

## Unesco

By LEONARD S. KENWORTHY \*

AMONG all the specialized agencies under the aegis of U.N., the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization is the nearest approximation to the Quaker approach to developing One World. There are some Friends who have doubts about supporting certain parts of U.N., but there should be few, if any, Friends who have doubts about supporting Unesco, since its aims and methods lie close to the ways of Friends, and in most instances are identical.

Unesco was established "to contribute to peace and security by promoting collaboration among the nations through education, science and culture." In an historic preamble, the governments who are parties to its Constitution assert "that since wars arise in the minds of men, it is in the minds of men that the defenses of peace must be constructed." This same preamble declares that "a peace based exclusively upon political and economic arrangements of governments would not be a peace which could secure the unanimous, lasting and sincere support of the peoples of the world, and that the peace must therefore be founded, if it is not to fail, upon the intellectual and moral solidarity of mankind."

The inclusion of the word "spiritual" in the last statement would have given Unesco a broader and better base and would have made the organization even more satisfactory to Friends. But such a word and such a concept will not be included in the charters of governmental bodies until the religious groups of the world learn to live in peace and harmony among themselves and until the world as a whole recognizes the place of religion in modern life. That day still seems far distant.

In the meantime there is a tremendous amount to be done to attain peace and security through educational means. Unesco represents the attempt to work for such goals at the highest governmental level. It is an international office of education, science and culture. It is the general staff for a world-wide campaign against illiteracy, ignorance and misunderstanding. It is the co-ordinating agency for efforts to develop world-mindedness, "an agency for the preservation of peace through understanding."

Although working under severe handicaps because of the small budget of six million dollars allotted to it by the General Conference (a sizeable part of which had already been spent by the Preparatory Commission), and in spite of the problems involved in assembling an outstanding staff representative of all parts of the world, Unesco is well under way. Several score of projects have been determined for 1947 and many are already in full swing.

Four of these general programs have been given the highest priority rating and Unesco's efforts are being concentrated upon them. The first of these is the program for the Reconstruction and Rehabilitation of education, science and culture in war-devastated countries. Field workers have already been sent to several of these nations to investigate the most pressing needs, and a 100,000,000 dollar campaign has been launched to provide help in reconstruction. This campaign is being conducted for money, materials, and scholarships for study abroad, and

many of the international voluntary agencies are cooperating in one way or another, among them the Friends World Committee.

The second of these programs is called Education for International Understanding and includes a number of different approaches to this goal. One of these is the Inquiry into the Development of International Understanding through the Schools of Member-States, Part I of which has already been issued. A seminar for key educators will be held in Paris for six weeks this summer to explore ways of developing world-mindedness through the schools. Small regional conferences of adult education leaders are being planned to explore the same topic with these influential moulders of public opinion. A program is under way for improving textbooks and teaching materials as they relate to this general theme of international understanding. International Relations Clubs are being aided and a Clearing House on the Exchange of Persons is being established at Unesco House in Paris.

The third of these high priority programs is that of Fundamental Education. The ultimate aim of this program is the equalizing of educational opportunities for all the people of the world. With one-half of the world illiterate today, that is obviously a tremendously large undertaking. Pilot projects are therefore being launched during 1947 by the governments of Haiti, Brazil, and China, in conjunction with Unesco, as experimental and demonstration centers for the world. A fourth project will be undertaken in a section of Africa not yet designated. This work will be conducted along the lines outlined in Unesco's publication, *Fundamental Education*, to which several world authorities in the field, including Ranjit M. Chetsingh, well-known Indian Friend, contributed.

The fourth main project is the establishment of an International Institute for research and exploration of the four and a half million square miles of the Hylean-Amazon region in South America, a highly important area comprising one-third of South America and bordering on six countries. A group of experts have already sailed for that region as Unesco representatives.

In many of these projects and in others not mentioned here, Friends should be tremendously interested. The Friends World Committee is already in close touch with Unesco, but that should be only the beginning. Friends should become interested and influential in the National Commissions and National Co-operating bodies in each country, which serve as the national branches of Unesco. Consideration of Unesco should be featured in Friends forums, schools, and discussion groups. Individual Friends should keep informed as to its activities. It is possible that there should be a Friends World Council on Education, one of whose jobs would be to survey and stimulate education for international understanding among Friends, and particularly in Friends Schools and First-day Schools, and to cooperate with Unesco. This might well be a correspondence committee, at least until the next World Conference of Friends, forming a part of the existing World Committee for Consultation.

In the building of the "defenses of peace" Friends can participate wholeheartedly and effectively. Every Friend can help in the building of these defenses in the minds and souls of men and women and children everywhere.

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