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INTERNATIONAL COMMITTEE FOR THE ADVANCEMENT OF ADULT EDUCATION

Unesco House, 9-17 December 1965

REPORT OF THE THIRD SESSION

ADDENDUM

'The promotion of international understanding through  
adult education and out-of-school activities of youth'\*

I. INTRODUCTION

At the second session of the International Committee for the Advancement of Adult Education, held in March 1963, the subject of adult education for international understanding was considered. It is dealt with in section J (paras. 81 to 87) of the Report of the Second Session, and amongst the recommendations is the following:

"The provision which has been made in the budget for 1963-1964 should be used in arranging a meeting of consultants to produce a report for consideration at the next meeting of this Committee on the promotion of international understanding through adult education."  
(para. 87 (k))

The recommendation was accepted, and in the spring of 1964 the Secretariat put in motion the procedure for inviting consultants (or "experts") in France, India, the United Kingdom, the United States of America and the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics to make reports on the situation in their respective countries so that the reports could, collectively, form the basis of discussion at a meeting of the five consultants proposed to be held in December 1964. Because the reports could not all be made available in time the meeting had to be postponed until May 1965, when it took place, thanks to the hospitable co-operation of the French National Commission for Unesco, at St. Céré, an agreeable small town in Perigord. Those present at the meeting were:

France - Mr. J. Rovan, Vice-President of Peuple et Culture, Paris.

India - Dr. T.A. Koshy, Director, National Fundamental Education Centre, New Delhi.

U.K. - Mr. F.W. Jessup, Head of the Extra-Mural Department, University of Oxford (who acted as the reporter).

U.S.A. - Professor C.O. Houle, Professor of Education, University of Chicago.

USSR - Mrs. R. Kourbatova and Mrs. R. Bezborodova, USSR National Commission for Unesco

French National Commission for Unesco :

Mr. A. Basdevant, Inspecteur Général de la Jeunesse et des Sports.

Mr. Y. Brunswick, Secretary-General of the Commission.

Mr. B. Clavel, Assistant Secretary-General of the Commission.

Unesco: Mr. P. Lengrand.

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\* Report revised following discussion at the meeting of the International Committee for the Advancement of Adult Education, 9-17 December 1965.

This report is, therefore, based upon the five national reports, upon the discussions which the consultants enjoyed at their meeting at St. Céré, and upon the very full discussion which took place at the third session of the International Committee for the Advancement of Adult Education.

In order to achieve some degree of uniformity the Secretariat of Unesco suggested to the consultants a series of headings under which the reports should be written. Nevertheless the reports showed, as might be expected, wide divergences not only between practices in the five different countries, but also between the ways in which the subject was approached, and indeed between the interpretations placed upon the Secretariat's suggested headings. Consequently any attempt to analyse and describe the consultants' reports on a comparative basis would have no significance. For reasons of practicality the inquiry had to be limited to five countries; had it been possible to extend it to include others (e.g. one or two smaller countries, or a recently emerged nation state), the experience and views recorded would undoubtedly have been still more diverse.

Because of these differences in practice, it was deemed advisable, at the outset of the consultants' meeting, to agree upon the meaning to be attached, for the purpose of this study, to the term "adult education". The consultants were asked to extend their reports to include "out-of-school activities of youth," but because the subject of "the preparation of young people for international life and understanding" was dealt with at the International Conference on Youth held at Grenoble in August 1964, the Committee for the Advancement of Adult Education agreed that it was unnecessary to include specific reference to it in this report.

"Adult education" is a term with a more or less extended connotation. In this study it is taken to mean programmes deliberately devised to impart education to, or to inform, adults, or to influence their attitude and behaviour in matters affecting international understanding. Adult education, in this sense, embraces a wide variety of activities. They can be thought of as constituting three concentric circles: the inner circle comprises adult education in the traditional sense, where the intent of the teacher and of the student are both specifically educational, and includes, for example, adult education programmes of colleges and universities; the middle ring consists of the resources which are available to the individual in continuing his education, including libraries, museums, and the activities of certain voluntary organizations for which education is a secondary objective; on the periphery are activities which can be regarded as linked to education (though not designed for specifically educational ends) in that they influence attitudes and behaviour, as for example, the media of mass communication and tourism.

The variety of approaches to the promotion of international understanding through adult education is reflected in the variety of organizations and agencies referred to in the five national reports. This is understandable, for each country devises its own educational pattern to meet its own needs and aspirations. Moreover, patterns are constantly being modified, explicitly or implicitly, as needs and aspirations change. In each country, it is emphasized, the pattern is so complex that it would be impossible to give an account of all the organizations involved. Even if it were possible in this report to enumerate all of them the list, in itself, would have little practical significance, and differences in nomenclature might well conceal similarities of aim and method of organizations in different countries. In fact in any attempt to synthesize a series of reports emanating from several countries the "Rapporteur-Général" is constantly faced with the problem of trying to decide whether the same thing is denoted by different terms, or whether the same term denotes different things.

## II. CONCEPTS OF INTERNATIONAL UNDERSTANDING AMONGST ADULT EDUCATORS

There is agreement amongst adult educators that the primary objectives in furthering international understanding can be described in the terms used to define the purposes of the United Nations (Article 1 of the Charter), namely "to maintain international peace and security . . . , to develop friendly relations among nations based on respect for the principle of equal rights and self-determination of peoples . . . , to achieve international co-operation in solving international problems . . . , and in promoting and encouraging respect for human rights and for fundamental freedoms for all . . . ."

This is to look at the objectives of promoting international understanding from the general, collective point of view. However, there is another objective, the opportunity which it gives for

the enrichment and enlargement of the individual, and of the social personality through the awareness of other cultures (in the anthropologist's sense of the word). In other words international understanding is necessary to personal development; it also is necessary to a profound understanding of one's own country.

Thirdly, in the view of many adult educators, social justice calls for a more equitable sharing between nations of the world's resources. The extent to which the present inequalities hinder the development of friendly relations between nations is an uncomfortable fact which, because it is uncomfortable, is too often forgotten. A more equitable distribution will be achieved only as a result of more widespread international understanding, based on a recognition of the mutuality of interest which is involved.

Adult educators are not only agreed upon their general objectives in furthering international understanding, they are also agreed upon the dangers of a facile optimism and the folly of making grandiose claims for their achievements; the power of forces tending in a contrary direction is far too conspicuous to permit of complacency. Adult educators are conscious, too, that tensions between communities, like tensions between individuals, are inevitable, but believe that they need not be contentious, that they should not be allowed to lead to conflict, and that they may even be fruitful.

Whilst a wide measure of agreement, therefore, exists, it is nevertheless natural that views amongst adult educators are strongly affected by the cultural backgrounds and national histories of their respective countries. To give a concrete illustration of this abstract proposition the following paragraphs from the Indian and U.S.A. reports are quoted to show the widely different backgrounds against which adult educators in the two countries function:

"A notable feature of Indian culture, which has a positive relevance to international understanding, is its catholicity. Mutually contradictory creeds can and do keep house together within the wide and hospitable Indian family. The tolerance of differences of opinion, creed, dress and language within its own fold and outside itself is an essential characteristic of Indian culture. There is another principle, allied to the philosophy behind tolerance, that one's judgements are partial truths and can never be absolutely true. Because Indian culture is not averse to foreign elements, it has continually grown vigorous in every age by appreciating and absorbing all that was best in the culture with which it came into contact."

"The American effort consciously to foster international understanding has been profoundly influenced at every point by the history of the country, by its geography, and, most particularly, by the sources of its population. Beginning with the first enduring settlements early in the Seventeenth century, the United States has been created by those who left their native lands to seek political, economic, and religious liberty. A river of migration, often at full flood, has constantly reinforced the natural internal growth of the population, and this fact has always had major consequences in the country's internal life and in its relationship to other nations."

Yet in spite of differences of background probably all adult educators start from the hypothesis that the level of international understanding varies directly with the level of education. It is not a hypothesis that has been scientifically validated, but it is supported by everyday experience. Not every man whose formal education has progressed to a high level necessarily achieves international understanding - the educated bigot is a known phenomenon - but there is little prospect that the uneducated will achieve it. The abandonment of prejudices, stereotypes and clichés, which is essential to the furtherance of international understanding, becomes of increased importance in a world where the media of mass communication are so powerful, and it can be brought about only through education.

In place of prejudices, stereotypes and "clichés" the adult educator must seek to substitute careful observation, critical examination and objective judgement. There is no disguising the fact that this may create problems. Most people have a predilection for their own country, and patriotism and nationalism have admirable qualities; the man who is without affection for his own village, town, or country is unlikely to be a good citizen of the world. However, this natural prejudice in favour of one's own country may make it necessary for the adult educator to stimulate objective consideration of national policies and actions. This may not always be welcome to governments,

and governments have an ultimate responsibility for, and some measure of control over, adult education. On his side the adult educator must proceed with a proper humility, recognizing that he may not have, and probably cannot have, access to all the relevant facts. He must loyally seek to understand and to explain constructively the government's position, but as an educator he has the function of presenting both sides of an issue in an attempt to arrive at the truth. Particularly in times of tension or conflict he has a difficult rôle to play, refusing to become a government "yes-man", discouraging hysteria, and encouraging a cool, even-tempered, analysis of the situation.

Another problem is to steer a middle course between, on the one hand, emphasizing differences between peoples, and, on the other, glossing them over. Those who emphasize the differences usually do so in order to prove their own superiority, for, to these people, to be different from them means to be worse. But the other attitude, of refusing, in the name of a vague and sentimental universal humanitarianism, to admit that there are important differences, is no more useful. The educator's task is to try to understand the differences, their causes and their significance.

Against this background, is it possible to say, with more precision, what the concept of "international understanding" involves for adult education? There seems to be general agreement on the following five points:

- (a) The first task is to arouse interest about other countries and other peoples, including strangers living in our midst, especially recent immigrants.
- (b) The second stage is the provision of relevant knowledge and information, and of opportunities to acquire the linguistic skill necessary for fruitful meetings with other peoples.
- (c) The third stage is the inculcation of an attitude of tolerance, acceptance, and respect towards the peoples of other countries. Tolerance is possible, and especially important, where affection is absent. Yet tolerance cannot be unlimited, for there are things which no virtuous man will tolerate. Moral principles must be upheld with fortitude but differences in which such principles are not involved need to be accepted with tolerance, an attitude which is often dependent upon education.
- (d) Tolerance can develop into sympathy, a more positive attitude, a development in which, again, education plays an important part.
- (e) Finally attitude affects behaviour and conduct, and sympathy leads to co-operative action.

All these factors are present in the concept of "international understanding", a concept which goes beyond a merely passive non-violent coexistence, and embraces the idea of active co-operation between peoples.

As regards paragraph (b) above, there are a variety of topics on which knowledge and information need to be made available through adult education. They include the way of life of other countries, their cultures (in the broad sense), their arts and philosophies, with more emphasis on the contemporary situation than on the cultures, arts and philosophies of the past; the problems they face and the degree of success with which they have been met; the history of relations between states, especially their recent history, and the analysis, with the fairness and objectivity which should be the distinctive quality of educational activity, of international situations which give rise to current problems; questions and problems of common concern to all men, such as the balance of world population and resources, the development and utilization of scientific knowledge, space travel, and the psychological, social, economic and philosophical factors that tend towards amity or towards hostility; and the work of international organizations in promoting peace and human welfare. The mere enumeration of these topics is enough to show how wide-ranging is the task to which adult education for international understanding is committed.

But there is also another side of the task for, as a consequence of migration, exchanges, study tours and the like, the adult educator increasingly has the opportunity, and therefore the obligation, to try to make his own country comprehensible to foreigners. Honesty of presentation is indispensable; any sort of cultural chauvinism is, in the end, self-defeating.

Adult educators in all of the countries studied are concerned about the limitation of international intercourse because of language difficulties. Although more people are studying foreign languages than ever before, and although more effective methods of language teaching are being evolved, the problem of linguistic barriers remains a real one. True understanding presupposes genuine communication. The man who has learned a foreign language has enlarged his area of communication, and perhaps even more important, has provided himself with the key essential to an understanding of a culture other than his own, but there will still be far more people with whom he cannot communicate for lack of linguistic skill. All children whilst at school should have the opportunity of learning a foreign language, and the teaching of foreign languages should be a normal part of adult education. That international understanding would thus be fostered is, of course, by no means the only argument in favour of foreign-language teaching.

Education for international understanding is not a discrete part of education. At the academic level, for example, it requires a multidisciplinary approach, and the humanities, the human sciences, and the social sciences are all involved. But at a more fundamental level it depends upon home and school as well as adult education. The child who grows up in a situation in which he feels secure, the child who has been taught to respect his fellows, is likely as an adult to achieve international understanding more readily than the one in whom insecurity has strengthened aggressive instincts or whose social education has been inadequate. Thus education for international understanding is a continuing necessity, not limited to any one period of the life span, though it is of especial importance to adult education for a great part of international understanding depends upon qualities which come only with maturity.

### III. METHODS USED IN THE PROMOTION OF INTERNATIONAL UNDERSTANDING THROUGH ADULT EDUCATION

Methods must be suited to the needs and conditions of those for whom the programmes are devised. In The University, the Citizen and World Affairs (C.O. Houle and C.A. Nelson) a careful analysis is made of the variety of needs and conditions, and although the book is based mainly upon experience in the U.S.A., the analysis is a useful one, of general validity, though obviously requiring some modification in countries with a high degree of illiteracy. It is, therefore, summarized here as an introduction to this section of the report. Citizens it is suggested, can be divided, according to their knowledge and concern about world affairs, into four broad, somewhat overlapping categories: (1) at the lower end of the scale is the large bulk of the public - inattentive and uninformed; (2) at the next level is the attentive citizen, having some understanding of the importance of foreign policy; (3) next is the actively concerned citizen having a special interest in world affairs and seeking opportunities to learn more about international relations; (4) finally there is the specialist for whom international relations, or some aspect of the field, is his occupation.

If this framework is adopted, Houle and Nelson go on to suggest, programmes intended to build international understanding may be clustered around six broad objectives:

- (1) to provide the opportunity for specialists to educate one another;
- (2) to serve the continuing needs of attentive citizens for information and understanding;
- (3) to serve the continuing needs of actively concerned citizens for a basic understanding of world affairs;
- (4) to help actively concerned citizens acquire techniques for discharging their special responsibilities more effectively;
- (5) to encourage some of the attentive citizens to become actively concerned and some of the actively concerned citizens to become specialists;
- (6) to help make inattentive citizens attentive.

Probably few adult educators define their objectives with this degree of precision, but the methods described in the five national reports as being used in the promotion of international understanding through adult education, in spite of their great variety, can be related to one or



other of these six objectives. The descriptive sections of the five reports together run to at least 50,000 words, and it is not easy to summarize them fairly or to arrange the activities in comprehensive and logically exact categories. The following classification, in the view of the five consultants, is convenient and meaningful, and those responsible for devising educational programmes for adults may well find that the study of this summary of activities already in progress suggests further activities for inclusion in their own programmes.

1. Direct teaching

Obviously a knowledge of certain subjects leads directly to a widening and deepening of international understanding, and whilst some of them, e.g. geography or a foreign language, can be taught at school, there are others, requiring experience and maturity of judgement, which cannot profitably be embarked upon before adulthood. The principal limiting factor is the individual's own range of concerns; unless the citizen is already attentive his interest cannot be engaged, and except for some rare and adventitious reason he will not be found undertaking an educational activity related to international understanding. There is no panacea for this difficulty, so well known to all educators. There is nothing for it but to go on doing our utmost, seizing opportunities presented by matters of topical interest, using suitable and modern techniques, and recognizing that the importance of the issue justifies, and requires, our maximum effort.

Subjects which are particularly relevant include:

- (a) Geography, especially human and economic geography.
- (b) Foreign languages.
- (c) Ethnology.
- (d) History, a subject which presents many problems, especially the tendency to see the past from only one point of view. This is particularly true in the case of countries which were formerly linked in a colonial relationship. Indigenous history has been neglected and events have been seen from the viewpoint of the colonizing country. To see the same events from the point of view of the people of the colonized country would help to explain attitudes taken up by some recently emergent nation-states. If the teaching of history is to promote international understanding there must be no glossing over of facts - including the fact that colonialism was a complex phenomenon, with good as well as bad features.
- (e) International law, international relations.
- (f) Social studies, including civics, government, and economics, which have implications for international understanding.
- (g) The cultures, including the religions, philosophies, literature and arts, of other countries.
- (h) The study of problems common to men everywhere, e.g. ill-health, agricultural production, industrialization, the recognition and protection of human rights.
- (i) The constitution and functioning of international and transnational organizations, including the operation of bilateral and multilateral aid programmes. An analysis of the action taken by an organization in relation to a particular problem or situation is more meaningful than a detailed explanation of the organization's structure.

Direct teaching may be carried on by a variety of means, such as series of lectures; classes and courses, long or short, residential or non-residential; correspondence courses; or radio and television. Its provision is usually the responsibility of educational authorities and institutions, but in some countries, particularly perhaps in the U.S.A., an important part is played also by the voluntary organizations built around world affairs.

In many forms of teaching textbooks play an important part. It goes without saying that they ought to be up to date, and as accurate and objective as a human account of human affairs can ever be - but if this goes without saying, it has to be added that textbooks too often fail to live up to this

ideal. There is no easy solution to this problem. An international imprimatur, by Unesco or by any other body, would be unthinkable even if it were practicable. In the writing and rewriting of school textbooks valuable co-operative work has been done by international groups of scholars. It may be that in certain fields a similar operation could be performed with textbooks used in adult education, but the immense range of books in use by adult students would make systematic international co-operation of this kind a task of formidable dimensions. However, a good deal could be done by informal, ad hoc consultation and co-operation.

## 2. Activities intended to convey information

Direct teaching of course includes the communication of information, but its purpose is educational, that is, broader than the mere communicating of information. In this section we are concerned with activities which are intended, by one means or another, to impart information, and which do not offer the same opportunity for interaction between the informer and the one who is informed as occurs in the teaching process; the student can question or argue with his teacher, he cannot so fruitfully question or argue with a book or a television set. The importance of the activities referred to in this section can hardly be overestimated, for international understanding is impossible unless the citizen has access to reliable and honestly presented information.

Of the great variety of means of communication those which are of special importance for our purpose are:

(a) The publication of books. The availability of inexpensive paper-backs has revolutionized book-buying habits within the last twenty or thirty years, and although the selection of titles published as paper-backs reflects, in the main, the comparatively limited public interest in international and world affairs, the part which inexpensive books are now playing in the dissemination of knowledge about such affairs is worthy of note, and of encouragement.

(b) Similar progress can be reported in the work of public libraries, another important source of information. An adequately staffed library can do useful work in helping, guiding and encouraging its readers, and we hope that, possibly through their professional associations, librarians will consider whether they could do even more than they now do to promote international understanding through their activities.

(c) Some use is already made by adult educators of the information resources available through Embassies, but it is unlikely that they are used so fully as they might be.

(d) As communicators of information, newspapers and periodicals vary widely. Some try to present information soberly, fairly, and with a due sense of proportion; some seize upon the trivial and the sensational, failing to make any rational distinction between the important and the unimportant; others are partisan and tendentious, particularly in their handling of news concerning other countries. An important part of adult education is to get people to read their newspapers critically and, in connexion with any statement on international affairs, to consider how the event might have been reported "from the other side".

(e) Although in some countries the printed word is the most important of the "classical" (as distinct from the "mass") media of communication, in others oral communication is more important, partly at least because of the prevailing degree of illiteracy. In parts of India, for example, social workers today use, successfully, the traditional informal means of adult education, based on readings, popular songs, a rhythmical prose, drama, ballads, and stories, and similar means would have to be employed for the large-scale communication of information about international affairs.

(f) Visual communication in general permits of less subtlety than verbal, but is capable of immediate and effective impact; hence the importance of exhibitions dealing with foreign countries, the work of international organizations, and such problems as famine, refugees, etc. Such exhibitions may be permanent or temporary, stationary or travelling. A tendency which has to be guarded against is the exhibition of only those aspects of a foreign country which are thought to be "cultural" or "picturesque". To learn something of the achievements, in the field of literature and the arts, of another country is part of adult education, but an exhibition hinders rather than promotes international understanding unless it gives a fair idea of the way of life in the other country today.

(g) The importance of the theatre as a means of communication varies from one country to another. In France, the Théâtre des Nations has been brilliantly successful. Where the drama is used as a means of communication it can be employed most effectively through active participation, which, educationally, is to be preferred to the rôle of a mere spectator.

(h) Perhaps music also should be included here. It is a powerful means of conveying feeling, but of limited use in the communication of ideas. Like visual communication it does not suffer from problems of linguistic barriers.

(i) In spite of the importance of all these means of communication, today it is the mass media which exercise the greatest influence, for good or for bad, on international understanding. Films deliberately designed to have an educational effect have their place, but a feature film, seen by millions of people, is likely to have a far greater impact. If it is an honest and friendly portrayal of another people it will arouse imagination and sympathy, but only too often such films show foreigners as being odd and unlike ourselves, and therefore either comic or sinister. As for radio and television, no one nowadays is likely to minimize their influence - especially the impact of television in those countries where nightly viewing is an almost universal habit.

Some, but by no means all, of the bodies controlling film production and showing, radio, and television are alive to their responsibilities in this respect. Adult educators can help to keep them mindful of their responsibilities, and of the importance of not underrating the intelligence and the interest of their audiences. The adult education movement is one means through which the consumers' views may be expressed to the producers.

Adult educators also need to study ways in which, in their work, the media of mass communication can most effectively be employed in the promotion of international understanding. No other medium possesses the same potentiality for arousing new interests, and this may prove to be the most important rôle of the mass media in adult education. The need for the critical examination of newspaper material, referred to above, applies equally to these media, and useful work is being done through the initiation of group discussion of selected radio and television programmes and films. More needs to be done in the way of the international exchange of programmes, and there is scope for the increased showing of foreign films and television programmes.

### 3. Conferences and colloquia

This category comprises a great variety of activities organized on a national or an international basis, some intended to provide opportunities for the exchange of information (a colloquium of specialists, for example), some to offer opportunity for study (a conference for "attentive citizens", for example), and some to influence attitude. A few general remarks apply to them all: they require careful planning, and promoters must be clear about their objective, and authoritarian procedures - which are alien to the spirit of adult education - must be avoided. It is possible to point to valuable consequences that have resulted from international meetings; the establishment, for example, of the International Congress of University Adult Education following the conference at Sagamore, New York, in 1960, and the development of university concern for adult education in German following a series of Anglo-German university conferences.

### 4. Exchanges, travel, study abroad, tourism

Of activities falling into this category there has been a considerable expansion in recent years, especially on the part of citizens of the more affluent countries. The expansion is, in fact, the combined effect of comparative affluence and technological improvements in transport.

Tourism has now become a major industry, particularly in Europe and North America. It is impossible to estimate its effect on international understanding. Where the traveller goes in a receptive frame of mind, is able to make personal contacts, and to see the way of life of the people in the country visited, understanding will be enlarged; where he goes with a closed mind, he will find the evidence that confirms his prejudices and the instances which justify his stereotypes. Those responsible for adult education can do something to ensure that some tourists, at least, go with some relevant preparation, by arranging courses, however informal, on the language and character of the countries to be visited. Suitably written booklets and brochures would be an aid -

on an aeroplane they would be agreeable alternative reading to the instructions about what passengers should do in the event of disaster.

One phenomenon of recent years has been a large-scale increase in travelling on the part of young people. Many, in small groups, undertake long journeys by motor-car; youth hostels enable groups to decide their own itineraries, and, by visiting districts which are not essentially touristic, to get a truer understanding of the country and its young people; joining a vacation camp in a foreign country or working in one as a helper is another way in which an increasingly large number of young people are making fruitful international contacts.

Personal exchanges may take place on an individualistic basis, or in parties, large or small; they may be bilateral (groups from two countries) or multilateral (groups from several countries). Whatever form they take, adequate preparation and suitable physical facilities are essential if they are to be effective in promoting international understanding. There are advantages in inter-family exchanges, which permit of an intimacy and continuity that can rarely be achieved in exchanges arranged on an institutional basis. There are other advantages in exchanges in which the participants have a common interest, especially a vocational interest, or membership of an organization with transnational links, and in many instances it has been found that a common interest of this sort can go far to overcome the barriers of language.

An increasing number of people are going on study tours and summer courses in other countries. Such tours and courses can make a significant contribution to international understanding, and their organization becomes easier with the improvement of transport facilities.

Organizations exist for the establishment of pen-friendships. International correspondence courses might usefully be developed; at present they are meagre, but there appears to be no serious obstacle to their expansion.

Finally, an unprecedentedly large number of students are studying at universities and other educational institutions abroad, an undoubted contribution to international understanding in that the horizons of the academic community, both teachers and students, are thereby broadened, but it is one which really lies outside the scope of this report.

In spite of the development of exchanges, study tours, etc., more could be done with advantage. The restricting factors are lack of resources, both financial and physical (youth hostels, holiday centres, etc.), and lack of information about opportunities.

##### 5. Voluntary work abroad

Collaboration in a specific project on an international basis, e.g. work camps for young people, and voluntary service for one or two years in a developing country, are methods by which international understanding can be fostered, provided that the work is undertaken in a genuinely co-operative spirit, not as a kind of propaganda, and provided that there has been adequate orientation. To enlarge upon the subject would be to go outside the terms of this report, but two comments are relevant to the extent to which voluntary work abroad is likely to foster international understanding: first, the receiving country must determine the conditions on which the help is given, so that the volunteers will know that their help is really desired; and secondly there is considerable mutual educational value in foreign volunteers and nationals of the receiving country working alongside each other, in joint teams.

##### 6. Education for men and women whose work takes them abroad

An increasing number of men and women are being brought into contact with foreign countries through their work, thus offering adult educators opportunities for expanding their efforts to promote international understanding. Several groups can be distinguished:

- (a) Immigrant and migrant workers, whose advent may lead to better international understanding, or may lead to friction and the hardening of prejudices. There is a twofold need and a twofold obligation; a need for preparation in the home country, which must be undertaken by or with the support of the authorities there; and a need for special educational arrangements to be made for them by the host country. Since the attitude of the host country

is so important it may well be desirable also to make special educational arrangements for the indigenous workers with whom the immigration or migrant workers will have to collaborate.

Some ministries of defence, whose soldiers were about to visit another country, made a practice of providing them with simple literature, giving some account of the country to be visited, its people, and their social customs and behaviour. It is at least as important that immigrant workers should be informed of these things as soldiers.

(b) Skilled men and women going to work for limited periods in developing countries will probably need short orientation courses. Simply from humanitarian motives they are likely to evince a warm sympathy for the poorer, and obviously necessitous, sections of the community. They also need to understand the less obvious, but real, problems which confront the emerging professional middle classes who are having to shoulder extensive administrative tasks with few resources.

(c) Seamen and aircraft crews are constantly visiting other countries but generally these visits are less productive of international understanding than they might be if they could be coupled with some suitable form of adult education.

(d) Similarly the internationalization of industry and commerce results in closer contact between people in different countries in the course of their work, and adult educators have sometimes seized the opportunity thus presented for developing programmes designed to promote international understanding. The joint arrangement, at Rochester, New York and Hull, England, of summer schools for American and English adult students results from the connexion of certain industrial organizations in the two towns.

(e) Because working abroad for a period is so effective a way of becoming acquainted with the people of another country, opportunities for foreigners to undertake temporary paid work should be encouraged, especially opportunities for young people so that they can work abroad during their vacations and earn enough to enable them to meet the costs of the visit.

#### 7. Programmes aimed at racial harmony and understanding

Such programmes are of increasing importance because of population mobility, leading to large-scale immigration, and the more frequent confrontation of ethnic groups. It may be that the most serious problems of the next century will spring from differences between racial groups rather than between nation states. Efforts which are being made through adult education to promote interracial understanding and co-operation therefore forcibly contribute to international understanding and world peace.

#### 8. Campaigns and associations promoting international understanding

Although not always thought of as being an aspect of adult education, the launching of campaigns and the formation of associations in support of some aspect of international understanding, supplying information and arousing imagination and sympathy, should be included; sometimes they can usefully be linked with more formal educational activities. The methods that are adopted vary widely, and include radio and television programmes; advertisements in newspapers and on hoardings and shop-window displays; the promotional work of clubs and societies; processions and rallies; celebration days and weeks. The objects directly relevant to international understanding which the organizers seek to promote in these various ways include: the work of the United Nations, Unesco, WHO, FAO, ILO and other international bodies; the World Campaign for Universal Literacy, International Co-operation Year, Freedom from Hunger; the education of public opinion in support of schemes for aiding developing countries; friendly relations and understanding between specific pairs or groups of countries.

#### 9. The international work of non-governmental organizations

There are numerous voluntary organizations and institutions whose interests and links cross national boundaries, and so help to promote international understanding. Some of these are national bodies, such as certain youth organizations, having links with similar bodies in other

countries; some are bodies set up expressly to promote international co-operation, e.g. the International Congress of University Adult Education; others are institutions whose concerns transcend national boundaries.

In addition there are in most, perhaps in all countries, voluntary organizations such as co-operatives, women's groups, etc. for which an interest in world affairs is not a primary concern but which have opportunities for promoting international understanding in its membership. It is to be hoped that these organizations will use to the utmost these opportunities for widening their members' interest and concerns.

Finally, it is impossible to ignore the influence of churches and of religious movements, some of which are world-wide in their concern, although others accept a mainly local ambit. But whilst it would seem bizarre to avoid all reference to them and the extent to which they do, or could, promote international understanding, it is not a subject which it would be proper to pursue here; perhaps, however, it is not inappropriate to express the hope that ecclesiastical and religious leaders are giving anxious thought to ways in which, through their work, understanding between peoples may be fostered.

#### IV. PROBLEMS

Inevitably, problems confront those who seek to promote international understanding through adult education. Some of them are obvious, springing from the fact that education is not an autonomous activity but is part of the total society and must operate within the framework of prevailing public opinion. We state the problems in no defeatist sense, for we are impressed with the success with which some of them are being tackled, and the final section of this report contains recommendations which we believe would help in overcoming others.

The overriding problem is the lack of interest and of a sense of urgency amongst the general public about international understanding, (and, we fear, amongst many adult educators themselves) with the consequence that the resources placed at the disposal of those working in this field are inadequate. More could undoubtedly be done, especially in the way of exchanges (one of the most useful ways of promoting international understanding) if more money were available. Perhaps National Commissions for Unesco could stimulate the provision of more adequate resources in their respective countries.

Secondly, little scientific evaluation of results has yet been undertaken, conclusions are largely based on intuition, and adult educators must largely work in a spirit of faith. It is perhaps not right to assume that all important values can be expressed in terms of dimensions which are capable of scientifically accurate measurement, and certainly judgement and action cannot be suspended until scientific accuracy has been achieved. Nevertheless more scientific research in this field is urgently required; without it, it is impossible to isolate the factors making for effectiveness or to determine precisely the success of a particular method. It is partly because there is so little in the way of evaluation of results that adult educators often tend to be uncertain about their objectives. Programmes ought to have as their aim something more specific than spreading a vague general goodwill.

Another problem is that international understanding may be most difficult to promote in situations where it is at a minimum and therefore most needed; for example, between countries whose physical remoteness makes personal contact difficult, or between countries or groups whose relations are strained with the consequence that little intercourse between them takes place and attempts to bring it about are met with indifference or hostility.

Another problem is that, whilst bilateral exchanges are comparatively easy to arrange, multilateral encounters present greater difficulties. Bilateral programmes can often be carried on with some continuity and on a large scale. The more limited field of action permits of a concentration of effort impossible to achieve where a wide variety of experiences is represented. But bilateral exchanges need to be complemented by multilateral programmes with the richness due to multiplicity and the widening of horizons.

The media of mass communication, whose influence in most countries is extensive, present adult educators with problems as well as opportunities. It is undoubtedly a problem that those

who control the mass media do not always put the promotion of international understanding high amongst their aims; responding to what they believe to be a mass demand for sport, crime, and the trivial, their programmes often serve to strengthen prejudices and confirm stereotypes about foreigners. Hence there is a need, as already noted, for adult educators to encourage the critical, intelligent, examination of programmes. But, on the other hand, some programmes directly aimed at the promotion of international understanding go unappreciated because many people do not understand the language of international affairs; there is a need for basic courses in the vocabulary of international affairs. Adult educators need to be ready to co-operate with the mass media. Their readiness to do so would probably lead to an increase in the number of films and programmes aimed at the furtherance of international understanding.

The problem of linguistic barriers has already been referred to. In spite of improvements in language teaching it remains a formidable one.

Finally, the problem is to make the most effective use of resources which are, and probably always will be, inadequate in terms of money, physical facilities, trained personnel, and suitable educational aids.

## V. SUGGESTIONS FOR ACTION

### A. By Member States

With the support of all countries, emphasis is now being placed on the promotion of literacy (thought of as something more than the bare acquisition of the skills of reading and writing) although the subject is of more direct relevance to some countries than to others; the spread of literacy is seen, in the long run, to be of universal benefit. This study about international understanding needs to be seen in the same light. The urgency for education in international understanding in any given country will depend upon the country's geographical, economic, political, and social situation, yet every country is affected by the furtherance of the comity of nations and of peoples, even in an area apparently remote from its own interests. States can no longer live in isolation; every country has an interest in the well-being of every other, and all are benefited by the extension, anywhere, of international understanding.

The growth of aid to developing countries is producing a new kind of relationship between States, and one which urgently needs to be rightly understood. There is need for understanding both in the giving and in the receiving country. "You do not have the humility to give in grace that we may accept with dignity," the late Pandit Nehru remarked on one occasion, and he was alluding to a state of affairs where there was inadequate understanding of the relationship which should prevail in this situation. It is a relationship of mutual interest which will not be adequately understood without adult education.

Suggestions for action which should be taken by Member States are implicit in the foregoing sections of this report. They include the placing of more emphasis on the promotion of international understanding in adult education programmes; the provision of more adequate resources; the bringing of this report to the notice of adult educators; and the incorporation in training programmes of the wider study of methods of promoting international understanding through adult education. In relation to this last point it must be said that the present arrangements for training adult educators are inadequate, and that most of them, slight as they are, make little reference to the international aspects of adult education.

A further suggestion commended to the attention of governments of Member States is that bilateral cultural conventions should be extensive enough in their scope to embrace adult education.

### B. By Unesco

It is recommended that Unesco should:

- (1) bring this study of the promotion of international understanding through adult education to the attention of Member States and of non-governmental organizations and should invite them, within a specified period, to report on the situation within their own respective countries or spheres of interest;

(2) give higher priority to the encouragement of international organizations and non-governmental organizations whose purpose is the promotion of international understanding; give financial support for their work where possible and necessary; publicize their work through Unesco publications; and seek to put similar organizations into touch with each other;

(3) take the initiative in promoting research, either undertaken by Unesco itself, or by a suitable institution (such as the Unesco Institute at Hamburg), or by a group of institutions in co-operation. Research will be of different forms, according to its purpose, e.g. the basic collection of data, the evaluative study of existing programmes, or creative research leading to the formulation of new ideas.

Note: the following are cited by way of illustration as topics in which research is desirable or where the results of research need to be publicised:

methods of language learning by adults;

the investigation, in a suitable urban society, of the reason why certain sections of the community have developed a concern for international understanding and how it is expressed;

an inquiry into the reasons why some experiments in the promotion of international understanding succeed and others fail;

an investigation of ways by which, through adult education, the results of research into the conditions which produce harmony or tension between groups (that is, conflict studies) can be disseminated;

an investigation of ways in which an interest in international understanding can be aroused in hitherto inattentive citizens.

(4) include education for international understanding in its own training programmes in adult education;

(5) act as an information clearing house, and in particular:

(a) seek to ensure the wider distribution of The Courier;

(b) collect systematically and publicize information concerning schemes and opportunities for promoting international understanding through adult education;

(c) be in a position to put similar institutions in different countries into touch with one another;

(d) publish information in simple language about the work of the United Nations and its Specialized Agencies;

(e) consult with the International Air Transport Association about the possibility of placing in airliners brochures concerning the countries to be visited, the cost of which might be met by the governments of the countries concerned.

(6) sponsor schemes for the exchange of adult educators and colloquia in which they may have the opportunity of exchanging experiences;

(7) investigate the possibility of securing inexpensive travel arrangements for bona fide adult students, and publicize the results of such investigations;

(8) explore the possibility of channelling funds from various international sources into activities aimed at promoting international understanding;

(9) provide an outline guide to the preparation of study kits relating to the promotion of international understanding through adult education;



(10) publish, or assist in the publication of, this report or similar reports for the guidance of adult educators, and secure the publication in a conveniently accessible form of such documents as the Charter of the United Nations, the Statute of the International Court of Justice, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, and the "Montreal declaration".

(11) provide, or encourage other suitable agencies to provide, international correspondence courses;

(12) take the initiative in promoting consultation about the education of seafarers;

(13) convene colloquia (a) of editors of adult education journals and (b) of producers of films and television and radio programmes with the object of considering how through their work they can make the maximum contribution to international understanding;

(14) consider the feasibility of making a periodical award for the film, radio or television programme considered to have made the greatest contribution to international understanding;

(15) provide resources so that, in so far as these suggestions are adopted they can be implemented effectively and without undue delay.