

World Congress on the Eradication of Illiteracy

AN UNUSUAL international conference, the World Congress of Ministers of Education on the Eradication of Illiteracy, was held in Tehran from September 8 to 19, 1965, under the auspices of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization and at the invitation of His Imperial Majesty, the Shahanshah of Iran.

The conference was asked to consider the following matters:

- (a) the problem of mass illiteracy, which continues to impede social and economic progress in many parts of the world;
- (b) national plans to eradicate mass illiteracy in countries where it is still widespread and to exchange experience on the preparation and execution of such plans;
- (c) the manner in which plans for the eradication of illiteracy can more effectively contribute to social and economic progress and to the objectives of the United Nations Development Decade;
- (d) how national efforts to this end can be supplemented by intensified international action;
- (e) how to ensure the fullest support of public opinion and the active participation of the people of all countries in a world campaign for the eradication of mass illiteracy.

Canadian Delegation

Delegations from 85 member states of UNESCO and one associate member participated in the conference. Observers from a number of international organizations attended. Forty-five delegations were headed by ministers or persons of ministerial rank. The Canadian delegation consisted of Mr. Paul Malone, Canadian Ambassador to Iran (chairman), Dr. H. T. Coutts, Dean of the Faculty of Education, University of Alberta, and Vice-President of the Canadian Education Association (vice-chairman), Mr. Joseph Pagé, Associate Deputy Minister of Education for the Province of Quebec, Mr. E. McEwen, Executive Director of the Indian-Eskimo Association of Canada, and Professor I. Brecher, Director of the Centre for Developing Area Studies, McGill University. Mr. Jacques Montpetit of the Canadian Embassy acted as secretary.

The Congress provided a forum for the exchange of information and technical ideas among representatives of various countries engaged in literacy work. Its recommendations will not be binding on UNESCO, but they will undoubtedly stimulate the activities of that Organization in the promotion of literacy. Discussions during the Congress were noteworthy for the emphasis placed by developing countries on the necessity of increased contributions by developed countries to