

GENERAL PROBLEMS

QUESTION 1

In your view, what are the main problems which face the world today and which, by their probable development between now and the end of the century and more particularly over the next decade, seem to you likely to have a major impact on the future of societies, on the satisfaction of the aspirations and needs of peoples and of individuals, and on the achievement of "a decent life in the future" and "further social progress"?

It is important to answer this question from two points of view: one, from the point of view of the Constitution of Unesco with its purposes of concern for peace and security, respect for justice, the rule of law, human rights, fundamental freedoms and the common welfare of mankind and two, from the point of view of the fields of competence of Unesco through which it makes its major contribution.

Unesco should therefore avoid addressing problems which are already well attended to by the United Nations and other specialized agencies or by other organizations elsewhere.

Development planning has so far concentrated too heavily on economic indicators, growth rates, industrialization, mechanization and technology. We have too often lost sight of the recipient of all this activity, the individual human being. This has resulted in a deterioration in the quality of life which in turn feeds social unrest and other world problems.

The major challenge of the 1980s will be to redirect the focus of planning on the development of the individual and to elaborate all plans by reference to their impact on that development. Canada proposes that the second Medium-Term Plan be devoted to the theme of human development and that this plan should address problems as they affect the individual directly under two headings: (1) the quality of life, and (2) coping with change.

Conversely, the 1980s offer new, unprecedented opportunities.