

UNESCO IN BRIEF

By Pedro T. Orata
*National Commission on Educational,
Scientific and Cultural Matter*

ORIGIN

The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, UNESCO, for short, was established on November 16, 1945, when, in London, representatives of 43 nations signed a final act approving the constitution. The constitution came into force a year later, on November 4, 1946, the date of its acceptance by the twentieth signatory government. Credit has been given to the Chinese delegation which, in a formal proposal in the London Conference of Allied Ministers of Education in 1942, had proposed educational and other forms of cultural cooperation among the nations of the world. The groundwork had been laid by the Allied Ministers' Conference which met intermittently in London for a period of about a year and a half. The preliminary work for establishing the organization was done at the United Nations Conference in San Francisco. Earlier, the French government had made extensive plans for the development of an international body for intellectual cooperation. At the San Francisco Conference the French delegation recommended that the United Nations call a conference to draw up a Statute of an International Organization on Cultural Cooperation. The

basic idea behind this proposal is the same as that underlying the International Institute of Intellectual Cooperation, which formed the executive organ of the League of Nations International Committee on Intellectual Cooperation. The Institute was inaugurated on January 16, 1926.

MEMBERSHIP

There are today fifty-seven members of the United Nations. Of these, thirty, including the Philippines, are members of UNESCO. They are Australia, Belgium, Bolivia, Brazil, Canada, China, Czechoslovakia, Denmark, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Egypt, France, Greece, Haiti, India, Lebanon, Mexico, Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Peru, Philippines, Poland, Saudi Arabia, Syria, Turkey, Union of South Africa, United Kingdom, United States, and Venezuela. Significantly enough, Russia and twenty-six other nation-members of the UN have not joined the UNESCO.

PURPOSES AND FUNCTIONS

The two major purposes of UNESCO are: first, to contribute to peace and security, and, second, to advance the common welfare of mankind. The means chosen are education, science, and culture. These purposes are well brought forth in the preamble of the UNESCO constitution.

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The philosophy of Unesco "will thus largely resolve itself into a philosophy of human progress. It must seek to discover in what progress consist and what are the conditions for realizing it in practice. It must have a wide evolutionary background against which to judge the rightness or wrongness of the direction in which we propose to move. It must be humanist in the broadest sense of that word, to include all the possibilities of human nature and its development, spiritual and aesthetic as well as practical and intellectual. It must be scientific, not only because science is one of the distinctive attributes of humanity and because scientific research and its application constitute by far the most important means of improving human welfare. It must be a global philosophy, universalist and world-wide, not only because Unesco is an international organization, but also because progress clearly depends on forging unified mechanism for the entire community of man on earth." (Unesco Prep. Com. Report, p. 7.)

To realize the foregoing purposes Unesco will:

1. Collaborate in the work of advancing mutual knowledge and understanding of peoples through all means of mass communication;
2. Give fresh impulse to popular education and to the spread of culture;
3. Maintain, increase, and diffuse knowledge.

ORGANIZATION

Unesco brings together three major groups: First, educators, including not only teachers, scholars and professors, but also persons engaged in such informal aspects of education as the radio, motion pictures, and the press; Second, scientists of the world in every field of endeavor; Third, the cultural group who will place emphasis on languages,

literature, the arts, and the various means of communication.

Unesco operates through a General Conference, an Executive Board and a Secretariat. The General Conference meet annually. It consists of representatives of all members of the organization, each being entitled to send five delegates. It determines the policies and the main lines of work of Unesco. It may summon international conferences on education, the sciences and humanities, and the spreading of knowledge. The first Conference was held in Paris from November 19 to December 10, 1946. The second Conference is now being held in Mexico City. The Philippines were represented in both of this meetings.

The Executive Board is responsible for the execution of the program adopted by the General Conference. It meets twice a year and consists of eighteen members elected by the General Conference to serve a term of three years. The Secretariat consists of a Director-General and such staff as may be required. The Director-General is nominated by the Executive Board and appointed by the General Conference. The first and present Director-General is Dr. Julian Huxley from the United Kingdom, an eminent scientist. He was appointed by the General Conference in November 1946 to serve a term of two years.

BUDGET

The first session of the General Conference approved a budget of \$6,000,000 for 1947 and authorized a revolving fund of \$3,000,000.

UNESCO IN ACTION

Functionally the various projects and activities of the Unesco would fall under one or other of three main heads. "First, those which would promote peace and security directly (naturally within the limits of Unesco's compe-

tence). Secondly, those which would promote human welfare directly (in other ways than by promoting peace and security), by means of the applications of the sciences and the arts. And thirdly, those which would encourage education, science or culture directly, in the belief that they would ultimately promote either peace and security, or human welfare, or both." (Unesco Com. Report, p.6)

Actually, Unesco's activities for 1947 are divided into three groups, namely: overall projects, sectional projects, and continuing activities, and described as follows: *Guide for Lecturers and Teachers*, p. 137-139.)

Overall Projects

These include projects for:

- (1) Educational Reconstruction and Rehabilitation
- (2) International Understanding
- (3) Fundamental Education

Educational Reconstruction and Rehabilitation

In this field Unesco will stimulate and coordinate the action of individuals and organizations. A council of Voluntary Organizations will cooperate with Unesco.

Unesco will act as a central agency in a world-wide fund-raising campaign to help rehabilitate educational, scientific and cultural institutions in war-devastated areas.

It will act as a clearing-house for fellowship and scholarship grants to specialists in educational, scientific and cultural affairs from war-devastated countries for residence and study in non-devastated countries. It will stimulate the granting of fellowships in non-devastated countries, and will make arrangements for the selection and travel of Fellows.

Unesco will also stimulate the setting up by voluntary organizations of

field workshops in devastated areas, and will co-operate with student organizations in promoting the establishment of youth service camps.

It will act as a clearing house for the various types of educational, scientific and technical equipment needed in war-devastated countries.

International Understanding

Work proposed under this heading covers such projects as;

- (1) revision of text books
- (2) formation of international study centers
- (3) the study of education for international understanding
- (4) formation of international relations clubs and teachers' seminars.

Fundamental Education

This is a long-term project, including primary education, work with adult illiterates, education for health, for economic and cultural development, for international understanding and citizenship. In this, as in other fields, Unesco will work in cooperation with national commissions.

Sectional Projects

Examples of these are

Libraries—projects for a bibliographical and documentary service, and for stimulating the growth of public libraries.

National Sciences—Creation of an International Institute of the Hylean Amazon, and the establishment of field offices to assist local scientist in raising living standards of non-industrialized peoples in China, India, the Middle East and Latin America.

Social Sciences—A study of tensions crucial to peace, and a study of the educational, scientific and cultural aspects of home and community planning.

Arts and Letters—A survey of the condition of the arts and artists, and

assistance in the creation of an International Theatre Institute.

Mass Communication—Circulation between countries of information that will help to develop the use of mass media for education, science and culture, and the encouragement of the production of films, broadcasts and articles on subjects important to Unesco's work.

Continuing Projects

These include:

(1) cooperation with governmental and non-governmental organizations, including in some cases the making of grants-in-aid;

(2) the preparation of inventories of research resources;

(3) plans for year-books in specific technical fields;

(4) the collection, analysis and distribution of information essential to developing more effective communication between the peoples of the world in specific branches of educational, scientific and cultural knowledge;

(5) the removal of barriers to such communication;

(6) development of documentary services and the establishment of clearing houses of information.

EDUCATION PROJECTS FOR 1947

It is possible here only to list the "Projects to be Undertaken in 1947" in the field of education. (School and Society, 65: 23, January 11, 1947.)

1. Establishment of a small committee of experts to make a general inquiry on the education provided in primary and secondary schools in various countries to foster international understanding.

2. Collaboration with schools, colleges, and out-of-school agencies in sponsoring the establishment of clubs which should stress citizenship in the community, nation, and world.

3. Encouraging voluntary organiza-

tions to establish reconstruction camps for youth in war-devastated countries.

4. A conference of leaders in adult education to exchange information about methods and technique in their fields.

5. A conference to make a survey of existing arrangements for training in international relations in institutions of higher learning.

6. An international educational seminar in the summer of 1947.

7. A further study of the problems of an international university.

8. A conference on the teaching of national history in connection with a long-range program for the analysis and revision of textbooks.

9. Establishment, in collaboration with the World Health Organization and the Food and Agricultural Organization, of an expert committee on health education.

10. A study of the relations between vocational training and general education.

11. An international conference to be attended by representative administrators of school systems, educational psychologists, physicians, vocational-guidance experts, and economist, on education and guidance in secondary and higher education.

12. A study of the problems of handicapped children, special attention being given to the classification of handicapped children.

13. Establishment of a committee on educational statistics.

14. Publication of an international educational yearbook.

15. Publication of an international educational newsletter or review.

This enumeration is far from complete. Nevertheless, the impression has been created in the minds of some peoples that the Unesco is venturing

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PRESIDENTIAL . . .

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In the interpellation by members of the Toastmasters' Club, this question was directed to us: "You say that the PPSTA will work for what the teachers want in a peaceful way through petitions. Suppose you do not get what you want through this procedure, what will be your next move?" We answered:

"We believe that in a democratic set-up, people will listen to reason. It would seem that intelligent people should be able to get together and discuss their problems in an objective dispassionate way. If, for instance, we should find that there is money somewhere which the government could use to improve the schools and the teachers' welfare, would it not be possible for us to hold a conference with the authorities concerned and tell them that since the money is not being used, could it be spent for the improvement of the schools and the teachers' welfare? Is the situation so bad and so hopeless that the authorities concerned will not listen to reason when they can see very well that a solution to our problem is in their hands? It is for us to help point the way; we cannot just ask and ask."

And another question was posed. "What guarantee is there that the teachers we now have, those who have stayed and have refused to seek greener pastures, as you say, can teach our children well, and what guarantee do we have that our children are learning from them?"

And we replied, "There is no guarantee either way. This much I know, however, that hundreds of the teachers who have stayed did so purely out of love for the work they are doing for our children, and they are doing their job efficiently. There is no guarantee

for effective teaching and learning until the public comes to know their schools and demand that better trained teachers be made available. It is for the people to appraise the work of the schools and they must pay the teachers more. It will be the constant endeavor of the PPSTA to open the eyes of the public to the kind of school system that we now have."

5. The next annual meeting of the PPSTA will be in June, 1943, in Manila. Article VI of the Constitution says that the Representative Assembly of the Association shall be composed of delegates representing *duly affiliated* Division Teachers Association or Division Chapter in the Representative Assembly. There are still very few Division Associations actually and officially affiliated with the PPSTA. It is desired that the Division Associations be organized right away, so that they can send delegates to the PPSTA convention.

6. Which reminds us about the principle enunciated in the Preamble of the UNESCO constitution that "wars are started in the minds of men." Personally we believe that wars start with stomach trouble, probably more so from empty stomachs. When the economy of the country is such that the people do not have the means of keeping body and soul together, they lose their conscience, they rebel against the existing order of things, and they go to war. What is high pressure politics but maneuvering for the most advantageous positions in the struggle for economic stability and power? Economic spheres of influence are the objective of all these machinations of the stronger nation to ingratiate themselves in the heart of weaker nations which have raw materials needed by world trade and industry. In this

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of any teacher who may die during the term of service; life pension after service of thirty years in addition to whatever benefits the teacher gets from his government insurance.

These rights and privileges, they believe, will not only give justice, so long denied, to teachers and teacher-nurses but it will surely attract men and women of high moral, cultural, and intellectual qualities to join the army of missionaries for peace and progress whose sacred task is to lay and fortify the basic foundations of light and truth, of freedom and justice.

On the question of backpay, Dr. Manuel T. Cases, Congressman from the district of La Union, asserted that the 57,000 teachers before the war as well as thousands of other government employees in the national, municipal and provincial rosters are entitled to their three years' salary. Dr. Cases advocates the payment of the back pay to all government employees in the form of negotiable bonds redeemable in ten years. Dr. Cases has a bill filed in the House of Representatives entitled AN ACT TO PAY PRE-WAR EMPLOYEES SERVING THE COMMONWEALTH GOVERNMENT UP TO

DECEMBER 7, 1941, THE AMOUNT EQUIVALENT TO THEIR RESPECTIVE SALARIES FROM JANUARY 1, 1942 TO JANUARY 30, 1945.

Let us hope that the next Congress will be more inclined toward the cause of the teachers and teacher-nurses and other poorly paid government employees. Write to your respective Congressmen to support this Back Pay Bill so that, in the words of Dr. Cases, "not only the big shots but also the small fry will be the recipients of the charity of Juan de la Cruz. Juan de la Cruz has no business giving lollipops to the big boys and say later that there is none left for the small potatoes. Let Juan be buried in debt, if there is no other way out, in order to serve all, instead of saving in order to serve only the few. This is only one among the many teachings and implications of DEMOCRACY, the way of life we have chosen to follow, a concept which means freedom of religion and of expression and security from want and fear. May the Spirit of Democracy continue to keep burning its sacred flame in the hearts of our people so that peace, order, justice and, progress will bless our lives."

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in too many fields, thereby duplicating the efforts of already well established organizations. Be that as it may, it is the purpose of Unesco "to promote the evolutionary adventure of humanity and to help to keep to the right direction for achieving true progress. In that adventure and that progress,

education and learning, the sciences and the arts, are one and the same, same time, means and ends, methods for achieving growth and also the flower and fruit of that growth. Unesco is the first large-scale organization to be set up to promote this adventure of humanity as a whole, concentrating on the mental and spiritual aspects, but not neglecting their practical applications." (Unesco Com. Report, p. 11.)