



STATEMENTS AND SPEECHES

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Statement by the head of the Canadian Delegation to UNESCO Conference, Dr. Victor Doré, made on November 13, 1952.

Mr. President,
Mr. Director-General,
Gentlemen and esteemed colleagues,

Yesterday, in his address of welcome, the French Minister of National Education, Mr. André Marie, declared that France deemed it an incomparable privilege to accommodate UNESCO in its capital. As Vice-President of the General Conference and head of the Canadian Delegation, I feel it to be my duty, - an especially moving duty for a French-speaking Canadian, - to return the compliment and to assure the French Government that UNESCO considers itself honoured to have been able to make Paris the centre of its activity.

France, Mr. President, is the meeting place for the world's great intellectual movements. Ideas seem to acquire greater clarity and humanity when cast into the melting-pot of French thought. UNESCO, which is striving to maintain and defend security by facilitating cultural exchanges, could find for its activities no more favourable atmosphere than that of Paris.

On behalf of my country, I should like to pay special homage to the President of the General Conference who is the distinguished representative of a country with which Canada is associated in the Commonwealth. I should also like to congratulate the President of the Executive Board, my friend Mr. Carneiro, for the admirable address that he gave this morning. I am sufficiently acquainted with the problems faced by the Executive Board to understand the full significance of his appeal to which we listened with the keenest sympathy. Finally, need I remind the Conference that if UNESCO is such an alive organization, it is largely thanks to the superior intelligence, intellectual courage, devotion and untiring energy of its Director-General? I express my friendship once again to Mr. Torres Bodet.

In the course of the remarks with which our distinguished colleague, the retiring president, Mr. Sargeant, made in his opening address to the Conference, he pointed to the steady progress of UNESCO as an indication that the forces making for peace are in the ascendancy and that the forces making for war can be steadily overcome. This statement has been so close to my own thinking that I would like to stress it again. The forces which would drive us to war can be steadily overcome

not merely by mechanical resolutions but by widening and deepening the positive international association, for example, through UNESCO, of three score or more states in a number of vital projects whose object is to assist countries the natural development of which has been retarded by war or the aftermath of war or of governments recently established and therefore in need of expert but disinterested aid. In this sharing of accumulated experience, in this effort through UNESCO to provide technical assistance where it is most needed to stimulate various programmes for fundamental education, it does not seem to me a realistic approach to divide member nations simply into two groups - one who contributes the bulk of the assistance and others who receive it. It is true that some nations are more favoured with material prosperity, with a higher level of industrial and economic development, and it is only reasonable that such nations are in a position to play a most active part in the general programme of UNESCO. Nevertheless, this process is not one-way, that is merely giving and receiving; it is more a sharing of experience. It provides an opportunity for all participating governments to learn to look at their own problems, of which each country has more than enough, with greater patience and with a wider knowledge as a result of association in UNESCO work. In the case of countries which provide a number of experts to serve on special projects in other parts of the world, these people will return to their own countries infinitely enriched by reason of their experience. It is thus a two-way process. (It is not a question of profit and loss; it is rather a type of activity in which all participants in some fashion profit). In the sharing of experience through UNESCO, the great majority of the countries of the world are getting to know each other and each other's problems by taking a practical interest in the solutions of these problems, and without perhaps being aware of it, are forging powerful links of friendship and peace which I am confident will serve to stand the strains and stress of this difficult age in which we live.

I would like to pass from the general to the particular and mention briefly what seem to me some of the major contributions which UNESCO has made in the past year. In our view, the services offered by UNESCO to the countries which are in need of assistance to develop their educational facilities deserve our particular attention. I am referring here to the help supplied by UNESCO to eradicate illiteracy, to improve the technical and vocational training in about 40 countries of the world, to the development of the existing centres of fundamental education, and to the fellowships and scholarships granted under our Technical Assistance Plan. These measures are in line with the basic aims of UNESCO and all possible encouragement within the scope of our financial possibilities should be given to them.

As for the contribution which Canada was able to make to the work of UNESCO within its territory, I think that I should mention first the grants made by the Government of Canada to our Canadian universities and classical colleges. Further to the recommendation made in 1951 by the Royal Commission in the development of the arts, letters and sciences, it was decided, for the first time in the history of education in Canada, that the Federal Government should, after having obtained the agreement of the Provincial Governments, assist our universities financially. In accordance with a recommendation

from the same Royal Commission, the Government of Canada has also established in 1952 a system of scholarships and fellowships for our most brilliant scholars and students. The first Canadians to benefit from these scholarships have already started to arrive in France and Holland. It is only fair to add that the Provincial Governments have been particularly generous in 1951 and 1952 in the field of fellowships and scholarships, and that they have extended by a great number the scholarships available from their Departments of Education. The Provincial Governments have also continued to give financial encouragement to our voluntary associations concerned with the progress of our national culture. Finally, I cannot find a better occasion than this short speech to pay a last homage to the Canadian Council for Reconstruction through UNESCO which wound up its activities in the field of education and relief in 1951. The devotion of this organization to the measures initiated by UNESCO in this field was supported by the Canadian public in a most generous fashion.

Our general approach to the programme and budget for 1953 and 1954 is substantially the same as last year. We are gratified that, since the fifth session of the General Conference in Florence, good progress has been made in defining with greater precision and realism the most appropriate fields of endeavour from which the Organization may reasonably expect tangible results. We are pleased to have heard from the Director-General this morning that much will continue to be done in that direction. We believe that in attaching a clear conception of the relative degree of priority and urgency to its various projects, UNESCO may rely on an ever increasing support from the public. This support is essential to the achievement of its high purposes and of future progress. For this reason, the Canadian Government welcomes the United States' suggestion that the present Conference should pay particular attention to the question of priorities and hopes that discussion on this subject will lead to some positive decision in furtherance of the best interests of the Organization.

In more purely financial terms, my Government hopes that the General Conference will aim at stabilizing the budgets for 1953 and 1954 at the 1952 level. To achieve this it will be necessary to concentrate available resources on the most urgent and productive fields of endeavour. My Government recognises the serious difficulties which the Organization is facing as a result of the special circumstances in which a few members find themselves, and over which they or the Organization may not have any direct control. It is prepared to examine each case on its particular merits.

Canada has been one of the oldest members of UNESCO and by its various contributions to it can be rightly considered as one of its staunchest supporters. On specific issues, no doubt critical comments have been made from time to time in the past by Canadian Delegations. I believe, however, it can be said that these comments have been motivated not by a negative or destructive spirit, but rather by the genuine desire to make of UNESCO as efficient and serviceable an instrument as possible. I would like to take this opportunity to assure you that my Government views UNESCO with continued confidence and lends it its sincere support. It is the earnest wish of my Delegation that as a result of the work of this Conference,

UNESCO will become an even more effective Organization. Mr. President and Fellow Delegates, I wish to assure this Assembly that my Delegation will endeavour in every way possible to serve to the best of its capacity those purposes at once lofty and yet very human for the realization of which this Organization was created.

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