

REPORT ON THE MARCH 4, 1960 MEETING
CALLED BY RECTOR THONG

The meeting was presided by Rector Thong. He had his secretary record the meeting, but I should like to paraphrase the events of such a meeting.

Rector Thong introduced me to the members present, including several businessmen, and informed the group that I was ready to report on my findings. I had not been prepared to do so but felt that it was an adequate time to review the status of my study. I explained to them that I had a dual responsibility in this study--one to USOM and ICA, the other to Michigan State University. I stated that I could not speak officially for USOM but as had been discussed with Mr. Dienes, I pointed out that in reference to their February 9 meeting, neither USOM nor ICA could make the type of financial commitment which was inferred in the minutes. Further, I attempted to clarify the fact that the matter of the NIA being the site was still under consideration.

It was pointed out that, to the best of my knowledge, the Presidency would have to approve a request for such a program and also would probably officially initiate a communication which would authorize such a program. Rector Thong informed me that both Deans Seelye and Taggart had conferred with the President and that he felt this was sufficient. My remarks were that, naturally, we were aware of the graciousness with which the President had received the Deans, but as they so well understood, formal lines still had to be established.

The group was encouraged to join hands with the leaders of the seminar program idea. The fact that a program of that nature could be instituted should redound to the benefit of a formal business administration program. In broad terms, the idea of executive management seminars was discussed and examples of the many types carried on in the United States were given. An attempt was made to point out that a formal academic program and a seminar are not mutually exclusive.

In a very pointed manner the question was presented as to whether I would recommend the NIA as the institute to develop a business administration department. I pointed out the advantages of the NIA such as their proposed plant expansion, their existing organizational areas, and other favorable assets. However, the group was informed that the interviews conducted throughout the month of February revealed the need for creating a better image of the NIA. Consequently, I told them that a tentative recommendation would be made that the NIA could be considered as the institution only if certain obstacles were removed. Such obstacles as the lack of trained faculty, the lack of a degree, the negative image, the lack of cohesion among the business and governmental leaders warranting a formal program, would all have to be settled before the NIA could become the proper place.

The Vice Rector urged that I use whatever influence I have to bring about the selection of the NIA. I pointed out that my report would not be the only one which Washington would consider, but that we were certainly desirous of strengthening the Institute.

An interesting point came out concerning the curriculum. The subcommittee (see the December 4 minutes) had worked out a proposed curriculum in business administration. They wanted to know my reaction to it. I attempted to avoid answering the question directly by stating that the current curriculum of the NIA in public administration already contained about 50% of the basic courses which would be required in a business administration program. I pointed out further that a curriculum is usually not the result of a small group meeting for a few days. Furthermore, I suggested that a joint committee made up of NIA faculty members, Country Team experts, and the institution which would offer academic assistance, should work out the curriculum that would be applicable in this country. This explanation, however, did not seem to be satisfactory for I was pressed by the Rector to state whether or not I believed each one of the subjects listed by his committee was appropriate or inappropriate. I then explained to him that in essence all of these topics or courses should be considered, but not necessarily taught. I pointed out to the mixtures of courses which were listed under marketing, showing him that certain areas are more properly classified as personnel or production rather than marketing.

Naturally, this meeting left me with several misgivings. It is not always easy to be certain that statements made are not misconstrued or correctly interpreted. The fact that I was the only American present cannot be discounted.

However, each one present had the opportunity to ask questions and make comments. In general, I believe they understood that there are some

obstacles to be removed. They also recognize that a formal program within the NIA adds a tremendous responsibility on them. The group also expressed their desire to work together with the seminar concept. Several committee members commented that the lack of clarity or line between the public and private enterprise sectors enhance the need for training in administration which can be made applicable in both areas. Rector Thong concluded the session by stating that the NIA was not actively soliciting such a business administration program, but that if the NIA were requested to accept such a responsibility they would be happy to do so.