

UNESCO by adding the word "scientific" to its title. It set up a preparatory commission whose job it was to prepare a programme and a provisional budget in readiness for the first conference of UNESCO itself which is to be held in Paris this November.

As executive secretary Sir Alfred Zimmern was appointed, but he fell seriously ill and I was asked to succeed him. I am glad to say, by the way, that he is now well again, and back with us as adviser. As an Englishman I am proud of the fact that UNESCO was conceived and born in London. London, which during the war, became the cultural centre of the world without wanting, or indeed for the time being, knowing it. But as a citizen of the world I am glad that we are now going to move to Paris with its outstanding traditions in the domains of literature, art, and science. Meanwhile I know I shall be speaking for all our member governments in expressing our warmest thanks to the British Government for all it has done for us during our time here in London. By the way, it's quite a job, I find, transporting more than 160 people, and a great many documents, and a good deal of office equipment from one country to another.

How It Will Work

The main job of the Preparatory Commission has been to draw up a programme to lay before the Conference in November for their approval for our future work. This will be a considerable document of some 70,000 or 80,000 words, which we needn't be surprised at, since UNESCO has to cover education in all its aspects; all the natural sciences, and all the social sciences, both pure and applied; the creative arts, such as painting, music and literature; philosophy and humanity; libraries, museums, and publications; and finally the so-called mass media of press, radio, film, and television.

In drawing up this programme of work we have got certain general principles in mind. First of all, UNESCO will always try to work through existing international organisations. For instance, in science there are a number of international scientific unions which are federated in an international council, and we will give this council office room in our own headquarters, and in the field of science will operate as much as possible through it. Then UNESCO will, of course, try to facilitate exchanges of every sort in all its fields. Exchange of students, teachers, research workers, of books, films, music, works of art, of scientific results for general information. To do this it will have to get rid of, or at least remove, many blocks to free communication — barriers of language, censorship, passports to Paris, commercial restrictions, government and business secrecy. All such exchanges will be planned by UNESCO in such a way as to secure better educational, scientific and cultural equalisation. Of course, this equalisation must be equalisation afterwards all over the world. We want to get rid of illiteracy, we want to see that more educational opportunities are provided in backward areas and we want to spread the butter of scientific research more evenly over the world.

Projected Surveys

Another field for UNESCO will be the making of special surveys and studies. Let me give one or two examples. The advance of science is really in danger of getting choked out and abandoned.

Scientific publication is getting chaotic, and neither the abstracting nor the reviewing services which exist now are adequate. We propose to make a survey of this big problem to see what might be done. And another study is to be made of the distortion or corruption of the arts and crafts of non-industrialised countries, caused by the impact of modern civilisation on them. We want to see what can be done to preserve their artistic vitality and we know that in one or two cases, like the Navajo Indians in the U.S.A., this has been successfully accomplished. Again, we shall study the problem of using the discussion group method which was used during the war as a means of Adult Education in countries where so far it has hardly been used at all, like China or Africa.

One proposal has been suggested from many sides, the setting up of an international university, and it isn't as easy as it sounds. We're going to make a thorough survey of the question and all the difficulties involved in it. However, these are concrete projects which UNESCO wants to set up, or see set up.

International Bird-watching

In view of the fact that we shall have to operate with limited funds, in general we propose to set up merely sample projects to show what might be done. First, we propose to set up an international youth camp; we propose to set up an international institute of home and community planning to show how the principles of planning can be applied in different geographical regions; and also an International Theatre Institute. And we want to set up as soon as possible a UNESCO Institute of Applied Mathematics, equipped with all the latest calculating machines, which really are quite miraculous and uncanny in what they can do. Perhaps we'll put it in India.

And perhaps I may mention in conclusion the proposal to take over the German bird-watching and bird migration station in Heligoland and internationalise it. By the way, I hope listeners will keep an eye open for what we shall be doing in Paris in November. Besides the conference we have organised, with the generous help of the French Government, a UNESCO Month—plays, exhibitions, concerts, films, lectures, broadcasts and so on—which I think is really going to be interesting. I suppose there are sceptical people who will say, What is the use of all this sort of thing when we are faced with the possibility of atomic bombs, and another war? To such I would reply, first, that war is only a possibility, and the very horror involved in the atom bomb is making governments throughout the world more than ever anxious to avert it. Secondly, anything that UNESCO can do to promote freer exchange of information, to build up international service in education, science and the arts, will actually help to make the risk of war less. And finally, even if the worst should come to the worst, and there should be another war, I am quite certain that the work of UNESCO will not have been in vain, and would continue afterwards. There we have the example of the International Labour Office, which in spite of the collapse of its parent, the League of Nations, and the outbreak of the second World War, is still very much alive and is carrying on the admirable work which it started 25 years ago. So we are going to Paris full of hope and belief in our future.

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