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memorandum about
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May 16, 1951

MEMORANDUM

TO: Rowan Gaither
FROM: Hans Speier
SUBJECT: Development of Communications Policy

Replying to your memorandum of May 9 concerning the Foundation's development of a communications policy, I offer the following suggestions:

1. Substantial funds have been allocated in both Programs I and IV for the support of projects in the general field of communications. If it is agreeable to you and anybody else among the Foundation's officers, whom you think should be heard on the subject, an attempt should be made to arrive at a meeting of minds as to what the respective interests in the field of communications are, once this field is divided among Programs V, I, and IV. Obviously nobody would want at this point to "review" the projects in Programs I and IV from the point of view of Program V. The line to be taken should rather be that communications projects in Program V should be so developed as to be of optimum support to Foundation activities in Programs I and IV.

2. In addition, there will be "independent projects" (Tasks 3 and 4 of Program V) in the field of communications. One such project was proposed by Don and myself under the name of Institute of International Communication. In preparing your memorandum to Mr. James Young and other members of the Foundation staff, you may want to take this earlier memorandum into account.

3. I still feel that it would be a good idea to have a conference called in the interest of the development of Program V. The conference should have the purpose of reviewing with a small group of experts the status of ecommunications research. Special stress should be placed on

- (a) facilities, (communications research centers, etc.)
- (b) research gaps,
- (c) international communications research.

The meeting should last about two days. An agenda should be worked out in advance. Participants should know in advance what they are expected to do. One or two of the participants might be asked to present their views on special points on the agenda by means of a prepared statement, preferably to be distributed to all participants prior to the meeting.

As to possible candidates for participation in such a conference, here is an enlarged list:

Rensis Likert, Michigan

Bernard Berelson, Chicago

Paul Lazarsfeld or Bob Merton, Columbia

Wilbur Schramm, Dean of Communications, Illinois
(recently returned from Korea)

Theodore Waller, Committee on Reading Development
of the American Book Publishers Council,
2 West 46th Street, New York 19, New York

Carl Hovland, Yale

Robert Leigh, Director, the Communications Study,
Russell Sage Foundation, and School of Library
Science, Columbia

W. Phillips Davison, RAND and Public Opinion
Quarterly, and/or Hans Speier

In addition, it might be desirable to have one or two experts on the Soviet Union present. I would suggest choosing from the following list:

Philip Mosely

Clyde Kluckhohn

Alexander Inkeles, at the Harvard Russian Research
Center, author of the book "Public Opinion in
Soviet Russia"

4. You will see that I have eliminated from this list the name of David Truman. He is a good man, but I doubt that his primary competence is in the field of communication.

5. Despite the fact that the field is very large and of great importance to the development of Program V in relation to the other programs, you may prefer to have a conference

attended by fewer people. In this case, I would eliminate names in the following order:

Wilbur Schramm
Robert Leigh
Theodore Waller
Carl Hovland
The Russian expert
Davison-Speier
Rensis Lickert
Bernard Berelson

In other words, I have listed the names in the inverted order of importance I attach to the participants.

6. I realize that this memorandum does not fully answer your request concerning the development of a communications policy. I hope, however, that together with the previous memorandum on the Institute of International Communication it will serve a useful purpose. I hesitate to draw up anything more specific prior to the communications conference and to our getting together with Mr. Young. If you wish, I could try to draft something more specific when we meet on the 22nd.