



NEWSLETTER - January 1959. With the end of 1958 and the beginning of 1959, the papers have been carrying reports on troubles in Russia and China, troubles related to the agricultural problem of those countries. In December Nikita Khrushchev said that figures the Russian government had previously published on agricultural production were too large (for instance, he said, the country hadn't really produced 145 million tons of grain, as previously announced, but only 100 million tons). Some observers feel he has had to admit these government inaccuracies in order that the Russian farmer take a realistic look at his inefficiency.

Simultaneously, Mao Tse-tung stepped down from the chairmanship of the People's Republic of China just as most of the world was becoming aware of the frightening upheaval which has taken place in China's rural areas where 99% (his figure) of the farmer's have been collectivized. Again, some observers have considered this change as related to the news that the disruption of his country's agriculture has placed some excessively difficult problems at his government's door. China, with its population increasing at the rate of 15 million new mouths a year, can't easily handle such disruptions!

On the last day of 1958, we finished selecting our new students who will arrive in March 1959. To do this, our professors traveled 20,000 miles in 1958 giving competitive examinations and interviewing the finalists. More than 1100 high school graduates took the exams in more than 50 towns throughout Latin America.

Of course, by having our staff personally interview each student before he is accepted, we have a good idea of his capabilities before he arrives, and we feel confident he can handle the work we offer him.

Of equal importance, however, is the value these trips have in giving our staff an understanding of the agricultural problems in the fourteen countries our student body represent. For this reason, we try not to send a professor to the same country twice and by giving the examinations in rural areas he is insured of an opportunity of seeing something of the country other than the capital.

And almost without exception the returning professor says:

"We've got to increase the quota for this country!"

These trips have clearly shown us the need for trained agriculturalists. For, while our staff knows well the relation of climate and soil to a country's agriculture, our staff knows also, by having traveled, the effect that agricultural technology, when allowed to, can have on making the most of that climate and soil. And the effect can be seen in the country's progress.

We admit we see the world through the eyes of an agriculturalist. But as this new year starts we cannot help but wonder if Russia and China would not make **greater** strides in solving their food shortages if they placed more emphasis on applied agricultural technology and less on political manipulations.