

CG

JM

EFD	JUN 28 '50	EFD
	AUG 1	1951

June 27, 1950

900
P+PTechnical Area studies
program

original filed

900
P+P

Underdeveloped areas

JM's proposal for basic regional studies in connection with the Technical Assistance Program opens, in my mind at least, an exciting range of possibilities. It is a germinal idea with striking potential for an important new phase of work in intercultural understanding. In fact it offers more in the way of possible consequences than anything proposed under "B" for the last year. The proposal could become a major vehicle for coherent and constructive activity abroad, and give positive and notable "balance" to our program on the international scale.

I feel we should carefully and at once examine the implications of the proposal, both within H, and among RF divisions. Whether we will or not is the first decision; this depends on our willingness to extend and radically revise our commitments in area studies. This shift might come to something like

- a) \$250,000 a year for two to five years for the organization and production of basic studies in a few representative countries,
- b) a clearcut and major reduction of interest in other forms of area studies. (This might be all to the good: less two-bit undertakings, a kernel per acre, etc.),
- c) allocating considerable staff time and energies to this focus, possibly adding temporary consultants.

Concerning the proposal in general terms, it obviously has a minimum and maximum of possible elements and complexity. It could take the form of a Humanities scheme, restricted to goals and approaches stressed in our general program (culture: outlooks, arts, languages, etc); or of a comprehensive, RF-wide program; or a stage in between, e.g. a joint SS-MS-H undertaking. Its scope will depend on the number of countries involved. Selection here would depend on several criteria, e.g. a total number practicable in terms of financial and personnel resources; one country per major region; assurance of favorable political response.

As we might start thinking within this framework:

<u>Major Area</u>	<u>Country</u>
Near East	Iraq
Latin America	Mexico
Australasia	Indonesia
Southern Asia	India
Africa	Kenya

Since a preliminary estimate of the situation in each country as well as a review of relevant work to date will be necessary, we might start by asking a suitable American, under grant or conceivably as a consultant, to begin exploration and planning. Early contact should be made with key officials, scholars and others in the countries of interest to enlist their cooperation.

These brief comments indicate a line of development that arouses my enthusiasm. A final general comment is that the proposal would give a framework to basic studies within countries and in turn within regions which seems to me now deplorably lacking. It might be just the scheme to capture the imagination of all concerned, and motivate inspired collaborative work.

and fruitful

CG:rmr

	500	100
500	100	100