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Report of the Canadian delegation
to the Seventh Session of the
General Conference of Unesco :
Paris, November 12 - December
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Report of the Canadian Delegation to the Seventh
Session of the General Conference of UNESCO,
Paris, November 12 - December 11, 1952

It has become customary to refer to various General Conferences of UNESCO in terms of crises and turning points. The Seventh General Conference held at Paris from November 12 to December 11, 1952, was no exception. It is no exaggeration to say that this was a critical conference for UNESCO; it would be incorrect to say that the crisis has been happily surmounted and that the Organization can now proceed confidently on a stable course. The different national conceptions of the work which UNESCO can and should do caused a serious rift in the middle of the conference. At its close there had been only a patchy and uneasy bridging of the rift.

The Canadian Delegation to the Seventh General Conference of UNESCO consisted of the following:

Chairman: Dr. Victor Doré, Canadian Minister to Switzerland and Austria

Vice-Chairman: Mr. E.H. Norman, Department of External Affairs

Delegates: Mr. T.A.M. Kirk, M.P. for Digby-Yarmouth

Mr. Garnet T. Page, General Manager, Chemical Institute of Canada

Mr. Paul Gérin-Lajoie, Montreal lawyer

Alternate Delegate: Miss M.E. Conway, President, Canadian Teachers' Federation

Adviser: Mr. René Garneau, Department of External Affairs

Financial Adviser: Mr. J.E.G. Hardy, Department of External Affairs

Adviser and Secretary: Mr. Blair Seaborn, Department of External Affairs.

Site of the Eighth General Conference of UNESCO

The action taken by the Sixth General Conference, commending to the Seventh Conference the invitation of the Government of Uruguay to hold the Eighth Conference at Montevideo, virtually pre-determined the decision.

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Several delegations stressed the extra cost of holding general conferences away from the permanent headquarters of the Organization - an extra cost which could only be met by funds which otherwise would be devoted to programme activities. They also stressed the difficulties and disorganization for the secretariat. Some countries warned that the distance and the additional cost would make it impossible for them to send full delegations, or perhaps any delegations at all. However, the argument that this was an effective way of publicizing UNESCO and making its work known on the South American continent won the day. The conference voted 28-13 (with 12 abstentions) in favour of Montevideo. It is expected that the 1954 conference will be held in May or September of that year; the decision rests in the hands of the Executive Board.

Admission of New Members to UNESCO

The admission of Nepal and Libya created no difficulties. The admission of Spain, however, aroused strong feelings among the delegations which had opposed it, and caused uneasiness amongst delegations that did not wish to take a strong stand either way. The General Conference accepted a resolution precluding debate on the admission of Spain. This was approved by a majority of 44-4 (with 7 abstentions). Spain's admission without debate led the Yugoslav member of the Executive Board to announce his resignation (which he later agreed to withdraw until his National Commission could review the issue) and resulted in the resignation of a member each from the French and Belgian delegations. The Canadian Delegation voted in favour of Spain's admission on the ground that UNESCO's objective was universal membership and that it was a non-political organization.

Withdrawal of Poland

A letter was received from the Polish Embassy in Paris in the last days of the conference denouncing the nature of the

Organization and announcing Poland's withdrawal from membership. It was not a startling development, because Poland, Czechoslovakia and Hungary had not taken part in the work of the Organization since the Florence conference of 1950. A letter has been sent from UNESCO urging the Polish Government to reconsider its decision; but it seems highly improbable that this will have any affect, particularly since Hungary announced after the conference its intention of withdrawing.

Debate on the Budget Ceiling

The programme and budget estimates prepared by the Director-General and approved by the Executive Board for presentation to the General Conference called for a budget of \$20,400,000 for the years 1953 and 1954. This, according to the Director-General, was the minimum necessary to carry out the essential parts of UNESCO's programme. This figure represented a substantial increase over the budget ceiling of \$8,700,000 for the year 1952.

The debate on the budget ceiling probably was the most critical of the session. On one side were those countries which entirely supported the Director-General's programme and considered that it constituted but one more modest step in the direction of a constantly expanding UNESCO programme. They saw an almost limitless field of worthwhile projects in education, science and culture, and thought that only through UNESCO could these be initiated. On the other side, those countries that spoke in favour of a more modest budget, principally the countries, such as the United States, the United Kingdom and ourselves, making the largest contributions to UNESCO, cited heavy commitments in other fields and inability to give unlimited funds to UNESCO. Although the division of countries into those which thought in an expansive way and those of a more conservative bent was not entirely clearcut, predominant among the former were the Latin American countries and some of the more important

countries of Asia and Africa.

A compromise proposal providing a budget ceiling of \$18,000,000 for the two years was finally put forward late in the discussion and was carried by a narrow majority of 29-21 (with 4 abstentions).

Although the ceiling of \$18,000,000 will mean a higher assessment for the forthcoming two years, the money available for the programme each year will be less than in the year 1952. There will be an effective spending budget of just over \$17,000,000. Firstly, it will cost, approximately, an additional \$300,000 to hold the Eighth Conference in Montevideo rather than in Paris. Secondly, non-recurring funds were used in 1952 to cover the expected shortfall in contributions and to permit the carrying out of projects which could not otherwise have been financed. This year no such funds are available. Thirdly, the estimated annual percentage of contributions considered uncollectable rose from 7.5 per cent in 1952 to 9.2 per cent in 1953-54. For all these reasons, there will be reduced programme activity.

One of the causes of the budget crisis was the constitutional vagueness concerning responsibility for the preparation of the programme and budget estimates. In theory, the Executive Board prepared the programme and the Director-General assembled the budget estimates necessary to implement it. But it was known that the Director-General, Mr. Torres Bodet, was very closely associated with the preparation of the budget and that he felt committed to its defence. The conference subsequently amended the constitution to give the Director-General full responsibility for the preparation of the programme and corresponding budget. The Executive Board will submit these to the General Conference with its recommendations. This clarification of the respective powers and responsibilities of the administrative, executive and legislative organs should help

the work of future conferences and lessen the chance of conflicts.

The Budget Committee was hampered in its consideration of the budget estimates prior to the opening of the General Conference by the Director-General's insistence that it neither examine the relative merits, in financial terms, of the projects in the programme, nor relate the proposed budget to the general financial policies of the fifteen member states on the Committee. The Committee was therefore limited to an analysis of the costing accuracy of each project. The Budget Committee, for the 1954 conference has been transformed into an Advisory Committee on Programme and Budget with enlarged terms of reference. It will have full power to examine, before the General Conference opens, the programme and budget of the Director-General, as well as the Executive Board's comments on them. It will also examine and advise on new proposals by member states or the Executive Board. Such a committee should facilitate the work of the General Conference through the elimination of the artificial distinction between the substantive and budgetary aspects of programme projects. Canada was again elected to serve on this Committee.

Resignation of the Director-General

On November 22, the morning after the budget had been fixed, Dr. Bodet announced his intention of resigning his post as Director-General of UNESCO. He said that he had "burned himself out" in his efforts to make the Organization what he thought it could and should be. Faced with a choice between retreat, stabilization, or advance by the Organization, the Executive Board and he had spoken in favour of advance, but the Conference had, in his opinion, chosen retreat. He said that he had lost heart and faith, and could no longer continue in his job. His resignation was not prompted by any sense of personal pique. He would, he said, have resigned even had his proposed programme and budget been accepted by the General

Conference by a small majority. He could not carry on unless he thought that a large majority of member states were whole-heartedly behind him in his endeavours. His resignation was followed by that of Dr. Paulo Carneiro of Brazil, the Chairman of the Executive Board, who associated himself fully with the Director-General's statement.

It is too early to judge whether the crisis of the budget and the resignation have been successfully surmounted. As was pointed out, after the resignation of Dr. Bodet, by Mr. Malik, Indian Ambassador to France and Head of the Indian Delegation in the absence of Sir Sarvepalli Radhakrishnan, the repercussions in distant countries, particularly less-developed ones such as his own, could not be gauged by those sitting in the conference rooms of UNESCO. In the narrowest sense, the problem is unresolved. The choice of a suitable successor to Dr. Bodet presents a real problem. To carry on in Dr. Bodet's place, the General Conference appointed Dr. John W. Taylor, Dr. Bodet's deputy, to serve as Acting Director-General until a new Director-General is appointed. This will take place at an extraordinary session to be held in the spring of 1953.

Sequel to Dr. Bodet's Resignation

The day before Dr. Bodet's resignation, Sir Sarvepalli Radhakrishnan, the President of the General Conference, had left hurriedly for India at Mr. Nehru's request. To succeed him as Acting President, the steering committee chose Mr. S.M. Sharif, the Head of the Pakistan Delegation and a senior official in the Pakistan Ministry of Education. During the course of the next three days, Mr. Sharif worked tirelessly to bring about agreement on a course of action for the remainder of the conference. In these efforts he was able to achieve much success. Those who had voted for the higher budget ceiling were not happy about the necessity of cutting the

programme. But through Mr. Sharif's efforts they were persuaded to proceed to a critical examination of the programme to decide where reductions could best be made to bring the programme within the limits of funds that would be available.

Work of the Programme Commission

When the Programme Commission began a detailed examination of the programme and budget estimates it had before it suggestions already made by the Budget Committee whereby savings could be effected in carrying out the programme as drawn up by the Director-General. Examples of some of these are noted in the Annex. The Administrative Commission was also able to effect economies in budgeting for the Eighth General Conference as well as for the Office of the Director-General and the New York Liaison Office. The Programme Commission and the various working parties which were set up under it had to work on the assumption that only A.1 priorities could be carried out in the years 1953 and 1954 and that all A.2, B.1 and B.2 priorities would have to be deleted from the programme. They had, moreover, to look for savings of approximately 7.8 per cent in the A.1 priorities in order to bring the programme within the limits of funds available. The discussions which followed reflected to some extent disagreement resulting from the budget-ceiling debate. However, the Canadian Delegation is satisfied that none of the important projects has been sacrificed.

Establishment of Priorities

A Working Party on the Future Programme and Development of UNESCO was set up to examine an item proposed by the United States on the "establishment of priorities". In its report, which will be referred to member states for comments to assist the Director-General in the preparation of the programme for 1955-56, the Working Party divided the activities of the Organization into three categories: (i) established-services activities, i.e., the techniques and methods used in carrying

out the permanent purposes or the particular programmes of UNESCO; (ii) programme activities corresponding to the present budgetary level; (iii) priorities for a programme corresponding to a higher budgetary level.

The activities of the Organization are so heterogeneous, its membership is so varied, the conceptions of its purposes are so different among various groups, that the problem of defining priorities will always be an arduous one. European countries, for example, tend to regard it as the successor to the Centre for Intellectual Co-operation of the League of Nations; whereas under-developed countries are more interested in fundamental education than in intellectual co-operation on a higher plane. Moreover, the Secretariat prefers to maintain the equilibrium worked out over seven experimental years among the various programme departments and their activities. Nevertheless, the General Conference has recognized the desirability of establishing priorities. The fact that certain fields have been selected for special emphasis is in line with Canadian thinking on concentration of effort, and represents an achievement on which it should be possible to build in the future.

Permanent Headquarters

The discussions on permanent headquarters for UNESCO were confused half-way through the conference when the French Government announced that it must withdraw its offer of a site at the Porte Maillot on the edge of the Bois de Boulogne. Complete plans for a building had been drawn for this site, and it seemed for a short time that it would be impossible at this conference to reach any firm decision about the building. However, the French Government was pressed into making a new offer to UNESCO, and this time it proposed the site at the Place de Fontenoy near the Ecole Militaire, which had originally been offered but had been rejected as unsuitable by the panel of five architects which is advising UNESCO in this matter. In

renewing its offer of the site at the Place de Fontenoy, the French Government agreed to reimburse the Organization in the amount of \$90,000 for the expenses incurred in drawing up plans for the other site. It also offered to withdraw the architectural restrictions on the Place de Fontenoy site which had previously made this ground unsuitable. The French Government renewed its offer of an interest-free loan of approximately \$6,000,000, repayable over 30 years to finance the building. Agreement in principle to acceptance of the new offer was reached, subject to final ratification at the extraordinary session to be held in the spring of 1953, when the architects will have drawn up new plans. It seems likely that agreement will be reached in the spring and that construction can proceed. If this is the case, UNESCO should have its permanent headquarters in good time for the Ninth General Conference in 1956.

Composition of the Executive Board

A long but fruitful debate was held in the Administrative Commission on the amendment to the Constitution proposed by the United States. This would have had the effect of electing to the Executive Board representatives of national governments rather than persons chosen in their individual capacities. Those in favour of this argued that such a change would make for closer co-operation between the Executive Board and the governments of member states in the period between ordinary sessions and in the formulation of the programme and budget estimates for future years. They hoped that through closer liaison with national governments it would be possible to avoid the type of crisis over the programme and budget which occurred in 1952. Those opposed argued that the Executive Board should be above national direction and pressures, and should serve not member states but the Organization as a whole. Canada played an active part in modifying the original amendment to meet some of the objections raised and the amendment as

finally phrased was much more acceptable than the original. However, an Indian resolution to defer decision until 1954 gained the support of those who were opposed and those who were undecided, and was carried by a vote of 25-19 with one abstention and 14 absent. There appears to be a fair chance that the principle of the United States amendment will be accepted at the next General Conference if Canada continues to press the point with other member states between now and 1954.

Following defeat of the revised amendment, changes were made to adapt the Executive Board to a system of biennial conferences. It was agreed that the Board should be composed of 20 rather than 18 members and that each member should serve for a period of four rather than three years. One half of the Board will retire at each ordinary session so that, once interim arrangements concerning numbers have been worked out, ten new members will be elected at each ordinary session.

Elections to the Executive Board

The members who were to retire in 1953 had their term of office extended to 1954. Professor Vittorio Veronese was elected to serve out the term, until 1954, of the late Count Jacini, the Italian member. The eight new members elected to the Executive Board are as follows (in order of votes received):

Mr. Luther Evans	United States
Mr. Henri Laugier	France
H.E. Ventura Garcia Calderon	Peru
H.E. Toru Hagiwara	Japan
Mr. Luang Pin Malakul	Thailand
H.E. Dr. G.A. Raadi	Iran
Prof. Oscar Secco Ellauri	Uruguay
Prof. Jakob Nielsen	Denmark

The Yugoslav member, who had announced his resignation over the admission of Spain, was persuaded to let it stand in abeyance pending consideration by the Yugoslav National Commission and Government. Should he renew his resignation, it will be necessary to elect one more member to replace him.

Legal Questions

A Legal Committee, on which Canada served, was set up at the Conference to consider the many amendments to the Constitution, rules of procedure and various directives consequent upon the adoption of a system of biennial rather than annual conferences. Canada was elected to the Legal Committee for the 1954 conference.

Conclusion

There are various considerations in Canada's participation in UNESCO. One point of view is that it is an Organization to which we give, but from which we also receive. This has not always been recognized in Canada but Canadian scientists, educators, social scientists and others are beginning to realize that they can draw positive advantage from some of UNESCO's projects. UNESCO can also be regarded as another channel for helping the less-developed countries of the world.

In the final analysis, the crisis of the recent Conference arose from the clash of concepts over the proper purposes and potentialities of the Organization as seen by delegates of the less developed countries on the one hand and the major contributing nations on the other. Debate on this central issue which precipitated Dr. Bodet's resignation generated a degree of bitterness on the part of some delegations. They expressed the view that at the end of the Second World War the great powers had stimulated the hopes of the whole world concerning the peaceful and constructive role of UNESCO; but now these same powers were showing greater concern with other matters, particularly defence, and were inclined to neglect the ideals represented by UNESCO. While these views may seem to some to have been based on a misunderstanding of what UNESCO can do in the present world and while the emotions aroused in the debate may have seemed excessive, these symptoms of disillusionment are phenomena which we in Canada should not ignore or belittle.

It is true that the Canadian Delegation together with a number of others, chiefly representing the larger contributors, insisted upon economies in certain projects, but there was no disposition to abandon what these delegations regard as the core of UNESCO responsibilities, namely fundamental education and technical assistance. Perhaps the effective way to dispel any misunderstanding or resentment among some delegations who expected a larger budget would be continued and detailed interest in the work of UNESCO between conferences and a willingness at forthcoming conferences to display a lively and sustained interest, both financial and professional, in those projects which we in Canada have always regarded as basic.

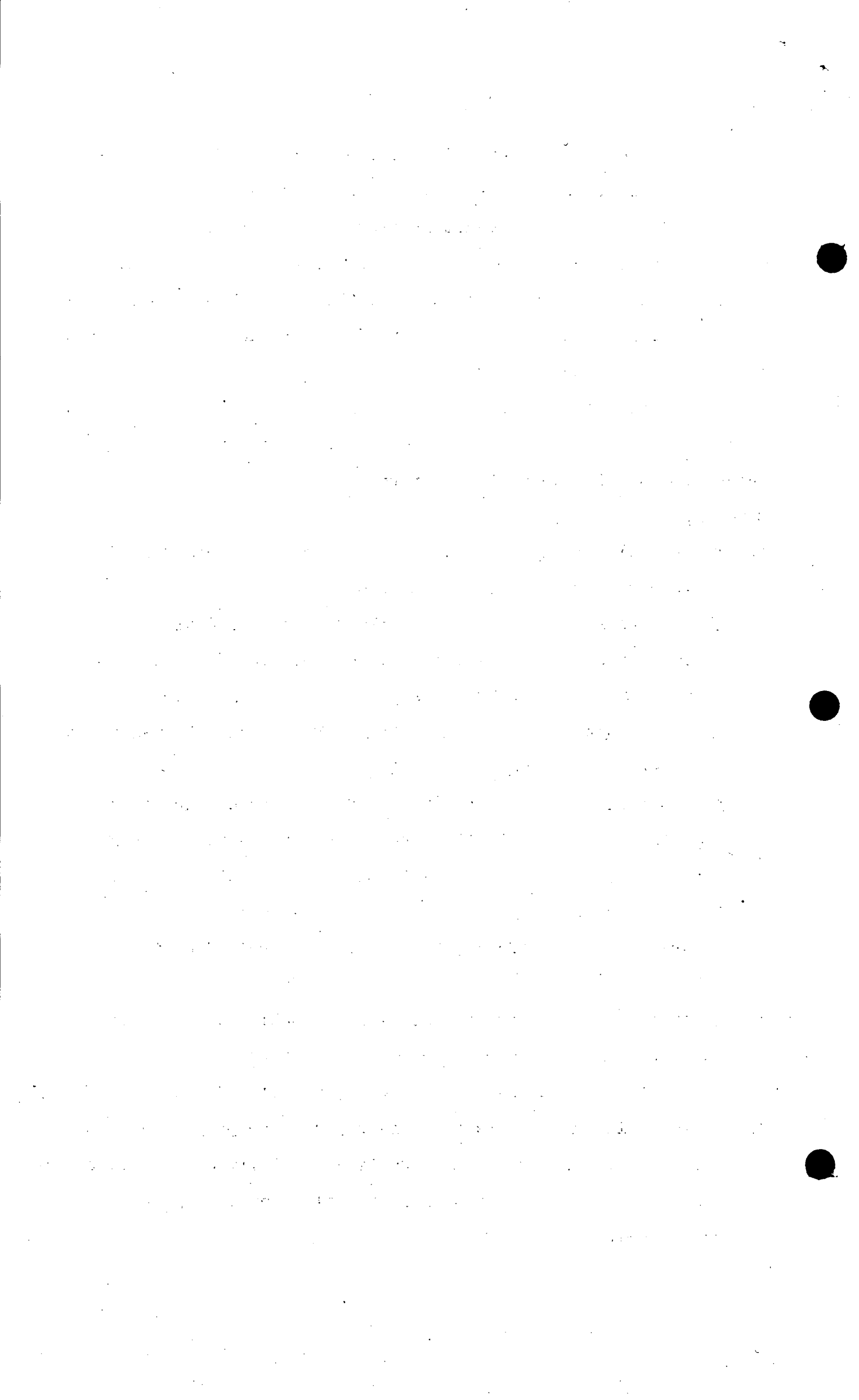
ANNEX

Voluntary societies and interested persons in Canada will undoubtedly be anxious to know the practical implications for UNESCO's activities resulting from the need to reduce the overall budget for projects with A.1 priority by 7.8 per cent. Although there was some discussion of the possibility of making a cross-the-board reduction on each project, it was decided to make the reduction selective.

The following list is not exhaustive, but includes most of the major and a number of the minor modifications of UNESCO's projects decided upon at the conference.

EDUCATION

1. The annual subvention to the International Association of Universities was reduced by \$1,000.
2. The annual subvention to the World Confederation of Organizations of the Teaching Profession was increased from \$3,000 to \$6,000, and upgraded from A.2 to A.1 priority.
3. The subvention of \$2,000 for the New Education Fellowship was upgraded from B.1 to A.1 priority.
4. It was decided to publish the World Handbook of Educational Organization and Statistics every three years rather than every two years. The next edition will be published in 1956.
5. The studies on the training of Secondary School Teachers in Great Britain, France, Germany and the United States were deleted.
6. A Committee of six consultants was established to consider the aims and methods of education for living in a world community and this project was given an A.1 priority.
7. It was reluctantly agreed to discontinue the programme of studies aimed at assisting educational activities in member states designed to equip children better for living in a world community.



8. The time limit for seminars was reduced from five to four weeks.
9. The UNESCO University Course is to be dropped entirely.

SOCIAL SCIENCES

1. Establishment of an International Social Science Research and Training Centre was postponed. Its place has been taken provisionally by a small Research Office.
2. The proposed subvention to the International Studies Conference was reduced from \$3,500 annually to \$1,750.
3. It was decided that the meeting of experts during 1954 to consider international conflicts and their mediation should be deferred and the study of theories and opinions regarding the causes of war postponed.
4. It was agreed that contracts with the Provisional International Social Science Council should be reduced from \$9,000 to \$6,000, and that the meeting of experts to evaluate international co-operation in the Social Sciences should be reduced in size.
5. The publication of the International Repertory of Social Science Documentation Centres was discontinued.
6. An increase of \$3,000 was approved for work on the Bibliography of South Asia.

NATURAL SCIENCES

1. It was decided not to investigate the possibility of forming an Institute for Brain Research. Instead, a small budgetary allocation was allotted to the creation of a Regional Pacific Oceanographic Institute.
2. Financial support for the proposed International Computation Centre was withdrawn.
3. There will be no new travelling science exhibition, and the three existing exhibitions now abroad, will complete their programmes and then will be kept in Paris for the next two years. The estimated saving will be \$38,000.

4. Publication of "Impact" is to be continued on a much reduced basis, and no Arabic or Spanish editions are to be prepared unless extra funds become available.
5. The printing costs for a number of publications were reduced by the decision to publish them either in one language only or in a single bilingual edition.

CULTURAL ACTIVITIES

1. It was found possible to reduce the cost of the Scientific and Cultural History of Mankind by \$40,000 for the next two years.
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