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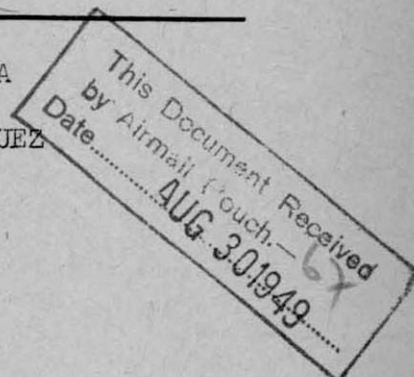
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**ECONOMIC
AND
SOCIAL COUNCIL****CONSEIL
ECONOMIQUE
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ECONOMIC COMMISSION FOR LATIN AMERICA
STATEMENT BY DR. ANTONIO VALDES RODRIGUEZ

CHAIRMAN OF THE CUBAN DELEGATION
ON THE ITEM ON THE AGENDA ENTITLED:
"ECONOMIC SURVEY OF LATIN AMERICA"



The Cuban Delegation is pleased to state that it deeply appreciates the efforts of the Secretariat of ECLA in producing, among other documents, the Economic Survey of Latin America, an achievement of a kind which until now has not been successfully accomplished in our Continent. Whatever observations we may wish to make in connection with the Survey, the fact is that our countries have incurred a debt of gratitude to the Secretariat which we are glad to recognize.

With this elementary debt of gratitude acknowledged, in spite of the shortness of the time, which has scarcely permitted us to read, much less study, this work, we pass to the first substantive item on the agenda.

We confess that at the end of our work in Santiago, Chile, we felt profoundly disturbed as to whether our Commission, with the poor resources at its disposal and the gigantic task before it, could attempt to complete in such a relatively brief time the task entrusted to it, and we asked ourselves what would be the best way of carrying out the work.

We knew that the task was long, trying and full of

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difficulties, and that only honest understanding on the part of our member countries would permit the Commission to surmount the problems it would have to face.

As we have stated, we have not actually read all of this voluminous study; we shall comment upon it in due course as we proceed to form our conclusions.

At the moment, we are only in a position to refer briefly to certain points which seem to us fundamental.

We believe that there is one essential initial step to be taken, as we start upon our work.

In our opinion, it is essential to approach the study of each one of our countries separately, as well as to examine the problem of its relations with the other countries of the Western Hemisphere and the rest of the world. Only when we have a more complete knowledge of the economic situation of each of our countries shall we be in a position to specify precisely - in the light of the similarity of their economic characteristics - the peculiar nature of the problems and the possibilities of establishing close relationships between the different national economies. Only then shall we be able to determine the existence of economic groups within the Latin American continent which will permit the undertaking of this difficult, but most fruitful and large-scale work in connection with our aspirations toward industrialization; in other words, to study the integration of economic groups within which the possibilities of development and progress may be greater than those which each separate country on its own now has.

In conclusion, the Cuban delegation is pleased to propose that the Commission take this opportunity of
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congratulating the Secretariat for the work it has done,
convinced that this Survey which we are now examining will
serve as a basic document to which we may at any moment refer.

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