

II THE PROGRAMME OF UNESCO IN 1949

The programme of activities in education, science and culture adopted at the Third Session of the General Conference of UNESCO follows in general the design of the programme approved at the Second Session at Mexico City. Some modifications were made necessary, of course, by the adoption of approximately sixty proposals submitted by member states and approved by the General Conference. Many of these proposals, however, were designed to clarify existing instructions, to ensure close co-operation with other specialized agencies, or to prevent any increase in the Organization's activities. Although many new proposals called for positive action by the Director-General, the General Conference restricted his responsibility in 1949 largely to studies of and reports on the new projects. It was the view of the Canadian Delegation that a workable programme had been adopted at the Beirut meeting.

The programme of UNESCO in 1949, which is reproduced in Appendix II of this report, contains seven chapters: Reconstruction, Education, Natural Sciences, Social Sciences, Humanities, Cultural Activities, Communications. It is proposed here to review briefly the work of the General Conference at Beirut in these fields.

RECONSTRUCTION

It was generally acknowledged at Beirut that some of the most successful of UNESCO's work had been achieved in the educational, scientific and cultural reconstruction of war devastated countries. The relevant chapter of the draft programme for 1949 providing for the continuation of the work undertaken at the First and Second Sessions, was approved with few changes at the Third Session.

There were, of course, some deletions from and additions to the reconstruction programme. Most important of these was a United Kingdom proposal that in the future UNESCO should effect a gradual transition from emphasis of the reconstruction of war devastated countries to constructive development of education, science and culture. It was the view of the Canadian delegation that this proposal was a sound one, since the reconstruction needs of war-torn countries were now diminishing. The General Conference also instructed the Director-General to publish a report on the work accomplished by the Organization in reconstruction.

The needs of refugees driven from their homes by military operations in the Middle East received attention from the Conference.

On the proposal of the Australian delegation the Director-General was instructed, in co-operation with the United Nations and the specialized agencies, to make an immediate survey of the educational and cultural needs of the refugees, to encourage donor organizations, to contribute towards meeting these needs and to extend the scope of UNESCO's emergency aid programme to include educational and cultural assistance to these refugees.

Two other new proposals were approved by the General Conference. The first, based on Belgian and United Kingdom suggestions, recommended to Member States that they call upon their educational institutions to provide employment for intellectual refugees, thus permitting their absorption into the normal life of their adopted countries. The second new project, based on Austrian and Belgian proposals, recommended to Member States that they issue stamps with a surcharge for the UNESCO Reconstruction Fund.

The principal deletion from the Reconstruction Programme was the Mexico City resolution on the possibility of creating an international loan fund for educational, scientific and cultural reconstruction. It was considered at Beirut that by now needy countries might obtain financial assistance in their reconstruction plans by more direct means.

EDUCATION

At the Second Session of the General Conference the Director-General was instructed to consolidate UNESCO's activities in the three fields of fundamental education, general education and education for international understanding. This directive was implemented in 1948 and Dr. Clarence E. Beeby of New Zealand became head of the Education Department with rank of Assistant Director-General.

UNESCO's programme in education for 1949 lists many projects begun earlier, but the main emphasis of the programme is on the development of "clearing-house" functions rather than on individual projects. This change in emphasis has resulted in a reduction in the number of seminars to be undertaken next year and the limitation of UNESCO's obligations with respect to pilot projects in fundamental education. Indeed, the programme proposed by the Director-General did not provide for sponsorship by UNESCO of any educational seminars in 1949, and it was only at the insistence of various delegations, including the Canadian, that provision was made for one seminar in 1949 and two in 1950. In addition it was agreed that assistance be given to a Latin American