

doc
CA1
EA
55U51
ENG

DOCS
CA1 EA 55U51 ENG
Unesco Conference : report of the
Canadian delegation. --
43268769

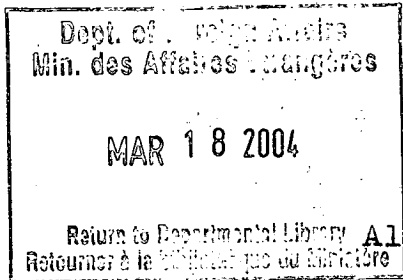
M
b2578359

UNESCO CONFERENCE

Report of the Canadian Delegation

The eighth General Conference of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) was held at Montevideo, Uruguay, from November 11th to December 10th, 1954. The Canadian delegation consisted of:

- | | |
|--|--------------------|
| Mr. S.D. Pierce, Canadian Ambassador to Brazil | Chairman |
| Mr. Bona Arsenault, M.P. | Vice-Chairman |
| Mr. C.W. Carter, M.P. | Delegate |
| Dr. Philippe Panneton | Delegate |
| Dr. Garnet T. Page | Delegate |
| Mr. F.K. Stewart | Alternate Delegate |
| Dr. A. Vibert Douglas | Alternate Delegate |
| Mr. Fulgence Charpentier | Alternate Delegate |
| Mr. M.N. Bow | Adviser |
| Mr. C.F.W. Hooper | Secretary |



The extent of the progress made by the Conference can only be properly assessed when action to implement the Conference's decisions has been taken and the results have been evaluated.

There were three principal areas of achievement:

- (a) An easing of tension and a degree of rapprochement (in matters within the competence of UNESCO) between the delegations of the U.S.S.R. and the United States was apparent.
- (b) A substantial increase in UNESCO's programme of activities and in the budget provided to finance this programme was approved.
- (c) A more responsible attitude of member states toward UNESCO and of individual representatives toward their governments was evident as the Organization approached universal membership.

UNESCO General Conferences are held every two years and the ninth General Conference will be held at New Delhi, India, in 1956. At that time the consequences of these developments may be more apparent.

Historical Notes

UNESCO was founded in 1945, and the first General Conference was held in Paris in November, 1946. In its early years UNESCO's energies were directed toward post-war rehabilitation but in 1948 the Organization turned toward the task of eradicating ignorance and illiteracy. Dr. Jaime Torres-Bodet, of Mexico, an international authority on mass education, was appointed Director-General. He envisaged an expanding programme and budget for a sustained attack on urgent international problems, but he resigned in 1952 when

43-268-769
b2578359

the General Conference did not approve the increased programme and budget which he presented. In July 1953, Dr. Luther H. Evans, of the United States, was elected Director-General of UNESCO. One of his first endeavours was a re-orientation of the Organization's programme. It was proposed that 1955 and 1956 should be transitional years and that a remodelled programme should come into force in 1957. In 1954 the entry to UNESCO of the U.S.S.R., the Ukraine and Byelorussia and the return of Poland, Hungary and Czechoslovakia to active participation brought the total membership to 72 nations.

Easing of Tension

On the first day of the Conference the Soviet delegation unsuccessfully urged the admission to UNESCO membership of Roumania and Bulgaria and rejection of the Nationalist Chinese credentials. The comparatively restrained and moderate statement of the Soviet spokesman was indicative of the attitude taken by the U.S.S.R. throughout the session. The United States also scrupulously avoided provocation and concentrated on supporting increased technical aid to under-developed countries. Under these circumstances, the two leading participants were disposed to be reasonable, even conciliatory, toward each other.

The debate on obligations and rights of UNESCO staff members which involved three United States' citizens who had declined to answer questions concerning alleged communist associations, illustrated these attitudes. Some European countries were prepared to make this an issue of civil liberties, individual freedom and the independence of international civil servants. The United States said that the whole future of UNESCO was at stake and it was obvious that a major propaganda debate could be precipitated. Because of the reticence of the principals a major clash was avoided and the Conference approved the Director-General's recommendations which were designed to bring UNESCO staff regulations into conformity with those of the United Nations.

Three resolutions on atomic energy offered another opportunity for political argument on such questions as banning atomic weapons, disarmament, the harmful effects of radiation and the control of nuclear energy. However, thanks to the cooperative spirit of all concerned, it was possible to combine the three resolutions into one which authorized the Director-General to extend full cooperation to the United Nations on questions concerning the peaceful uses of atomic energy. The joint resolution was approved unanimously.

A Soviet resolution on "Measures to prevent the use of means of mass communication for the propaganda of war" seemed certain to create trouble until the Soviet joined Canada, Colombia, Czechoslovakia, France, India, Lebanon, Mexico, the United Kingdom and the United States in sponsoring an alternative resolution on "Freedom of Information". The resolution was approved unanimously but the variation of interpretations of the operative paragraph which invited member states "to take the necessary measures to ensure freedom of expression and to remove barriers to the free flow of undistorted information" somewhat circumscribed the enthusiasm with which this Soviet concession had been greeted.

Expansion of the Programme and Budget

Throughout the Conference there was an insistent demand from under-developed countries for a substantial extension of UNESCO's programme and a large increase in the budget. The crisis of 1952 did not recur because the contributions of new members provided additional revenue and made expansion of the programme and budget possible without any increase in the individual contributions of member states. By an overwhelming majority vote the Conference approved an assessment level of \$20,000,000 for 1955-56, an increase of approximately \$2,000,000 over 1953-54. Redistribution of contribution percentages as new members joined UNESCO caused Canada's percentage to decline from 3.54 to 2.77. The amount of the Canadian contribution for 1955-56 will be approximately \$554,000 compared with more than \$600,000 in 1953-54.

The under-developed countries obtained approval of a resolution calling for a study of the possibility of establishing an educational, scientific and cultural development fund. They explained that western-trained experts on educational and cultural development were ineffective because of differences in languages, educational methods, cultural conceptions, etc., and that they preferred a development fund from which loans could be obtained for building schools, libraries and laboratories and for financing fellowships to train their own nationals.

The programme proposed by the Director-General and the Executive Board was approved with minor alterations. Projects which are of greatest interest in Canada are reported in the annex to this report.

Attitude of Responsibility

The decisions to remodel UNESCO's programme and change the structure of the Executive Board to provide for representation of governments rather than of individuals competent in the areas of UNESCO activity are developments to be welcomed as they bring the Organization closer to the governments that contribute to it.

At the last two UNESCO Conferences proposals to alter the structure of the Executive Board were defeated, although in 1952 a Canadian compromise proposal received more sympathetic consideration and a decision on it was postponed. At the recent Conference a United States resolution to change the composition of the Executive Board encountered stiff opposition. However, when the operative paragraph of the Canadian compromise was inserted, the Conference voted by a large majority to elect an Executive Board of government representatives to "...exercise the powers delegated to them by the Conference on behalf of the Conference as a whole." Nevertheless, when the new Executive Board of 22 members was elected many of the same individuals and the same countries that had served in 1953-54 were returned to office, and it is unlikely that the attitude of these representatives or their governments will alter immediately.

Recommendations concerning remodelling UNESCO's programme were approved unanimously but this decision appeared to be something of a paradox in view of more than 100 new resolutions, many of which would detract attention

and resources from concentration on major projects of international importance. The net effect was therefore, unanimous agreement in principle on concentration of the programme, but in practice a tendency to continue the wide diffusion of activities.

Conclusions

The easing of tension at the Conference was a consequence of a series of compromises and concessions. At the next General Conference at New Delhi, India, in 1956, an evaluation of the results of compromise resolutions may reveal whether further steps in the same direction would be profitable.

The Director-General and the Secretariat have the difficult assignment of attempting to reconcile the Conference's decision to remodel UNESCO's programme toward concentration on a few major projects and its approval of a large number of new activities. The Director-General will require a strong support from member states who wish to see UNESCO established on a progressive and stable basis.

The next two years will be of great importance in the development of UNESCO. It is by endeavouring to secure popular participation in its activities on a well-organized national basis that the Organization can probably acquire greater strength and stability.

Annex to

Report of Canadian Delegation to
Eighth General Conference of UNESCO

Summary records of the Conference and the complete text of all resolutions approved by it will be printed and issued by UNESCO in due course. Meanwhile, the following decisions of the eighth General Conference of UNESCO may be of general interest in Canada:

A. EDUCATION

The Conference recommended special emphasis on primary education and fundamental education.

1. Fundamental Education aims at giving minimum knowledge to enable uneducated people to improve their condition of life (e.g. health, nutrition, output, etc.) within the environment in which they live. The continuation of the international fundamental education centres at Patzcuaro, Mexico, and Sirs-el-Layyan, Egypt, was approved but the Conference strongly recommended the development of national centres. Dr. W.S. Gray's report on "Methods of Teaching How to Read and Write" will be published in 1955 and field tests will be conducted in India and Africa. An evaluation of literacy campaigns will be made in 1955 and reading material for new literates will be produced. The role of women in fundamental education will be studied.
2. Pre-School and School Education. This project calls for international action in the development and the improvement of school systems and school teaching:
 - (a) The International Bureau of Education, Geneva, and UNESCO jointly sponsor annual conferences on public education and one major problem of school education is studied each year. In 1955 the study subject will be the financing of public education and in 1956 it will be the inspection and supervision of schools.
 - (b) A regional conference on compulsory education will be held in Latin America during 1956.
 - (c) Teaching about the United Nations and Human Rights will be stressed.
 - (d) The project entitled "Education for International Understanding and Cooperation" was carefully considered in the light of a report from a committee of experts. Some of the committee's recommendations were severely criticized but it was agreed that the objective of this project should be maintained in all parts of UNESCO's programme and that national and regional seminars on school education for international understanding and cooperation should be assisted during 1955-56.

3. Adult Education Assistance to member states in the development of adult education toward better international understanding was authorized. Special consideration will be given to selected summer schools in under-developed areas and those for women students.
4. Work with Youth. In the development of youth education for social responsibility and international understanding a system of "Associated Youth Enterprises" will be developed in 1955-56.
5. Subventions to 11 international educational organizations were approved. The proposed subvention of \$2,000 to the World Confederation of Organizations of the Teaching Profession was increased to \$4,000 and a subvention was granted to the Joint Committee of International Teachers' Federations.
6. The Proposed International School at Paris for children of UNESCO staff members was rejected.

B. NATURAL SCIENCE

1. Assistance to Scientific Research
 - (a) Arid Zone - The Conference agreed that arid zone research should be accelerated and a substantial budgetary increase was voted for this activity. Integrated surveys of arid areas in Latin America, the Middle East and South Asia will be commenced during 1955-56. Comprehensive reports will be prepared and circulated and additional fellowships will be awarded.
 - (b) Humid Tropical Zone research will be examined by a committee of experts in an effort to coordinate research on this subject.
 - (c) Physical Oceanography and Marine Biology research was approved with a revised work plan.
 - (d) The proposed "Campaign Against Cancer" was the most controversial item in the entire UNESCO programme. It was approved, rejected, and finally accepted under the new title "Basic Research on Cellular Growth".
2. Teaching of Science. A study conference on science teaching will be held in South Asia in 1955 and the preparation of manuals and catalogues of laboratory and teaching materials will continue.
3. Science Cooperation Offices. The changing direction of UNESCO's programme stimulated a discussion on the maintenance of some of these offices. After prolonged debate it was decided to continue the operation of all offices except the one at Istanbul. An evaluation of the work of these offices will be made during 1955-56.

4. Improvement of Scientific Documentation. Advice and encouragement to international organizations concerned with the standardization of terminology, the compilation of multilingual dictionaries and the improvement of scientific translations was authorized.
5. Subventions. The Conference expressed keen interest in the work of the International Council of Scientific Unions. Subventions to the Council of International Organizations of Medical Sciences, the Union of International Engineering Associations, the General Assembly of the International Union of Biochemistry and the International Geophysical year were approved. There was wide enthusiasm for the latter activity.

C. SOCIAL SCIENCES

1. Development of Social Science Teaching will be encouraged with particular attention given to direct aid to member states and teaching of economics at universities.
2. Problems of International Understanding and Tensions. The title of this project was altered to "Current Problems of Peaceful Cooperation" and an extensive revision was made in the light of a United States-Czechoslovak resolution, which authorized a study of means of promoting cooperation in accordance with UNESCO's Constitution.
3. Problems of Human Rights and Minorities. The Conference decided to intensify its work in this field and to initiate a world-wide campaign to eradicate racial discrimination.
4. Improvement of Social Science Documentation and Terminology. The publication of bibliographies, catalogues and multilingual lists of scientific terms was approved.
5. Improvement of International Comparability of Statistics. A study of standards and criteria was authorized.
6. Subventions were granted to eight international social science organizations or institutions.

D. CULTURAL ACTIVITIES

1. Humanistic Studies in Culture and Education. The Conference authorized:
 - (a) An enquiry on the role of the humanities in contemporary culture, and a round-table discussion;
 - (b) An enquiry into the teaching of the humanities;
 - (c) An analysis of the use of radio and television in cultural programmes;
 - (d) A study of traditional cultures in South East Asia communities which are undergoing rapid technological changes.

2. Education through Arts and Crafts - Aid to member states in which existing educational facilities are inadequate will be provided. Comparative studies of methods used in industrial and rural areas will be conducted in Sweden, Germany and the U.S.S.R.
3. Development of Libraries. Under-developed countries that have requested assistance will be aided in the establishment of libraries and archives, education of librarians, and the micro-filming of library or archival material. During 1955 a seminar on public library development will be held in India and a regional conference on exchange of publications will be held in Latin-America.
4. Development of Museums. Aid to member states (e.g. Burma, India and Pakistan) in the development of museums was approved and assistance to the International Council of Museums in the international exchange of exhibitions was authorized.
5. History of the Scientific and Cultural Development of Mankind. The auditors' observations on accounting of funds allocated for the preparation of the history and continued misgivings about the value of this activity inspired the establishment of a special sub-committee to investigate the project. The continuation of the activity was authorized on the understanding that it will be largely completed by 1957.
6. Study of Cultural Relations. An international discussion between representatives of Asian and American cultures for the purpose of identifying common cultural interests, analyzing the causes of misunderstandings and determining the best means of developing cultural relations will be organized in 1956.
7. Dissemination of the Visual Arts and Music. The following activities were approved:
 - (a) revised catalogues of colour reproductions;
 - (b) new albums of oriental art and of the art of certain other regions;
 - (c) travelling exhibitions of reproductions;
 - (d) financial support of the International Music Council's circulation of musical recordings;
8. Translations. Publication of a series of translations of a selection of classic and modern works was approved.
9. Implementation of International Conventions and Preparation of International Agreements. The Conference recommended the maintenance of services necessary for implementation of the Universal Copyright Convention; the convening of a meeting of contracting parties to the Convention on Protection of Cultural Property in the Event of Armed Conflict; a recommendation to member states concerning archaeological excavations; transmission

to member states of draft standard regulations for international competitions in architecture and town planning; and a meeting of an advisory committee on the desirability of new agreements concerning the exchange of publications and micro-filming of documents.

10. Subventions. Subventions to 11 international cultural organizations were approved. Subventions to the International Council for Philosophy and Humanistic Studies and the International Association for the Visual Arts were increased.

E. MASS COMMUNICATIONS

A working party established to consider reorganization of UNESCO's Mass Communication Department recommended that the two operative functions of this Department - UNESCO publicity or public relations and means of communication between member states -- should be separated.

1. Promotion of International Understanding. The continuation of all UNESCO activities in this field was authorized although the budget for film production and showings was reduced.
2. Free Flow of Information. Continued efforts to procure support for proposed international agreements in this field were urged and the preparation of a recommendation to member states on the free movement of persons was authorized.
3. Clearing House Approval of press, film and radio activities was given and special attention was directed to exchanging information on use of television.
4. Aid to Member States in Development of Mass Communications and Services. A substantial appropriation was provided for expert missions and fellowships.
5. Voluntary International Assistance. All the UNESCO coupon schemes were approved.

F. EXCHANGE OF PERSONS

The Conference commended this section of the programme and approved all the projects with a few minor amendments. In awarding fellowships priority will be given to under-developed countries.

G. GENERAL RESOLUTIONS

1. Development of National Commissions - The Conference considered this to be one of the most important questions on its agenda. A study of the structure and methods of work of existing commissions, the resources at their disposal and the difficulties they were encountering was authorized and all member states were urged to improve the operation of their national commissions. National commissions will be given assistance in organizing regional cooperation.

2. Decentralization. A special working party was established to study this question. Its recommendation that UNESCO's programme but not its administration should be decentralized, was approved.

H. REMODELLING UNESCO'S PROGRAMME

The Conference approved the report of the Executive Board on this subject and instructed the Director-General to prepare future programmes in the light of the principles outlined in the report. The Division of the programme into two parts -- general activities and special activities -- was approved and the following programme areas are to be given priority in future programmes:

- (i) free and compulsory education at the primary level;
- (ii) fundamental education;
- (iii) racial, social and international tensions;
- (iv) mutual appreciation of eastern and western cultural values;
- (v) scientific research for the improvement of living conditions.

During 1955 - the Director-General will prepare a small number of major projects and during 1956, detailed plans for their implementation in 1957-58 will be prepared.

LIBRARY E A/BIBLIOTHEQUE A E



3 5036 20041611 6

A 55U51 ENG c.1 DOCS
conference 43268769

DOCS
CA1 EA 55U51 ENG
Unesco Conference : report of the
Canadian delegation. --
43268769