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Institute for Social Research
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To: Rensis Likert, Director, Institute for Social Research
From: Warren E. Miller, Program Director, Political Behavior Program
Re: The Organization of the Inter-university Consortium for Political Research

Considerations Leading to the Establishment of the ICPR

The development of survey research during the last twenty years has given a powerful stimulus to the growth of an empirically based social science. The impact of this new research instrument has been felt in every social science discipline and in virtually every center of social science training and research throughout the world.

The sample survey is by nature a highly technical and extremely versatile research operation. It requires a formidable combination of specialized personnel, complex methodologies, and organizational apparatus. It provides a base for the systematic integration of many types of data in the investigation of a wide range of problems. The rapid increase in scholarly interest in the kinds of data which survey research can provide has far outstripped the availability of the survey mechanism to the interested scholar. This hiatus has become a matter of serious concern to many social scientists. The Social Science Research Council has had the problem under discussion for several years and recently (December, 1960) sponsored a "Conference on Survey Research Facilities" to explore alternative possibilities of extending the availability of survey resources.

The Survey Research Center has come to believe that substantial gains can be made in the areas of study with which it is concerned by joining its interests and resources with those of scholars outside its own staff. Over the years we have had many fruitful associations with individual scholars who have drawn on the Center's archives of data or have used the services of its technical personnel. This has led us more recently to seek ways in which groups of scholars or institutions with common interests might become associated with one or another of the research programs at the Center.

The Survey Research Center is currently in its fourteenth year of research on American politics. A series of studies, supported by grants from the Carnegie Corporation, the Rockefeller Foundation, and the SSRC have been conducted and reported in the scientific literature. This series has included the most extensive program of studies of the political perceptions, motives and acts of the American electorate to be found in the United States today. In recent years the political behavior program of the Survey Research Center has also embraced studies of organizational communications, primary group influence, the interaction of constituents and congressional representatives, and the congressional campaign. It has included work in comparative analysis of European and American electoral behavior and has plans for a major extension of that activity in the near future.

The Center has made a continuing effort to bring outside scholars into contact with this program. In 1950 we obtained a grant from the Carnegie Corporation which made it possible to bring two post-doctoral fellows from the field of political science to the Center for a two-year

period. In the summer of 1954 and again in 1958, under the sponsorship of the SSRC, we conducted post-doctoral training institutes in political behavior research. In recent years a number of political scientists have come to the Center on fellowships or sabbatical leave. We increasingly serve as a source of data for scholars who are acquainted with our studies in this area. Many of these individuals have published articles or books based wholly or in part on information provided by the Center. The development of the Inter-university Consortium for Political Research is not intended to displace these contacts with individual scholars which we have found valuable and rewarding, but to create a mechanism for a more intensive program of collaboration.

The Inter-university Consortium for Political
Research: Organizational Premises

The time, effort and expense which an Inter-university Consortium will require can only be justified if it holds promise of scientific advances beyond the present level of accomplishment. We are confident that the Consortium, based on the following principles, can indeed lead to important gains.

1. Institutional rather than individual participation.

The Consortium has been organized on the basis of institutional rather than individual participation. There is considerable evidence from recent years that an individual's freedom to acquire new skills is relatively meaningless without subsequent support for and facilitation of his efforts to utilize those skills. The most productive members of previous Survey Research Center Political Behavior seminars have profited

from active and continued support from their home departments. Seminar members who participated solely on their own initiative or who came from departments not equipped to sustain the interests and exploit the skills developed in the seminar may have returned home no worse for the experience; but these people have found it very difficult to maintain their interests, and the effort expended in their training appears to have been largely dissipated.

With a formal introduction to new research problems and methods through summer seminars and other organizationally sponsored contacts, and with sustained departmental support, it is reasonable to expect individual Consortium participants to continue to enhance their own contributions to knowledge and to graduate instruction. This will result in part from their ability to share intellectual interests with one or more departmental colleagues who are participating in the same program, and in part from the opportunity to organize better graduate training experiences for selected graduate students. Continued benefits from participation should result from continuing cooperation and active contact with members of other departments sharing the same general interest. Although Consortium sponsored data collections cannot hope to satisfy all of the developing research interests of participants, new data acquisitions should encourage continued fruitful activity by each of them.

The Consortium, organized on the basis of university participation, will provide a broader channel of communication between the Center and interested scholars in the universities, both in the United States and abroad, and will particularly increase contact among the younger men on these faculties. It will also guarantee a measure of institutional

support for those individuals who might be attracted by the research opportunities this arrangement will make available.

2. Continuing rather than episodic relationships.

The Consortium is organized on the assumption of long-term association. The advantages to be gained by the creation of a group of scholars with a continuing commitment to a given subject matter are substantial. The exchange of ideas will be maximized through the continued interest, over time, of departments of political science committed to the endeavor and represented by their appropriate staff members and graduate students. The cumulative effect which results from building closely on one's own work and the work of colleagues will be exploited. The sporadic work of individuals with diverse interests and little or no association with the work of predecessors or contemporary colleagues often produces worthwhile results but through the Consortium the power of extended and cumulative programs of research can also be realized.

3. Facilitation of advanced training in research methods.

The scholars who have made effective use of the Center's political data have almost invariably been people of considerable sophistication in research methodology. People who lack experience in survey research but who could acquire research skills from continuing contact with our resources are unlikely to find an opportunity to do so without the aid of some organizational device such as the Consortium contemplates.

Training in the broad array of techniques now associated with the exploitation of the survey method will constitute a major interest of the Consortium. Beyond the selection of samples, the construction of questionnaires and the conduct of interviews lies the extensive repertoire of analysis procedures which are useful to researchers and which

are best transmitted through the research practicum. Advanced graduate students as well as faculty members will be able to develop skills relevant to many of the newer types of analysis now being explored as well as to the established concerns of behavioral research. The many methodological and technical problems of integrating different kinds of data in a single study design will receive systematic attention. Considerable emphasis will be placed on combining survey information with the results of content analysis of the communications media, with the public records of legislative bodies, and with aggregated census and election statistics.

Both the training experience and the research materials will be directed in part toward the facilitation of subsequent teaching in the classrooms and seminars of Consortium participants. The Consortium is intended to serve not only the research interests of the participating individuals but the training of their students as well.

4. Participation in research planning as well as analysis.

Prior to the present time, participation of outside scholars in the Center's political behavior research has been almost entirely at the level of so-called secondary analysis. In the early stages of the development of the Consortium this will continue to be the major emphasis; we will attempt to broaden and make more effective the exploitation of the Center's extensive archives. However, we expect the Consortium to move rapidly toward the planning of new studies to be undertaken as Consortium enterprises. These will be planned jointly by Consortium members and Center staff and will attempt to encompass as many research objectives as possible. Participation of Consortium members at this stage of study development has two obvious advantages: it opens the door to a broad

range of fresh research ideas, and it involves the Consortium members at the original point of decision so that their contributions become maximally effective.

It is notoriously difficult for a group of scholars to produce a well-designed study unless they can work together over an extended period in a careful development of study plans. The Consortium will provide the kind of continuing relationship from which this type of planning could emerge.

Mode of Operation

In order to achieve these objectives, the Consortium will undertake the following activities:

1. Individuals from interested universities have formed a Committee of Representatives to work with the staff of the Survey Research Center in planning Consortium activities. This Committee will come together for annual meetings with representatives of the Survey Research Center to review the activities of the program, to make decisions regarding contemporary operations, to project future developments, and to plan new studies. The first meeting of the Committee was held in Ann Arbor on June 1 and 2, 1962.

2. The Consortium will sponsor new studies. The technical conduct of the studies after the determination of objectives will be the responsibility of the Survey Research Center. Member universities will have complete freedom of publication of all materials gathered at the direction of the Committee of Representatives. The first ICPR sponsored study, approved at the June meeting of the Committee of Representatives, will be a minor collection of data following the 1962 Congressional elections.

3. The Survey Research Center will conduct summer training institutes for representatives from the member universities, the Center providing staff and facilities and the Consortium or the member universities providing the stipends and expenses of the participants.

4. The Survey Research Center will provide supervision and facilities to a limited number of pre-doctoral or post-doctoral interns nominated by member universities and appointed by the Committee of Representatives for a term or one year or less.

5. Each member university will receive a complete set of questionnaire forms, codes, IBM cards and straight runs from all studies in which they participate. To protect the research interests of participants, these materials will be made available to non-member universities only with the approval of the Committee.

6. The Survey Research Center will also make available to members, and facilitate their use of, its extended collection of data from the 1948, 1952, 1954 and 1956 election studies. The data from two studies in 1958, the data from the 1956-1960 national panel study, and the data from the 1960 cross-section will be made available within the limits imposed by the Center's present commitments.

7. The Survey Research Center will provide advice on technical problems to individual members as desired and will carry out machine tabulations or clerical services as requested at cost.

Financing

The financing of the research and training activities will come through two sources, the member universities and the private foundations.

1. Those universities participating in the activities of the Consortium are contributing an annual appropriation of \$2,500 to a special fund which is being administered through the Survey Research Center. As of July 30, 1962, the participating institutions included: Cornell University, The University of Chicago, University of Florida, Georgetown University, University of Illinois, State University of Iowa, The University of Kansas, The University of Michigan, Michigan State University, University of Minnesota, The University of North Carolina, Northwestern University, University of Oregon, Princeton University, The University of Rochester, University of California at Los Angeles, Vanderbilt University, Washington University, Wayne State University, The University of Wisconsin, and Yale University.

2. A grant has been made by the Stern Family Foundation to the Survey Research Center to support developmental activities of the Consortium during the period of organization.

3. The sums collected in the Consortium fund will be used for the support of those persons on the Survey Research Center staff, professional and non-professional, who are associated with the program; for the processing and disseminating of data; for the conduct of the training institutes; and for the incidental expenses of the Committee of Representatives, including the annual meeting.

4. Financial support for new collections of data, the first probably to be undertaken in 1964, will be sought in separate requests to private foundations. The foundations and other fund granting agencies will be approached by the Consortium for support for research conferences and for expenses and stipends to trainees.