

There were never more than two Commissions meeting at any one time, but since there were usually two, it was necessary to alternate my time between whatever two Commissions were meeting. Actually it didn't matter too much. In the first place, most of what was said in Commissions was a repetition of what had been said in the opening interventions. In the second place, and partly as a result of the first, the same things were being said in all commissions, regardless of what each was ostensibly to deal with. In the third place, and this point I want to elaborate on further, it didn't matter what was being discussed as the Resolutions weren't being prepared in the Commission anyway.

When the Commission on Democratization and Reform of Education first met, we were informed that there would be a general discussion for as long as the participants wished, then sub-commissions were to be elected to draft resolutions, and then these draft resolutions were to be presented for final discussion and amendment before presentation to the Final Plenary Session.

The participants first became aware that there was going to be a change from this procedure when the Chairman read out the names of people, or rather countries, who, he said, had "volunteered" to draft the various resolutions that would be required. The Representative from British Guiana declared that he wanted to be on the sub-commission dealing with IUS Scholarships, but he was informed that since there were already some volunteers, his labour would not really be required. Despite his persistence he was firmly refused admission to the sub-commission, and a long wrangle followed as members of the IUS Secretariat, who declared that they were speaking as representatives of their respective countries, and who were all on sub-commissions as "volunteers" insisted that time would be saved with preparation of resolutions by these sub-commissions. (Needless to say volunteers had never been called for, and until the announcement of who had volunteered the remainder had not known that there were any.)

Later the same day it became perfectly clear why the representative of British Guiana could not join the sub-commission he wanted to join. The instant the Commission completed its general discussion it was presented with a six-page resolution on the first point of the agenda, which resolution had been translated into the Official Congress languages and duly mimeographed in those languages -- a job taking many hours of work. At this point a number of us asked the Representative from Martinique, who was a joint-proposer of the Resolution with Poland, when the Resolution had been prepared. He told us that it was the previous afternoon. (The Commission had not started its work until the evening of that day!)

This preparation of drafts even before the Commissions had started any work was the common practice. On the night of October 15th I went into the office of the technical services staff and asked whether they could give me any resolutions for the Commission dealing with World Student Unity. Even though that Commission didn't start its work until the following afternoon, I was given four draft resolutions, running into many pages, for each of which there were apparently several "volunteer" draftsmen. The discussion in Commissions could take any turn it wished, but eventually it would result in a draft resolution which had been prepared beforehand and which reached and passed through the final plenary session with few amendments, and no major ones.