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Survey and Review of Staff

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The Review of ECLA (Memorandum from Roy Blough

- to Philippe de Seynes (Dept. of ECOSOC)

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7 February

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The Review of ECLA

This memorandum deals with certain problems of policy with regard to ECLA which call for early solution and which would seem to have a bearing on the projected trip of the Review Committee. If that Committee is to be concerned with these policy problems its membership should include at least one person having special knowledge and judgement regarding the complicated economic, political and personal factors involved. Even if the scope of the review is narrower and is limited to the organization, number and grades of staff and other administrative matters, the presence of such a member would be very helpful. The Committee could scarcely hope, and should not try, to reach more than interim conclusions regarding the administrative matters until the policy decisions are made, and a satisfactory result of even this limited character would be difficult to reach without a rather complete understanding of the reasons for ECLA's activities and the implications of the policy problems. In any event, the Review Committee would undoubtedly want to be thoroughly briefed before undertaking its mission.

The chief problems of policy with regard to ECLA that I have in mind are the following:

1. The scope and magnitude of the programs that is visualized for ECLA - particularly by Dr. Prebisch and the Latin American delegations - and how this regional programs fits into the overall UN plan. Is ECLA to be primarily a research body or is it to have an active role in technical assistance? Is increasing emphasis likely to be placed on conferences? on intergovernmental committees? on country studies and missions? Should existing, and possibly future, capital investment programs make larger use of ECLA, and if so how? The ECLA programs has been an expanding one and the tendency for it to expand still further and along new lines will be stimulated by the growing recognition of Dr. Prebisch's leadership in Latin America.

2. The relationships between the ECLA Secretariat and the Headquarters Secretariat. This is in part a problem of so improving the co-operation between substantive staff in New York and Santiago that each group will genuinely strengthen the other. It is partly a problem of dividing work between the regional Secretariat and the Headquarters Secretariat. In the fiscal field, for example, the Headquarters Secretariat has agreed to devote a substantial portion

of its energies to ECLA problems. The alternative would be for ECLA to appoint its own fiscal specialists. This is a much broader question than simply one of who pays the bill. Another question concerns the possibilities of ECLA taking over certain parts of the World Economic Report as recommended by the economic advisory group. The division of function with respect to economic development is another matter that requires exploration and decision.

3. The relations between ECLA and the Technical Assistance Administration. These present a major problem which, despite the frequently repeated pledges of co-operation made on both sides, cannot be considered solved. A major question is whether programme decisions, selection of experts, and administration of the programme should be more largely centered in the ECLA staff than is the case today.

4. The relations with the specialized agencies. The principal relationship is with the FAO which, if I am correctly informed, is not satisfied with the character of its relationship with ECLA. At least as recently as the Summer of 1953 ECLA likewise was very dissatisfied. The problems here relate to division of work, control over projects, and relations among staff members.

5. Relations with the Organisation of American States. In the past there has been some friction and competition between the OAS and ECLA. A considerably more co-operative relationship seems to be developing, but is not clear to what kind of relationship it is leading or should lead. The implications of the larger role played by Dr. Prebisch in the 1954 Rio Conference of Ministers of Finance and National Economy need to be explored.

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