

AFGHANISTAN PROJECT

Nestled between Iran and Pakistan is the little country of Afghanistan. It covers approximately 250,000 square miles—about the size of Texas. Seven hundred miles of Afghanistan's frontier borders the Soviet. Ninety-five percent of the 12 million inhabitants are illiterate. Being land-locked it has had far less European influence than have its neighbors, and has constantly struggled to retain its state of neutrality.

While the Soviets have been very active in negotiating military agreements and more recently a \$100,000,000 economic aid deal in long term credits, the United States Government has negotiated agreements with the Afghanistan Government to facilitate development of Afghanistan's economy, to stimulate the interchange of technical skills and to strengthen understanding.

United States assistance supplements impressive programs already having been initiated by the Afghanistan Government itself.

Through the International Cooperation Administration, the U.S. Government is carrying out its program of technical assistance in cooperation with the Ministries in charge of agriculture, industries and mining, public health and sanitation, education, public administration and community development. (Refer to suggested Reading 2)

The United States Information

Agency is likewise carrying out a comprehensive cultural program through establishment of libraries, making mobile units available and providing American teachers.

Soviet technical aid activities in Afghanistan have followed and have been identified with a drive for expanded trade, not in the form of basic cultural and economic development as do our U.S. programs.

It is particularly the education of girls in Afghanistan in which we as a National Federation are most interested and the reason for which the Special Committee at the Workshop in the Biennial Convention recommended support of the UNESCO Afghanistan Project No. 28.2. UNESCO is working with the Afghan Government on the most strategic part of their education program—secondary education. The Afghan Ministry of Education is desirous of building a basis in the secondary schools from which will come teachers for the primary schools and students for the university.

Girls' education in Afghanistan has been limited and has consisted of learning the ways of the family. Girls are seen leading camels or carrying babies on their backs. They carry the jugs of water from the river balanced on their heads. They help build the fire, pitch the tents and cook the meals. Possibly one in four hundred girls receive formal education compared to perhaps one

in twenty boys.

Shar I Nau Girls School in Kabul (Afghanistan Project No. 28.2) provides opportunity for approximately 3,000 pupils to obtain formal education. This is over one-half of the girls in Afghan schools, which means of course, that less than 6,000 girls are in school. It further provides a Teacher Training Section in which 80 girls are enrolled.

Equipment-units and amounts needed by UNESCO to assist in combatting illiteracy through visual education material (Afghanistan Project No. 28.2) are:

A 16mm sound projector	\$580
B 16mm education film, 17 @ \$40	680
C Textbooks—48 sets for 48 girls per year. 48 @ \$20	960

Your National Office merely improves participation in this Project which was voted by the convention body in Miami Beach. Select your project from the three listed above. Write to the Project in Afghanistan of your interest and send contributions direct to UNESCO Gift Coupon Office, United Nations, New York.

SUGGESTED READING:

Catalogue of GIFT COUPON PROJECTS for the United States of America. UNESCO Gift Coupon Office, United Nations, N. Y.

Afghanistan Looks Ahead. International Cooperation Administration, Office of Public Reports, Washington, D. C. January 1956.

The Russian Moves in Afghanistan by Arthur Bonner. The Reporter, 136 E. 57th Street, New York 22, N. Y. April 1956.

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lations Committee is to make available to our members basic suggestions and material from which well balanced programs can be developed. More Federation publications relating to our Study Program will be developed. Each issue of NATIONAL BUSINESS WOMAN will bring you monthly program material as outlined below and, a close-

up of "This Month In The UN" by the UN Representative. Availability of PROGRAM-ROLLS was announced in the October issue of INDEPENDENT WOMAN. And occasional mailings of background material on special observance days to international relations chairmen will be made.

The International Relations Committee developed the following suggested program outline for 1956-57:

November—Foreign Policy

December—Human Rights

January—World Trade

February—International Federation Week

March—Technical Assistance

April—Pan American Day

May—State Convention Suggestions

June—Workshop Suggestions

Plans for programs subsequent to June will be directed toward cultural studies of Latin America and the near, Middle and Far East.