

4,5Nov49

The report on Human Ecology (Population), filed as D. R. No. 96, prepared by Doctors Balfour and Bates of the International Health Division staff, after consultation with the Director and other officers of the Division in the New York office, with the President and Vice-President of the Foundation and representatives of the other Foundation divisions, and previously mailed to the Scientific Directors and distributed to all the above-mentioned Foundation officers, was formally presented by the Director of the Division for discussion.

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In presenting the report, the Director stated that the question before the board was to decide whether human ecology was a field in which the International Health Division should participate and if so, in what way it might contribute, and that the report had been prepared as a point of departure for discussion.

He emphasized that human ecology was a subject which transcends the competence of present International Health Division staff; that a sincere effort had been made by the International Health Division officers to consult with the other divisions and to keep them informed of International Health Division thinking in respect to the subject; that the other divisions had in fact, already engaged to a considerable extent in the subject during the past years and he mentioned as examples the programs of the Social Sciences in population and demography, of the Natural Sciences in the Mexican agricultural program, and the Medical Sciences in sex problems.

The Director expressed his personal preference for a field unit as a way for the International Health Division to start. He stated

that a field study, once established, might possibly provide a focus for participation of other divisions, so far as the field approach was concerned, although it was his belief that their efforts in advancing knowledge for understanding would continue to be on the academic level.

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The Vice-President expressed the belief that human ecology should be considered a Foundation project but that, should a joint program be decided upon, it might possibly then be turned over to the International Health Division to carry through. He raised the question of a special consultative group which might include experts at an advisory and staff level in all the fields closely involved.

The consensus of the group was that the subject probably should be approached from the level of a field study integrated closely with an approach at the academic level; that it was a very complex field to which a multitude of disciplines must be brought to bear, and that it probably would be necessary to bring in outside experts to supplement Foundation experts in the various fields involved; that human ecology was definitely a field in which the International Health Division should participate in close collaboration with other Foundation divisions; and that the International Health Division officers should explore further the possibility of Division participation.