. In this field, particularly in Latin America, the centers have no peer and many are obliged to turn away students for lack of room.

The center's teaching activities very often go beyond their own quarters. Ministries and educational institutions request seminars for local teachers and special English courses are provided for university faculties. For some years the Lima binational center has provided special English classes for the Foreign Ministry's diplomatic school. The center in Monterrey, Mexico, has taken over the teaching of English at the state university located in that city, and the class B center at Chiclayo, Peru, does the same for a national agricultural college located nearby. The student affairs specialist in Caracas is a professor at the national university, turning over his salary to a university student activities fund administered by the binational center. Many centers have contracts for teaching employees of host country, American, and other foreign companies.

The centers also perform services as clearinghouses for information and applications for study in the United States, for testing and screening scholarship candidates, providing orientation for those who are successful, and providing information on American universities and educational systems. Almost all centers help organize and provide for meetings of associations of persons who have studied in the United States.

Binational centers in many cities are the focal point of the cultural life of the community. This is particularly true in the provincial centers, but even in sophisticated capital cities such as Lima, Santiago and Bogotá, the centers have been singled out for praise by leading newspapers for their contribution to the cultural scene.

Speakers and lecturers of national and international renown are programmed at binational centers and center-sponsored forums bring together young, future leaders of government and business under conditions propitious to an appreciation and understanding of democratic traditions and values. In cooperation with the United States program of cultural presentations abroad, centers have sponsored outstanding American symphony orchestras, ballets, and theater groups.

Center libraries provide both lending and reference services. Their primary function is to make information about the United States, in both English and the national tongue, available to nationals of the host country. At the same time, works on the host country are included in center libraries for the information of United States citizens residing or visiting there.

There is no limit to the kind of activities centers undertake. They organize and staff American studies programs, seminars on economic development, discussion groups, host country and American folk dancing, among their wide gamut of educational, cultural, and social activities.

PROBLEMS

For at least the past decade it has been generally agreed by those who understand the binational center system, that the centers are one of the most effective means we have of telling America's story to the world. At the same time there has been an awareness that, except in a few cases, the centers do not approach