

been imposed on the Agency's activities; it will not venture into the political sphere in the near future. The apprehension in that regard was increased by Jean-Marc Léger's remarks about Quebec; stating that he was satisfied with the results of the Second General Conference, in spite of the limited means at the Agency's disposal, he declared:

The Agency was established as an instrument by which peoples might meet and learn about each other, and to provide cultural dialogue. The French language is the Agency's eminently privileged and principal means in this. But the means are not the purpose of the Agency. The purpose is a unique form of co-operation between peoples of all continents who use a common basic tool, the French language. (*Le Devoir*, October 19, 1971).

To give effect to this unique co-operation of which the Secretary-General speaks, "development programs" that have a more social and economic content should be implemented; such projects should be long-lasting and job-creating in the Third World. Initiatives such as the Bordeaux International School, youth exchanges,

educational television, dissemination of books and films, and methods of introduction to French as a second language, are an interesting development but one which is still too much centred on the "cultural" aspect. This, however, might be a stage that must be passed before the above mentioned programs can be more fully developed.

Be that as it may, two years after its founding conference in Niamey the Agency for Cultural and Technical Co-operation has definitely been recognized as a permanent institution. Setting it up has been sometimes and sometimes painful, but it is now firmly established. The Second General Conference in Ottawa and Quebec has shown that development and pursuit of the Agency's goals in the positive spirit inspired by Hamani Diori and Jean-Marc Léger, provide hope and a challenge to Canada, Quebec and the entire French-speaking community — particularly to the member states of the Third World, who have the right to demand a great deal from this new international organization.

Behind the barricade of files inside a troubled West Bengal

By Clyde Sanger

Someone in our group who had seen Mr. Sengupta's desk a few months earlier remarked upon the change. It had always been an extraordinary desk. It lay in a bare room with a high ceiling on the second floor of the dour Writers Building in Calcutta. Walls bare except for a single calendar. The huge semi-circular desk dominated the room. Even months earlier, files were loaded high along its perimeter, our colleague told us. But now it was an encampment, and Mr. Sengupta seemed to be crouched down behind the manila files like an infantryman behind a sandbag barricade. There were seven telephones along the rim, ranging from a snazzy carmine-coloured instrument to an ancient field-telephone set.

Inevitably, military metaphors occurred to us. He looked like a soldier manning an outpost that was about to be overrun. Yet the job of the eight of us —

James George, Canada's High Commissioner in India, and the seven of us who had come from Canada to talk about refugee relief — was to fire questions at him. We pulled eight chairs up around the desk's perimeter and, as gently as possible, began to besiege the Chief Secretary of Bengal

. . . It was calmer in the great hall where Governor Dias received us. Lord Curzon hadn't actually occupied this place, we were told, but it had obviously been built to vice-regal proportions. Governor Dias had personal presence enough to complement the big room and its creaky wobbly ceiling-fans. His engagements for the day were typed out and mounted in a photo-frame at his elbow, a subtle reminder to visitors to put their business briefly. Yet he spoke in an old-fashioned leisurely style and a little majestically; mentioned the continuing flow of refugees