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PREM 19/3202

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UNESCO General Conference
Belgrade 23 September - 28 October

UNITED NATIONS

UNESCO

[In attached folder: Foreign Affairs Committee (FAC) Report
on UNESCO.]

OCTOBER 1980

Referred to	Date	Referred to	Date	Referred to	Date	Referred to	Date
16.10.80							
13.2.81							
21.5.84							
21.11.84							
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4.3.6.88							
9.2.90							
30.3.90							

PREM 19/3202

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10 DOWNING STREET
LONDON SW1A 2AA

From the Private Secretary

30 March 1990

UNESCO

Thank you for your letter of 28 March, conveying the results of the review of our future relationship with UNESCO. The Prime Minister agrees that we should not rejoin and that we should only consider a further review when developments in UNESCO warrant one. She is content with the proposed Parliamentary answer and the letter to the Chairman of the Foreign Affairs Committee.

I am copying this letter to Tim Sutton (Lord President's Office) and Stephen Crowne (Department of Education and Science).

C. D. POWELL

R.N. Peirce, Esq.,
Foreign and Commonwealth Office.

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Foreign and Commonwealth Office

London SW1A 2AH

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28 March 1990

Die Minister

Dear Charles

70% of the Budget is still spent in Paris & 60% of the staff are there. Agree that we should not rejoin.

As you know we have been conducting a thorough review of our future relationship with UNESCO in the light of the results of the organisation's recent general conference. The Foreign Affairs Committee have done a review of their own, and issued their report on 15 March. I enclose a copy, together with a short summary. Their principal conclusion is that we should not rejoin UNESCO but should be ready to do so if reform has made sufficient progress in a year's time.

but and should only think again if there are genuine reasons to rejoin it.

We have now completed our own review. We too have concluded that we should not rejoin UNESCO. Nor do we set a time limit for reconsideration. This would simply create expectations which might well not be met. In the Foreign Secretary's view it is better for us to keep a close eye on developments in the Agency and only consider a further review when developments there warrant one. The Foreign Secretary would like to announce the result in the form of an answer to an insired PQ in the first week of April and, at the same time, to set out our reasoning at greater length in a letter to the Chairman of the Foreign Affairs Committee responding to their report. I enclose drafts.

CDP 29/3

I am copying this letter to Tim Sutton (Lord President's Office) and to Stephen Crowne (Department of Education and Science).

*Yours ever
R N Peirce*

(R N Peirce)
Private Secretary

C D Powell Esq
10 Downing Street

CONFIDENTIAL

Draft letter from Mr Sainsbury

I am writing in reply to the Report by the Foreign Affairs Committee on UNESCO which was published on 15 March.

We have been conducting a detailed review of our policy towards UNESCO in the light of the results of the organisation's recent General Conference. In the course of our review we have received comments from over 90 British organisations interested in UNESCO and its work. A full list of these is attached. I have been ... to Paris to meet Professor Mayor and we have of course thoroughly scrutinised the Organisation's Third Medium Term plan and its Programme and Budget for the period 1990/91. We were also most grateful for the work of the FAC on this subject and have taken your views fully into account.

The principal question we have addressed is whether the Organisation has been sufficiently reformed since our withdrawal in 1985 to merit our re-entry. The criteria we have used in assessing this are listed in our memorandum to the Committee. It may therefore be helpful if I set out our views on how things now stand on these points.

(a) Programme Concentration

Evidence on progress in this area is ambiguous. The Third Medium Term Plan shows a reduction from 14 to 7 in the number of major programme areas, with a reduction from 52 to 18 in the number of programmes. On the other hand the number of sub-programmes has risen from 147 to 182 and it is not possible to discern from the programme and budget any substantial transfer of resources into, for example, the core areas of education and literacy. The opinions on this point of those organisations which contributed to our review were similarly divided. Many had the impression that UNESCO programmes are now better concentrated and more relevant to the Organisation's mandate. A number of particularly well informed bodies however commented that there had been no significant improvement in the content, clarity and presentation of the Medium Term Plan. And Professor Mayor himself has been unable to point to substantial cuts in programme activity.

I have therefore concluded that while the Organisation's claims of substantial programme concentration demonstrate a very welcome intention, they remain disappointingly unproven in fact. It remains to be seen whether there will be a significant concentration of resources into UNESCO's core areas of activity.

Rt Hon David Howell MP
Chairman of the Foreign Affairs Committee
House of Commons
London SW1A 0AA

Rt Hon David Howell MP

(b) Duplication with the activities of other UN Agencies

UNESCO's programmes as described in the Medium Term Plan and 1990/91 Programme suggest there is extensive overlap with the activities of a number of other UN bodies, notably the UN Environment Programme (UNEP), the drugs bodies at the United Nations Office in Vienna, the World Health Organisation and the International Telecommunications Union. A number of the organisations with which we have been in correspondence have expressed continuing concern about this. When I raised the point with Professor Mayor he said that he was in the process of tackling the problem through agreement with other UN bodies and that, in particular, he had just reached such an agreement with UNEP on environmental programmes.

This is another issue on which it is impossible for me to arrive at a definitive judgement now. The elimination of duplication plainly depends upon the implementation in practice of the agreements between UNESCO and other UN bodies. We would like to see UNESCO consulting openly with other UN bodies at the inception of major new projects which are likely to overlap with other parts of the system and not only after expensive feasibility studies have taken place.

(c) Special Programme Issues

In 1985 we expressed particular concern about two specific programme areas. These were the New World Information and Communications Order (NWICO) with its attempts to impose controls on the media; and the particular attention devoted by the human rights programme to "people's rights" rather than individual human rights.

On NWICO, the text adopted at the 1989 General Conference was the product of a particularly hard fought negotiation. It is accordingly convoluted and difficult to interpret. As the FAC has noted, it contains some references to the "better balanced dissemination of information" which has been seen as code for control of the media. On the other hand it refers repeatedly to the free flow of information and the avoidance of obstacles to the freedom of expression. In these circumstances the attitude of the Secretariat takes on particular importance, and Professor Mayor has repeatedly and clearly emphasised his commitment to the free flow of information. I have also been struck by the comments I have received in the course of our review, from many who in the past have been highly critical of UNESCO's Communications Programme. They now see NWICO as being only a minor problem and have drawn attention to the useful work being done by UNESCO in developing contacts between the free press of Eastern Europe and their Western counterparts.

Rt Hon David Howell MP
Chairman of the Foreign Affairs Committee
House of Commons
London SW1A 0AA

Rt Hon David Howell MP

I would not wish to give the impression that we are completely content with NWICO. It would undoubtedly be better if the programme did not exist. And given its history, and particularly some of the attitudes expressed at the last General Conference, there remains some possibility that in certain circumstances it could again become an attack on media freedom. But in its present form it no longer constitutes a serious obstacle to UK membership of UNESCO.

Our concerns about UNESCO's activity on "people's rights" have also been largely allayed. As Professor Mayor has pointed out, the 1990/91 Programme provides only \$30,000 for an academic study on this issue.

(d) Decentralisation

X UNESCO has so far made little progress on this. Over 70% of the Organisation's budget is still spent in Paris and some 60% of its staff (including contract staff) are still based there. This makes little change from the situation in 1985 when we left the Organisation. It compares badly with other UN agencies and was cited as a cause for continuing concern by many of those consulted as part of our review. I also agree with the Committee's observation that the extent of decentralisation is relevant to the proportion of UNESCO's efforts devoted to "action" programmes as opposed to "reflection" programmes. Professor Mayor has himself said that further progress is needed and earlier this month set a target of 54% decentralisation by the end of 1991. This would be a welcome shift in the imbalance between UNESCO activities in Paris and in the field but of course it is impossible to make a judgement so soon after the announcement of the extent to which it is likely to be achieved.

(e) Administration and Efficiency

As the Foreign Affairs Committee report notes, the Hammarskjold Commission report, which issued in December 1989, strongly criticises UNESCO's management and administration. It calls for radical changes in a number of areas: devolution of responsibility, improved internal communication, personnel policy, staff evaluation and changes to the organisation's "top heavy" structure.

Following endorsement of these recommendations by an advisory panel under Ambassador Wilenski, Professor Mayor announced on 5 March a set of administrative reforms. With one important exception, these respond to the problems identified in the Hammarskjold report. There is to be a freeze on recruitment and the filling of posts in Paris; a sharp cut in documentation and official

Rt Hon David Howell MP
Chairman of the Foreign Affairs Committee
House of Commons
London SW1A 0AA

Rt Hon David Howell MP

travel; and machinery is established to bring about improved delegation of authority, internal communication, staff management and evaluation.

The measures also include a reorganisation of UNESCO's structure which is not in conformity with the Hammarskjold recommendations. They entail in particular the appointment of 44 new senior staff at a cost of \$6.2 million. This step has caused considerable concern, both among member states and within UNESCO itself.

The commissioning of the Hammarskjold report demonstrated Professor Mayor's awareness of the need for administrative reform in UNESCO. This is welcome, as is the bulk of the steps he has now announced to respond to the Hammarskjold recommendations. It will, however, be some time before we can judge the effectiveness of these steps in practice.

I cannot, however, welcome the staff changes. These are certainly at variance with the comments in the Hammarskjold report on the top heaviness of UNESCO's existing structure. They seem also to have been announced with little regard to the proper procedures for such appointments or to their budgetary consequences. As the Foreign Affairs Committee puts it, they are disturbingly "redolent of bad old habits within the Organisation".

(f) The Budget

At the 1989 General Conference UNESCO approved a budget for the 1990-91 biennium of \$880,948,000. This represents zero real growth when compared with the previous biennium and constituted a rejection by Member States of real growth of 2.5% proposed by the Director-General. In general UNESCO has successfully adhered to the principle of Zero Real Growth over the past few years and has sought to fund additional activities from extra-budgetary sources, particularly through other UN Agencies. This is a satisfactory outcome and compares well with performance elsewhere in the UN system.

(g) Consequences of UK non-membership

Your Committee, in the latter part of its report, looks at the consequences for British organisations of UK non-membership of UNESCO. The comments we have received on this point correspond quite closely to the evidence given to the Committee. A wide range of British organisations, notably academic institutions, feel that our absence from UNESCO leaves us on the margin of important multilateral contacts in the fields of education, science and culture and deprives us of the opportunity to bid for projects and

Rt Hon David Howell MP
Chairman of the Foreign Affairs Committee
House of Commons
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Rt Hon David Howell MP

consultancies financed by UNESCO. There are also fears that such contacts as do continue will erode the longer we remain a non-member.

On the other hand, I have been struck by the continuing extent and vitality of contacts between UK organisations and UNESCO five years after our withdrawal. This is in part due to the continuing financial support provided by HMG to a number of UNESCO bodies and programmes. It also reflects the substantial efforts made by certain organisations to ensure that they continue to be regarded by UNESCO as having an important contribution to make to UNESCO's own activities.

A number of organisations also recognised, as noted by the Committee, that UK re-entry to UNESCO would entail a reallocation to UNESCO of funds currently used for other purposes. This was seen as a strong argument against re-entry.

(h) Conclusion

I have noted that the worst features of UNESCO's activities on communication and human rights have been eliminated and that the organisation has announced steps towards programme rationalisation, decentralisation and administrative reform which, by and large, are in line with our wishes. I have also noted the Committee's feeling, shared by many who contributed to our review, that "by its absence from UNESCO the UK is failing to participate as fully as it might in important international initiatives in the fields of education, science and culture".

I am conscious, on the other hand, that these announcements are very recent, and that the transformation of UNESCO into the vigorous and cost-effective organisation we wish to see depends crucially on their full implementation in practice. At this stage there is clearly some uncertainty about this, and the new staff appointments mentioned above are an additional source of doubt about the future prospects of the organisation. I therefore agree with the Committee's view that "some more time is necessary before it will be possible to be certain of the Director-General's ability to deliver the reforms which UNESCO badly needs". I do not believe that the UK should rejoin until we have that certainty. Your Committee has suggested twelve months as a period after which we should judge whether there has been sufficient progress. ~~I am not sure that that would be long enough and do not propose to set a deadline for review.~~

That may not turn out to be long enough, but we shall keep a close and continuous watch on the rate of progress.

UNESCO's mandate for education, science and culture includes some of the most important of mankind's activities. It is a matter of regret to us that in present circumstances we cannot endorse

Rt Hon David Howell MP
Chairman of the Foreign Affairs Committee
House of Commons
London SW1A 0AA

/...

Rt Hon David Howell MP

the choice, administration and implementation of the organisation's programmes. It is of course our intention to continue to participate in certain specific UNESCO programmes as we have in the past. Our non-membership of UNESCO also frees resources for other aid projects in the fields of education, science and culture. The UK remains firmly committed to the ideals underlying the establishment of UNESCO. We will continue to monitor developments in UNESCO closely and look forward to the day when we can join a ~~suitably~~ reformed organisation.

Tim Sainsbury

Rt Hon David Howell MP
Chairman of the Foreign Affairs Committee
House of Commons
LONDON SW1A 0AA

DSR 11 (Revised Sept 85)

DRAFT: minute/letter/teleletter/despach/note

TYPE: Draft/Final 1 +

FROM:

Reference

DEPARTMENT:

TEL. NO:

RESTRICTED

BUILDING:

ROOM NO:

Your Reference

SECURITY CLASSIFICATION

TO:

Copies to:

Top Secret

Secret

Confidential

Restricted

Unclassified

SUBJECT:

PRIVACY MARKING

..... In Confidence

CAVEAT

Question: To ask the Secretary of State whether he has taken a decision on the question of UK membership of UNESCO.

I have conducted a thorough review of UK membership of UNESCO as part of which I have consulted a large number of organisations with an interest in UNESCO activities. I have also taken into account the views expressed by the Foreign Affairs Committee of the House in their report on UNESCO dated 15 March. I have concluded that although there have been improvements at UNESCO over the past few years these are not sufficient to justify rejoining ^{now} ~~at the present time~~.

As recommended by the FAC I will continue to keep the situation under review and we will continue to maintain our observer section at UNESCO. We will also continue to participate in the UNESCO programmes with which we are ^{now} ~~currently~~ involved.

Enclosures flag(s)

I have today written to the Chairman of the FAC giving my detailed comments on their report. A copy of this letter has been desposited in the Library of the House.

10JAAC

LIST OF ORGANISATIONS WHO REPLIED AS PART OF THE REVIEW OF UK POLICY
TOWARDS UNESCO

Government Departments

Overseas Development Administration
Dept of Education and Science
Dept of the Environment
Dept of Trade and Industry
Office of Arts and Libraries
Home Office

Others

UNA
NERC
The Royal Society
British Council
Publishers Association
Geological Society
Royal Society of Chemistry
Cambridge Philosophical Society
SERC
Arts Council of Great Britain
English Heritage
Museums Association
Library Association
Ancient Monuments Society
University of Leicester
BBC
Friends of UNESCO
Arms of Industry
IBA
Broadcasting Standards Council
Newspapers Society
The Times
The Independent
Daily Mail

The Economist
The Observer
Sunday Correspondent
Thomson Foundation
International Press Institute
Amnesty International
British Assoc. of Former United
Nations Civil Servants
LSE
Bristol University
NUT

Academic Institutions

Universities

The University of Cambridge
The University of Aston
University of Bath
University of Bradford
University of Buckingham
The City University
The University of Durham
The University of Essex
The University of Exeter
The University of Hull
The University of Keele
The University of Lancaster
The University of Liverpool
The University of London
Loughborough University of Technology
The University of Manchester
University of Manchester Institute
The University of Newcastle Upon Tyne
The University of Nottingham
The University of Reading
University of Salford

The University of Sheffield
The University of Surrey
The University of Sussex
The University of Warwick
Cranfield Institute of Technology
The Open University
University of Aberdeen
University of Dundee
The University of Edinburgh
The University of Glasgow
Heriot-Watt University
University of St Andrews
University of Stirling
The Queen's University of Belfast

Polytechnics

Coventry Polytechnic
Hatfield Polytechnic
Huddersfield Polytechnic
Lancashire Polytechnic
Oxford Polytechnic
Nottingham Polytechnic
Wolverhampton Polytechnic
Polytechnic of Wales
Middlesex Polytechnic
Polytechnic of East London
Polytechnic of Central London
South Bank Polytechnic
Manchester Polytechnic
Newcastle Upon Tyne Polytechnic
North Staffordshire Polytechnic

Other replies

IFPI
Lord Briggs



10 DOWNING STREET
LONDON SW1A 2AA

call ✓
e: UNESCO

From the Private Secretary

9 February 1990

UNESCO POLICY REVIEW

Thank you for your letter of 8 February about the review of our membership of UNESCO. The Prime Minister has noted this, in particular the present view that there is likely to be little justification for rejoining.

I am copying this letter to Stephen Crowne (Department of Education and Science) and Myles Wickstead (Overseas Development Administration).

Charles Powell

Bob Peirce Esq
Foreign and Commonwealth Office



Foreign and Commonwealth Office

London SW1A 2AH

8 February 1990

copy
(2)
Mr Prime Minister
COB 8/2

Dear Charles

UNESCO Policy Review

In 1985, when we withdrew from UNESCO, we said we would keep our membership under review. We have repeated this commitment in reply to letters and PQs.

In the past, when the Director-General has pressed us to rejoin; we have said that we could not take a view until we had seen the organisation's new Medium Term (ie Five Year) Plan. This has now been revealed.

We are therefore starting a thorough review of our relationship with UNESCO. We are consulting a wide range of scientific, educational and other bodies, both Government and independent, with an interest in UNESCO and its activities. We shall also consult institutions representing the British media. They will be asked to respond to a list of detailed questions about changes in the organisation since 1985, focussing particularly on whether certain of UNESCO's policies, notably on freedom of the press, have become less objectionable since M. Bow's departure, and whether UNESCO's management and direction have significantly improved.

These responses will give us an insight into the extent to which UNESCO is valued by UK institutions, but the decision on whether or not to rejoin will of course be HMG's alone. Our present assessment is that there would be little justification at present for rejoining and that our contributions can be better spent elsewhere.

We have now received a PQ for answer on 9 February which we shall use to make public our decision to hold a review. I enclose a copy of the draft reply, cleared with the DES.

/I am



I am copying this letter to Stephen Crowne (DES) and
Myles Wickstead (ODA).

Yours ever

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'R N Peirce', with a horizontal flourish at the end.

(R N Peirce)
Private Secretary

C D Powell Esq
10 Downing Street

PARLIAMENTARY QUESTION

HOUSE OF COMMONS: FOR WRITTEN ANSWER

HEAD OF

UND

Please submit:

a draft answer and background

to Parliamentary Relations Unit before

NOON 8/2/90

FOR

PRIORITY

WRITTEN ANSWER ON

9/2/90

QUESTION

MR BOWDEN WELLS (HERTFORD AND STORTFORD) [C]

To ask the Secretary of State:

when he will publish the report of the proceedings at the recent Biannual General Conference of UNESCO; what organisations in Britain he is consulting; when he expects to publish his assessment of the conference; and whether he will make it his policy to consult with: (a) the UN Association of Great Britain and (b) the FAC of the House before coming to any conclusions.

FOR ANSWER BY

(Minister)

ANSWER

UNESCO has just adopted a new Medium Term Plan for the period 1990-95 and a programme and budget for the period 1990-91. These documents provide us with our first real opportunity to assess what progress the organisation has made since we left it in 1985. We will, therefore, now be making a detailed review of UNESCO with a view to deciding what our future relationship with the organisation should be. As part of this review I will be consulting a wide range of bodies with interests in the Educational, Scientific and Cultural fields covered by UNESCO's mandate. The United Nations Association will be one of the organisations consulted. A final decision will be announced after we have considered all the evidence. I understand that the Foreign Affairs Committee of the House intends to conduct hearings in mid-March on our policy towards UNESCO.

Authorised

(Head of Dept)

OR PRU ONLY
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6/2/90

WITE O.P. DATE

9/2/90

RIAL NO: 1098

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approval by

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PQs

Reply

py to:

vate Secretary

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(Minister)

liamentary Clerk



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Foreign and Commonwealth Office

London SW1A 2AH

13 June 1988

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13/6

Dear Charles

Prime Minister's Visit to Royal Opera House:
Meeting with Director-General of UNESCO

The Prime Minister has accepted an invitation from Sir John Sainsbury to meet a number of VIP guests for drinks before the performance of Anna Bolena at the Royal Opera House tonight. These guests include Dr Federico Mayor, Director-General of UNESCO.

News that the Director-General is likely to meet the Prime Minister is circulating at UNESCO Headquarters in Paris, where it has stimulated considerable interest. Mayor is likely to make the most of any conversation with the Prime Minister in subsequent contacts with the media to give the impression that he has entered into a high-level dialogue with the British Government. You may therefore find the following background on him helpful.

Mayor was elected Director-General in November 1987 largely because he was the only candidate acceptable to a majority of Member States with a realistic chance of defeating M'Bow. By temperament a conciliator rather than a leader, he has concentrated on trying to build up consensus and avoiding controversy at UNESCO rather than promoting real change. He has spent most of his first six months in office travelling overseas. This reflects his priorities: to improve UNESCO's public image, and to persuade the US, UK and Singapore to rejoin. He is campaigning for the latter under the slogan "a return to Universality". He has made a good impression on audiences chiefly because of his abundant personal charm and public relations skills. His approach however often consists of telling each audience what they wish to hear. The result is that few of his (contradictory) promises to individual leaders or audiences have yet led to real changes of policy or practice at UNESCO. But Mayor is beginning to use his ability to portray himself as a moderate and reasonable man with ambitious ideas for revitalising UNESCO, to encourage the UNESCO lobby and public opinion in the UK to press us to give him stronger backing.

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At UNESCO itself, Mayor has made some positive moves by implementing austerity measures in an attempt to reduce the budget deficit, introducing more open management practices and calling for greater concentration of programmes. But he has consistently ducked difficult or controversial decisions. He has left M'Bow's supporters in place in the Secretariat, has been reluctant to take difficult decisions over staffing, and has done little to reduce UNESCO involvement in controversial activity (particularly in the sphere of communications). In recent weeks a draft paper he has produced on UNESCO's activities for the period 1990-95, although characteristically vague, has succeeded in alienating most of the Eastern European and Third World States by failure to mention their pet projects. Mayor's reaction to their pressure will be an important indication of his future leadership and ability to win support for reform proposals. He has not hitherto shown himself willing to stand up to pressure or criticism.

Our policy in dealing with Mayor has been to welcome the change of Director-General, and to express the hope that the reform process will make real progress under his leadership but to insist that what really matters is action not words. "Universality" is not the issue: we need to see real reform achieved at UNESCO before we can begin to reconsider our position on membership. Mayor has acknowledged that he understands this in private contacts with us and the Americans, who have taken exactly the same line. But he has repeatedly given over-optimistic accounts to the press of UK and US confidence in the future of UNESCO and readiness to rejoin the Organisation. He may well cast any conversation with the Prime Minister in the same light when speaking to the press afterwards.

Mayor will return to London on 22 June for meetings with Mr Eggar, who will take the opportunity to repeat the message about our position to him, and with the Foreign Affairs Committee.

I am sorry to send you this at the last minute.

Yours ever, R N Peirce

(R N Peirce)
Private Secretary

C D Powell Esq
10 Downing Street

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12th
100
1888

For Tim Fletcher

UNESCO : STATEMENT TO HOUSES OF PARLIAMENT : 5 DECEMBER 1985

With your permission, Mr Speaker, I should like to make a statement about the United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural Organisation, UNESCO.

2. Britain played a prominent part in the creation of UNESCO. We continue to support the ideals and objectives contained in its Constitution. But the House will be aware of the Government's long standing doubt about the effectiveness with which UNESCO has been pursuing them. Among our concerns are the degree to which its work has been harmfully politicised; the organization has been used to attack those very values which it was designed to uphold. Then there has been inefficient management. This has led to programmes which contain vague and meaningless studies, duplication with the work of other agencies, and lack of discrimination in the creation of projects. There have been serious weaknesses in staff management, and excessive expenditure and staffing at the Paris headquarters.

3. Although we have put forward firm proposals for reform, and worked hard, particularly at the recent General Conference at Sofia, to secure their adoption, the results in our judgement fall far short of what we believe could justify continued British membership. The Government has therefore decided that notice given by my Rt Hon Friend the Foreign and Commonwealth Secretary in his letter of 5 December 1984 to the Director General will not be withdrawn, and that the United Kingdom will cease to be a member from 31 December 1985.

4. This decision is in no way aimed at the United Nations system as a whole. But we are determined that our support for the UN should be seen as support for effective and efficient organisations. Unfortunately, UNESCO is not such a body.

5. We will not be cutting back on international cooperation in the fields now covered by UNESCO. The money saved from our contribution will be used to further educational, scientific and other activities designed to benefit developing countries, particularly in the Commonwealth. In this way there will be more support through the aid programme for education, for the most part to be carried out through the British Council. We have particularly in mind increased allocations for training in this country for students from poor countries in the Commonwealth and elsewhere. In science we shall certainly continue to support the Inter-governmental Oceanographic Commission and the International Geological Correlation Programme, and make other arrangements for assisting international science, including for example programmes in soil and water management in arid and semi-arid countries in Africa. This list is not exhaustive and we shall give further details to the House in due course.

6. Because of the importance we attach to the underlying principles of UNESCO's work, the Government plans to maintain observer status in the Organisation.

7. Mr Speaker, it is sad that an organization which began with such high hopes and to which this country has contributed so much in the past should have gone so wrong. But we have to deal with what the Organization has become. We must resolutely ensure that the resources we have devoted to its purposes are spent in the most useful way.

1

PRIME MINISTER

UNESCO

I do not think this need be more than a very short discussion. I suggest that you ask whether anyone disagrees with the recommendation that we confirm our decision to withdraw. (Mr. Raison may, but I doubt it.)

I enclose some useful press cuttings about showing what a perfectly dreadful organisation UNESCO continues to be.

There may be some parliamentary difficulties. Only one speaker in the House of Commons debate favoured withdrawal. The Foreign Affairs Committee supported continuing to work for reform from within. (The Lords were more firmly in favour of withdrawal.)

Nor should it be difficult to agree that the money saved should be spend on education and other similar activities, in good part through the British Council and mostly for the benefit of Commonwealth countries.

If we can finish early there would be time for a short meeting on Westlands which we badly need.

C.D.P

CDP

4 December, 1985.

There is a real c: Lord President

problem here. I think

1. MR POWELL

the Foreign Secretary himself

2. PRIME MINISTER

must handle it in the House (Tim

Raison is not sound on this). He

can't do it until Monday. Agree that

Bernard should discreetly let the outcome be

UNESCO

The media have no doubt that the Government will consider its future membership of UNESCO tomorrow (Thursday). They believe we shall pull out and that we shall redeploy our "subs" in the aid programme to soften the blow.

known after tomorrow's meeting?

CDP

I appreciate that the Foreign Secretary is to fly to Spail/Gibraltar after Cabinet. But this is not a decision which can usefully be announced later rather than sooner. The decision should be announced tomorrow - assuming it is taken then.


There is only woe to be had if an announcement is delayed (in the likely full knowledge of the decision).

This boil needs lancing soonest.

Agree?

BERNARD INGHAM

4 December 1985


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B.07232

PRIME MINISTER

c Sir Robert Armstrong

British Policy towards UNESCO (OD(85)27)
OD Meeting on 5 December 1985 at 9.30 a.m.

BACKGROUND

In January 1984 the Government announced that the United Kingdom would remain in the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO) but fight for reform from within and that the situation would be reviewed towards the end of that year. A detailed account of the reforms required was sent by the Minister for Overseas Development (Mr Raison) to the Director General of UNESCO (Mr M'Bow) in April 1984. As a result of the lack of positive results from this approach, the Foreign and Commonwealth Secretary announced in November 1984 that, unless rescinded, the United Kingdom's notice of withdrawal from UNESCO would take effect on 31 December 1985.

2. In his memorandum (OD(85)27) of 2 December, the Foreign and Commonwealth Secretary concludes that, despite some improvements in UNESCO, the present situation justifies confirmation of the United Kingdom's notice of withdrawal. Sir Geoffrey Howe proposes that, in presenting such a decision, we should announce a number of specific proposals for using the money thereby saved for the aid programme in ways that would benefit developing countries, particularly in the Commonwealth, probably in the fields of education and science.

3. All members of the Committee are due to be present. The Secretary of State for Education and Science and the Minister for Overseas Development (Mr Raison) have been invited to attend.

[Lord Chancellor cannot attend].


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HANDLING

4. You should invite the Foreign and Commonwealth Secretary to introduce his memorandum. The Minister for Overseas Development and the Secretary of State for Education and Science will be able to amplify the advice on the performance of UNESCO.

5. You may wish to direct discussion to cover the following main issues -

a. The performance of UNESCO and the case for withdrawal.

The Foreign and Commonwealth Secretary considers that, given our notice of withdrawal, the burden of proof as to reforms within UNESCO must lie with those who argue that we should now rescind our earlier decision. He assesses UNESCO's recent performance under the following main headings:

i. Political bias

What success has been achieved in putting an end to the use of UNESCO for Soviet propaganda, attacks on Western values and discussion of extraneous political issues? Has our pressure for an assurance that UNESCO would not pursue its work on disarmament produced an adequate response? Is there a danger of a reversion to UNESCO's worst habits? (Minister for Overseas Development)

ii. Better programmes

As the memorandum makes clear, 74 per cent of UNESCO's resources continue to be spent in Paris. How great has been the growth in practical measures to help developing countries? Is the new system of priorities likely to bring UNESCO's activities under lasting and effective control? (Minister for Overseas Development / Secretary of State for Education and Science)



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iii. Financial stringency

The Foreign and Commonwealth Secretary reports that this has been our most successful area in achieving reform. Is the constraint of the budget at virtually the same level likely to last?

(Minister for Overseas Development)

iv. Improved management

The Foreign and Commonwealth Secretary lists the administrative reforms agreed in UNESCO. Is there evidence of solid achievement in making UNESCO less wasteful and more effective? Are Mr M'Bow's personality and management style the real problem? What are the prospects for his departure when his second term as Director General expires in 1987?

(Minister for Overseas Development)

b. Impact of a decision to confirm our withdrawal

The Foreign and Commonwealth Secretary reports that, with the exception of Singapore, other countries who have been reviewing their membership have decided to stay. Would our absence increase the Soviet Union's opportunities to extend its influence over UNESCO? Are there any grounds for other countries to accuse us of bad faith if we withdraw after they have supported our efforts to reform the Organisation? Is there further bilateral action we should be taking to allay this? (Foreign and Commonwealth Secretary)

c. Presentation

You will wish to ask the Foreign and Commonwealth Secretary to describe his proposals for using the funds saved. Decisions are needed quickly if these are to be announced



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together with confirmation of our withdrawal from UNESCO. They should be specific and practical, thus contrasting with UNESCO's wooliness. The British Broadcasting Corporation's Overseas Services have benefited from a real increase of 31 per cent in financial provision over the past five years and are protected from readjustment of priorities within the overseas information budget for the next 2½ years. The Foreign and Commonwealth Secretary is likely to argue that the money saved might rather be devoted - under the aid programme and through the British Council - to specific projects in the areas where UNESCO should have provided a lead:

i. Education

More money for students from poor Commonwealth countries, for students from China studying in the United Kingdom, and for the Overseas Development Administration's Shared Scholarship Scheme for students from developing countries at British universities; money for "distance learning" (on the lines of the Open University) to be arranged between universities in the Commonwealth; and money for black South African students to study in Britain, as a unilateral start to the idea for a Commonwealth project which you mentioned at the Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting.

ii. Science

Continued British co-operation with programmes on oceanography and geology which are sponsored by UNESCO; a British programme on hydrology, to be loosely linked to UNESCO's hydrology programme; a British contribution to an existing international scheme to help arid Commonwealth countries in Africa.

[This covers
Sir Yk Pao's
proposal]

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iii. Communications

A contribution to the Commonwealth Media Development Fund, which undertakes training in Commonwealth countries.

iv. Culture

Help in establishing museums in developing countries for archaeological treasures which are not being properly looked after.

CONCLUSION

6. Subject to discussion, you could guide the Committee -
 - a. to agree that our withdrawal from UNESCO be confirmed;
 - b. to agree on specific proposals for using the money thereby saved for developing countries.

C L G Mallaby

C L G Mallaby

3 December 1985

John O'Sullivan

Heath, narrow and blinkered

Lords Annan, Beloff, Blake, Bauer and Eccles, with Baroness Cox, have all rendered distinguished service to education, scholarship and the arts. Between them, they have been heads or fellows of Oxbridge colleges, directors or trustees of such institutions as the Royal Opera House, the National Gallery, the British Academy, the Royal Historical Society and the British Museum. Lord Eccles has been education minister (twice) and minister with special responsibility for the arts.

Their background apart, they have one thing in common: all support British withdrawal from Unesco. That puts into some sort of perspective Edward Heath's remarks in last week's Commons debate that the impetus behind the Government's notice of withdrawal from Unesco was "nasty, narrow-minded nationalism". It is not easy to imagine the above dignitaries as a jingoistic mob, still less a philistine one.

Nor do the arguments of those opposed to Unesco membership generally bear much relationship to the traditional British philistinism of, say, the old *Daily Express* campaign against the British Council. Here is no chortling contempt for Morris dancers in the Sahara, no derision at the idea of lectures on T.S. Eliot to aboriginal tribes.

What the critics dislike is Unesco's corruption of genuine intellectual and artistic values for political purposes. The political purposes in question are the interests of the Third World/Soviet bloc majority in Unesco - but "nasty, narrow-minded nationalism" does not suddenly become attractive to the liberal mind because it happens to belong to someone else.

Discussion of this has normally and rightly focused on the principal examples of Unesco's politicization: its propagation of the New International Economic Order, one-sided peace and disarmament education, collective "people's rights" as opposed to individual human rights, and the campaign against Israel. However, to quote Sir Lewis Namier: "In a drop of dew can be seen all the colours of the sun" - and Unesco's essential character can be seen in one small but significant item. In 1978, the organization established the Intergovernmental Committee for Promoting the Return of Cultural Property to its Countries of Origin or its Restitution in case of Illicit Appropriation.

The idea embodied in this committee is dangerous on several counts. It assumes, first, that works of art are the property of the nation rather than of the artist or the purchaser. Although national cultural heritage is an important

consideration, it can never be the sole one. Artists must be able to sell their works in the market place (which means that someone must be able to buy them), or they will tend to produce fewer of them. The state may enter the auction as a purchaser, of course, but it cannot reasonably demand the return of paintings or sculptures centuries later.

More difficult questions arise when the objects have been stolen or looted. We cannot simply assign title to the political authority currently ruling the area of origin. Heirs to the original owner (or artist) may be traceable; they may have emigrated; they may feel the present government to be a thoroughly unsuitable owner, on either ideological or preservationist grounds. The unthinking assumption that the government is the sole heir of cultural property is only one example of Unesco's collectivist mentality.

The second objection to transferring all cultural property to its country of origin is that it is incompatible with the very notion of museums and galleries. If such a step were ever seriously attempted, they would be denuded. Texas and California would again be cultural wastelands and Italy would sink under the weight of returned art treasures. Those who regard the great collections as part of the heritage of civilization must regard this with extreme misgivings. Indeed, collecting as such, which is one important expression of artistic sensibility, would be impossible.

The final effect would be to seal off different national cultures hermetically from one another. Tourists would be the only people with regular access to the historical cultural experiences of other countries. The rest of us would have to wait for the occasional travelling exhibition.

This would be contrary to Unesco's stated aim of increasing "exchanges between the world's cultures". Yet, as an attitude combining philistinism and narrow-minded nationalism in about equal degrees, it is the purest possible expression of what Unesco stands for.

Why, then, does Mr Heath wish Britain to remain in an organization which is so radically flawed? After all, he is no philistine but a musician of passion and attainment. For a full answer to this riddle, one must turn to his Commons speech. The short answer is that he is a narrow-minded internationalist. It is the simple fact of international organization, the grand design, which wins his support. The results are secondary and must not be allowed to cloud the big picture.



HEATH: grudge.

Sour grapes from Heath



M'BOW: charm.

(BUT THE SWEET LIFE FOR M'BOW...
£80,000 A YEAR EXPENSES PLUS SIX CARS)

by Geoffrey Wheatcroft

THESE have been a busy couple of weeks for Mr Edward Heath. Not two days seem to go by without his piping up to put someone down, or put the record straight, or chastise the unrighteous.

His enemies over the past fortnight—actually there's only one enemy, a lady whose initials are MT although others serve as temporary substitutes—have been the newspapers, anyone who applauded the Anglo-Irish agreement, and anyone who was against Unesco. The three might not seem to have much in common, but look hard and you begin to see the light.

Almost a year has gone since the Government said that it was going to follow the Americans and withdraw from Unesco, the United Nations cultural organisation. After a good deal of hovering, the Government now has to make up its mind by Christmas.

Since the original announcement, every kind of pressure has been put on the British to stay. The Third World doesn't want us to leave, the Commonwealth doesn't want us to leave, the Foreign Office—but of course—doesn't want us to leave.

Unesco has its problems, they concede. But it can best be reformed from within. Staying in doesn't cost us much (which is true, but then stepping in front of a bus costs nothing at all). Don't rock the boat. Or, in one of those phrases from a news story which breathe "FO briefing" at you, it is "counter-productive to attack M M'Bow personally".

In fact, I have a very soft spot for M Amadou Mahtar M'Bow, Unesco's director general. His critics say that Unesco does no good. It is spend-thrift, it is in the hands of the Soviet bloc, its plans for a "new information order" when interpreted mean simply totalitarian censorship.

But leave aside all that. We are familiar enough in this country with businesses run in the interests of their employees rather than their customers—look at any nationalised industry—so Unesco shouldn't be difficult to understand.

The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation may not do much good for the countries which pay for it, but it is good to those who work for it and it is especially good to M M'Bow.

Vanity and cupidity

This excellent Senegalese—a man of great intelligence and charm, by all accounts—has been in charge of Unesco for 11 years, and has never had to worry about rearies. A year ago he was being widely criticised for his "vanity, cupidity and intolerance." Amadou had a simple answer. He increased his salary by 23 per cent, to £115,000. No doubt like most international civil servants he pays rather little income tax on it.

But salary is only the beginning. The humble scribbler who may have ever contemplated taking his girlfriend out and putting down "Lunch: contact in industrial chemicals" stands in awe of this stupendous exes artist. At the last reckoning M M'Bow received £60,000 a year in general expenses, and £21,000 a year for entertainment.

He had some difficulty in find-

ing a pad when he came to Paris. Incidentally, most Unesco employees seem to live in the *villle lumiere*, where three-quarters of this "worldwide" organisation's budget is spent. Incidentally again, when the French threw out 47 Russians suspected of espionage two years back, 12 of them were working for Unesco. But I digress.

When, as I say, M M'Bow wanted somewhere to live, an apartment was carved out of the Unesco headquarters. As it was difficult to keep the flat warm—we all know the problems of central heating—the entire building is heated 24 hours a day for his benefit.

He has six cars at his full-time disposal. He has regular free holidays in Bulgaria. Hats off to Amadou. As Gilbert and Sullivan should have put it:

*M'Bow, M'Bow, ye lower middle classes!
M'Bow ye tradesman, M'Bow ye masses.*

Blow to self-regard

If the advantages of Unesco to M M'Bow are more obvious than those to the British taxpayer, why is Mr Heath so keen that we should stay in? Look back to his other speeches or "statements" for a clue. Mr Heath's life is a sad pilgrimage. Running through it is a central theme: how to persuade other people to take him seriously.

Poor Ted, it hasn't been easy. His speech in favour of televising the Commons was a howl of pain and a violent denunciation of the Press. Parliamentary sketch-writers spend their time sending up politicians (they seem to find Mr Heath eminently sendable-up) and don't realise what a fine body of men our legislators are. Bring in the cameras, do away with the reporters and we'll all stop worrying and learn how to love the politicians.

You would think it takes a good deal of self-esteem and self-importance to suppose that continual exposure to the camera would flatter any of us. But then Mr Heath...

Mr Heath has been suffering from an intolerable blow to his self-regard ever since that day a little over ten years ago when the girl from Grantham toppled him as leader of his party. He has never forgiven her and has born a grudge of super-normal size ever since.

Only last night he was at it again with another attack on the Government's economic policies. He really seems to believe that he can persuade us that tax cuts are "an insult."

His condition is now pathological. He can't quite condemn the agreement between Mrs Thatcher and Mr Garret FitzGerald—in fact he is

in favour of it—but he fiercely denies that it is "historic." Yes, he actually went to the length of saying so publicly. It can't be an historic agreement because his own Sunningdale agreement in 1973 ran on similar lines.

Never mind the cynical thought that the 1985 attempt to solve the Ulster problem is almost certainly as doomed as the 1973 attempt. Does anybody else worry so much about having his thunder stolen?

In the matter of Unesco, too, we can detect the Taking Ted Seriously factor. There is a class of person, of whom Mr Heath is definitely one, who live for international conferences and committees. They are never happier than when globe-trotting to put the world to rights.

They publish their deliberations and their advice. The Brandt Report was the perfect example, a gathering of the great and good and pensioned-off politicians who got together to find out why the poor nations were poorer than the rich. Needless to say Mr Heath was one of their number.

Alas for self-appointed philosopher-kings and their advice! The recommendations of Brandt have now been overtaken and the latest

conventional wisdom holds that a "massive transfer of resources" from the North to the South won't by any means solve Africa's problems.

Never mind. There will be another committee for Mr Heath to sit on, or another consultancy, or another international agency—like Unesco. That surely is the answer. If bodies like Unesco have no other function at all, they exist to be taken seriously by, and to take seriously, people like Mr Heath.

His only trouble is that he doesn't quite fit into the rough and tumble of democratic political life where there are other politicians to do him down and coarse journalists to laugh at him. The House of Commons and the papers are both unruly and unmanageable.

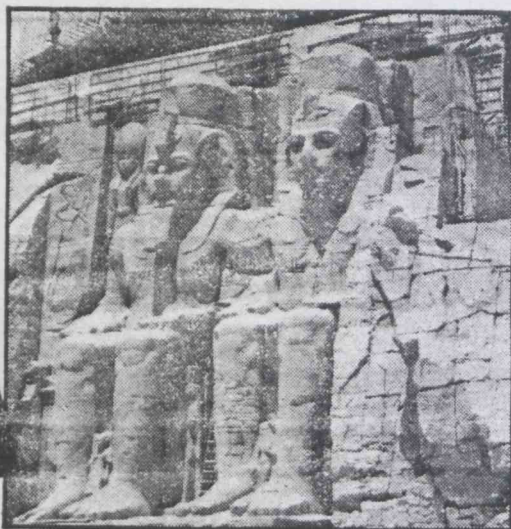
The saddest thing is the contrast between M M'Bow and Mr Edward Heath: M M'Bow is a man supremely at peace with himself, as Mr Heath is not.

Isn't there an answer here? The Place Fontenoy already offers a home to one failed, preposterous politician, Mr Gough Whitlam as Australia's ambassador to Unesco. Now there's a job for Mr Heath—British ambassador to the court of Amadou M'Bow. It's almost a good enough reason for staying in.

London Standard

28.11.85

Born to help the world—now it helps guerillas



The bad and good: Soldiers of the PLO (top left) and the temples of Abu Simbel, both funded by Unesco.

SOMETIMES I am ashamed of being British. I was ashamed in 1970 when Unesco called on all member governments to pay tribute to Lenin as a 'great humanitarian' and Britain abstained when it came to the vote.

I cannot understand how Britain could go along with this tribute to a man who was responsible for countless political murders and who openly recommended the use of terrorism with words such as 'We do not at all oppose political killing' and 'Terrorist partisan acts against representatives of the violent regime . . . are recommended.'

Now, once again, I am about to be ashamed of Britain. The reason? A year ago Britain gave notice that we would withdraw from Unesco, unless significant reforms were achieved during 1985. Such reforms have not been achieved and a decision is expected next week on whether or not we honour our word. It is said that the Foreign Office do not want us to withdraw.

Threats

Unesco director-general, Mr Amadou Mahtar M'Bow, last week met the Foreign Secretary, Sir Geoffrey Howe, to persuade him that the organisation had 'put its house in order' and that Britain should not quit.

But if we don't pull out we shall be showing the world that we do not stick to our principles and that we are politically impotent — reduced to uttering empty threats.

We shall also be deserting the United States who have already had the courage to leave, and be giving a green light to the Soviet Union to continue its anti-Western campaign with renewed vigour.

Unesco has become a tragic perversion of the organisation which was founded in 1945, with lofty ideals. Its constitution says its purpose is 'to contribute peace and security by promoting collaboration among the nations through education, science and culture in order to further universal respect for justice, for the rule of law and for human rights and fundamental freedoms which are affirmed for the peoples of the world.'

Undoubtedly Unesco has



Let's leave this farce with honour

by **Baroness Cox**

done good work — for example in preservation of monuments of historical and cultural interest, like the Abu Simbel temples in Egypt.

But in recent years growing evidence shows that Unesco has degenerated into a tool of the USSR and other socialist countries, who use it as a vehicle for anti-Western policies.

Unesco has also tried to freeze out Western influence from developing countries, by urging them to set up Soviet-style government-controlled news agencies. This project, called the New World Information Order, would entitle their governments to censor Western media reporting.

In education, Unesco's influence can be seen in its promotion of subjects such as

'Peace Studies'. It has spent large parts of its 'education' budget on pro-Soviet 'peace and disarmament' initiatives. By contrast, education programmes for refugees have received a pittance.

Unesco has also become notorious for allegations of corruption, maladministration, 'jobs for the boys' and misuse of funds. Half of its 300 million-dollar budget goes on paying the staff in Paris and only one-tenth is spent on people working in the field, in developing countries.

The British Government is now rightly bringing in legislation to try to prevent local councils from misusing public money on partisan political propaganda, so why should we continue to support an international organisation — to the tune of £5 million a year — which does this on a global scale?

There is abundant evidence that Unesco is still anti-Western, corrupt and incapable of reforming itself. Unesco's Draft Programme and Budget for 1986-7 indicates massive funding for terrorist organisations, such as the PLO, and for African 'national liberation movements'. However, I could find no reference to helping 'liberation movements' in Afghanistan.

Mrs Thatcher, to her great credit, is understood to be in favour of taking a principled stand. She is keen for us to honour our word and to leave, in view of Unesco's obvious refusal to adopt the required reforms.

But the Foreign Office apparently wants to adopt a policy of appeasement and to keep Britain in. Yet there is precedent for getting out.

Ideals

Other organisations have been set up with similar worthy aims — such as the World Federation of Trade Unions and the World Federation of Democratic Youth. Like Unesco, they became merely Soviet front organisations.

When the Western powers realised what had happened, they withdrew. This showed those organisations up for what they were.

Now it is time for a similar decision to be taken on Unesco. Britain can no longer afford to support an organisation which, whatever its original ideals, is now committed to one-sided ideological, cultural and military disarmament of the West.

But we need not be negative. We can spend the money we now give to Unesco to good effect. For example, we can expand the BBC Overseas Services and the British Council, whose work in developing countries is deeply appreciated.

In the next few days, Britain's integrity and international reputation will be on trial. I sincerely hope that I shall not be left feeling ashamed of being British once again.

Time to quit



Britain should give up UNESCO, but not what it stood for

Britain could win an easy round of international applause by cancelling its notice to withdraw from UNESCO at the end of this year. It should pass up the backpats and leave. Recent reforms at the Paris-based United Nations agency for education, science and culture are not enough to make Britain stay.

At UNESCO's 160-nation conference in Sofia last week, many delegations urged Britain not to follow America by pulling out. They argued that, thanks to reforms adopted at the conference, a newly sensible UNESCO was back on track. But the Sofia changes do little to answer Britain's complaint that a badly run and ideologically slanted UNESCO minds almost anybody's business but its own.

The Sofia reforms are mainly procedural: all UNESCO's programmes will from now on be marked "urgent" or "not-so-urgent", a rough-and-ready device that is unlikely to bring UNESCO's sprawling activities under the sort of control that its big financial contributors should demand. As if to underline that the reforms were more show than substance, the organisation's director-general, Mr Amadou-Mahtar M'Bow, who has antagonised both the West and Russia, said contentedly after the conference that attempts to restrict UNESCO's activities had failed.

There are other reasons not to expect real improvement at UNESCO. First, this would need a sustained effort by the organisation's executive board. But the UNESCO establishment is packing this 51-nation board with people who believe that the main criticisms have

already been met. Second, Western compromise and muddle have blunted the drive for genuine change. Next, UNESCO's apparent conversion to stricter financial planning comes more from necessity than conviction, since America's departure has cut membership revenue by 25%.

It would be a pity, however, if Mrs Thatcher shut the door on UNESCO and forgot about it. A British withdrawal would count for more if Britain made it clear that it was not turning its back on multilateral co-operation as such, but was simply fed up with UNESCO as at present run. Officials in Whitehall should get to work to show that there are more effective ways of advancing co-operation in education, science and culture, free of UNESCO's red-tape and its leading officials' posturing. Non-governmental bodies could maintain links with parts of UNESCO that do useful work, such as the natural sciences division. Britain should also have a team of observers in Paris to keep a watch on UNESCO and stay in touch with other governments worried by its decline.

By putting forward alternative programmes, Britain and like-minded countries would provide a standard by which to judge UNESCO's performance. A new approach to international scientific and cultural co-operation would also strengthen closet critics in the poorer countries who hesitate to speak out because they cannot for the moment see any real alternative to UNESCO. Britain could help them by showing that there is another way.

FARCE AND FAILURE AT UNESCO

When in 1945 the British and Americans co-ordinated the founding of Unesco, its purpose was - according to the recent report of the Commons Foreign Affairs Committee - "to reduce both in Europe and elsewhere the chances of a recrudescence of totalitarianism". This principle must have been discarded by 1954 when the Soviet Union became a member. It must have been utterly forgotten by 1970 when the Executive Board called on all members to celebrate the centenary of "that great humanitarian" Lenin. In that vote Britain, almost unbelievably, abstained.

To judge by the behaviour of British representatives at Unesco in 1985, very little will have changed when the Organization meets today for its general conference at Sofia. Under the rules of "consensus management" by the 51-strong Executive Board, a whole saga of British muddle, duplicity and appeasement seems to have been conceded - but not completely. Presumably this has been deliberately organized by the bureaucracy, led by the Foreign Office, to draw the teeth of last year's official ministerial announcement of intention to withdraw from Unesco by the end of this year unless the situation dramatically improved.

Have ministers been taken in so easily, or have they simply been slack in following up their notice of withdrawal? Certainly the Foreign Affairs Committee of the Commons was taken in, to judge by last month's report. Of course there were many serious submissions from groups in receipt of Unesco money which wanted to put their case against withdrawal. Yet the evidence of Mr W. A. Dodd, the British member of Unesco's Executive Board, should have been sufficient to have alerted the MPs to the totally intolerable lack of control, supervision and accountability which has existed for some time and would continue to exist if Britain remained a member.

Mr Dodd certainly did not intend to give that impression - indeed he has been against withdrawal all along - but what he had to say was damning. It should have sealed the fate of British membership even before the culmination of the Sofia conference, without the pretence of waiting for it all to change for the better in Bulgaria.

The only serious study of Unesco's administration was carried out in Washington by the General Accounting Office two years ago. Yet the Executive Board was forbidden to discuss it because, according to Mr Dodd, "to mention the report to the Unesco Executive Board, particularly to the developing country membership and Commonwealth membership, is like touching a sore tooth, so we had to try again".

Under the so-called consensus the United Kingdom has agreed to the sacking of all American international staff serving Unesco. That is a vindictive act. It was not required by or relevant to withdrawal of official United States membership and it is probably in breach of United Nations employment practices. Presumably British consent to such a decision will stiffen the resolve of our own officials to intrigue against the intention to withdraw, since the senior British full-time official at Unesco has already received a staff committee and told them that he did not want them to be sent home to join the dole queue.

Under consensus the British have also connived at a resolution praising Mr M'Bow, the Director General, for his resolve; another one reinstating the proposed "New World Information Order" which attracted a negative British vote only last December; and even one threatening to take the United States to the International Court for not paying its dues this year. It seems extraordinary that Britain could connive at the last resolution since it would thus put itself in an exactly similar position after the intended

withdrawal at the end of this year, and would find such a case all the more difficult to fight in the light of this vote. Moreover to have voted like that can only have encouraged other members of Unesco to doubt whether ministers had ever been really serious.

The most decadent move of all has been for Britain, within the consensus, to endorse a resolution consolidating all previous resolutions, many of which Britain had voted against at the time. The outcome of this curious pattern of behaviour by Britain in Unesco has been to create despair among all those other members who have been waiting for the British to show the way to the exit before taking a similar path themselves. It has elicited contempt from the Third World and from Mr M'Bow. They have all been able to witness a maudlin display of a confused, confusing and ultimately corrupting style of diplomacy which has left Britain in the worst position of all. If this is the best Britain can do within the Organization, it would be better to come out now. The pretence that Britain is a force for reform with Unesco must end.

For once the financial aspects of this decision are not predominant. There may be no saving from the \$15.2 million which represents Britain's contribution over two years. Indeed, as the Select Committee pointed out, the financial balance sheet could eventually register a net loss on account of the "harvest" of consultancies and contracts placed by Unesco with British individuals and companies. However the loss will not be felt enormously in Unesco, with its \$253 million annual budget, of which only 0.08 per cent is contributed by half the members. The United States, used to contribute 25 per cent but since its departure the Soviet Union, with 10.4 per cent, has become the largest contributor to the organization's regular budget. In the circumstances what could be more appropriate?

CONFIDENTIAL

Prime Minister (2)

COO

MR POWELL

ms
27 November 1985 27/11

UNESCO

Ministers will be deciding the question shortly. I think we should withdraw. There has been some improvement, but not enough, and not lasting enough to meet our requirements.

2. My main concern, however, is that our contribution to UNESCO should not disappear into the void of general aid funds. A part of it at least should be devoted publicly to some specific imaginative cultural use, eg studentships or English language training, likely to assist British interests in developing countries. We do not practise cultural diplomacy as actively as we should, or as the French, for example, would if they possessed our assets. An announcement of this kind to coincide with a decision to withdraw would underline that we were opposed not to the ideal of UNESCO, but to its perversion under present management, and would help to blunt criticism as well as serving our foreign and trade policy objectives.

h

PERCY CRADOCK

CONFIDENTIAL

(2)



10 DOWNING STREET

ms

Prime Minister

You will want

to see these

letters from Lady

Cox & Lord Blake

on UNESCO.

CDP

19/ki

THE BARONESS COX
B.Sc. (Econ.), M.Sc. (ECON.), S.R.N.

November 18 1985

60X
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Dear Prime Minister,

I hope you will not think it presumptuous of me to write to you about UNESCO, but I believe it is a matter on which Britain's integrity and international standing are at stake.

I understand that a decision on withdrawal is imminent and that there is still some doubt about the outcome. It would surely be disastrous if we do not withdraw, given UNESCO's failure to achieve significant reform. It is well known that UNESCO is pervaded by deeply entrenched hostility to the West, which is reflected in its policies and virulent propaganda. Even if Mr M'Bow were to be replaced, the situation would not improve because the West is now so heavily outnumbered by the Soviet bloc and its supporters. Therefore the argument that Britain should continue to try to achieve reform from within is unconvincing. Indeed, this has been proved to be the case by the events of the past year.

If we fail to withdraw, on the one hand we would leave the United States on a limb, encouraging very understandable tendencies towards isolationism. On the other hand, by appearing to be no more than a paper tiger, we would stimulate the Soviet Union to step up its anti-Western campaign.

UNESCO's influence on education has been very harmful in this country. Its promotion of subjects such as "Peace Studies" has been used to support the development of this dubious subject in ways which are entirely compatible with pro-Soviet 'Peace and Disarmament' initiatives.

There are precedents for withdrawal by the West from international bodies which have become in effect Soviet front organisations. The World Federation of Trade Unions is a good example. Once Western nations had withdrawn, it lost credibility and influence. Its successor body has fulfilled its functions admirably.

Let us do the same with UNESCO. We can either put the money we save into an alternative organisation, or expand the valuable work already being done by the BBC Overseas Service and the British Council.

I and many of my colleagues ardently hope that you will stand firm and not allow the government to adopt a policy of appeasement. Whilst this issue may not be of great interest to most of the British electorate, it has enormous significance for Britain's international reputation.

We should no longer support an organisation which is committed to the ideological, cultural and military disarmament of the West.

Yours sincerely,

Cassie Cox.

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From the PROVOST:

Lord Blake, F.B.A., J.P.

Telephone (0865) 248411

BOX NW.
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OX1 4AW

R19 PPs
18 November 1985

Dear Margaret

You will have had a letter, with which I am associated, from Alun Chalfont about UNESCO. I entirely agree with him but I venture to write to you on my own behalf separately to emphasise a particular point which is of special significance to those who, like myself, are involved in education.

The basic issues are the deeply entrenched hostility to the West and the wholesale perversion of language which pervade the activities of UNESCO. Corruption, favouritism and the role of Mr. M'bow are secondary - almost irrelevant. These latter shortcomings could perhaps be reined in by the much publicised reforms. But the basic defects are beyond repair in the face of the ideological confidence of the soviet bloc and the built-in large third world majority.

Western participation conceals these realities and lends spurious respectability to UNESCO. Therefore, I very much hope that we shall withdraw rather than continue to lend our name to the support of an institution which is fundamentally and incurably inimical to our ideals and interests.

To cancel our notice of withdrawal in the face of the conduct of UNESCO would be rightly seen as vacillation and weakness, notably by the third world where it would impair our standing.

Finally, I hope that you will not think it presumptuous if I say that withdrawal would have no adverse electoral consequences whatever, not even in marginal constituencies, especially if the money was diverted to the External Services of the BBC or to the British Council as has been suggested by, among others, Peter Bauer - and also by myself in a letter to The Times a year ago. The broad electorate knows little and cares less about UNESCO.

Yours ever

Robert

The Rt. Hon. Margaret Thatcher, MP,
10 Downing Street,
London SW1.

I thought you were splendid with Brian Walden on Weekend World yesterday.

CONFIDENTIAL



10 DOWNING STREET

From the Private Secretary

18 November, 1985.

UNESCO

The Prime Minister has seen a copy of Paris telegram No. MODEV 92 entitled "UNESCO: DO WE STAY IN?".

The Prime Minister has minuted "NONSENSE" at several points in the telegram.

I thought you would like to know!

(C.D. Powell)

P.F. Ricketts, Esq.,
Foreign and Commonwealth Office.

CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

Time this

CONFIDENTIAL

FM PARIS

TO DESKBY 180900Z ODA

TELNO MODEV 92

OF 151738Z NOVEMBER 85

AND TO IMMEDIATE FCO,

AND TO PRIORITY UKMIS NEW YORK, UKMIS GENEVA,

AND SAVING TO PARIS, BONN.

*This is
no longer*

you will want to

be aware of the

advice which

the Foreign Secretary

is receiving

from our representative

to UNESCO.

UNESCO: DO WE STAY IN?

*and should be
discussed*

1. I HOPE THAT YOU WILL BE ABLE TO TAKE ACCOUNT OF THE FOLLOWING IN FINALIZING A SUBMISSION FOR MINISTERS ON OUR FUTURE MEMBERSHIP OF UNESCO.

*CDP
17/11*

2. OUR KEY CRITERION, AS IN OTHER FOREIGN POLICY DECISIONS, MUST PRESUMABLY BE THAT OF UK NATIONAL INTEREST, SEEN PRIMARILY IN TERMS OF UNESCO ITSELF BUT ALSO OF THE BROADER IMPLICATIONS FOR THE UN SYSTEM AND FOR OUR RELATIONS WITH COMMONWEALTH AND FOREIGN COUNTRIES.

3. IN TERMS OF UNESCO ITSELF WE ARE LOOKING MAINLY AT WHAT WE HAVE ACHIEVED IN THE 20 MONTH PERIOD FROM APRIL 1984 TO NOVEMBER 1985. AT THE SAME TIME WE MUST PUT THIS IN A LONGER TERM PERSPECTIVE. WE CANNOT IGNORE THE CUMULATIVE EFFECTS OF OVER 20 YEARS OF POLITICAL NEGLECT BY WESTERN COUNTRIES, INCLUDING ENDORSEMENT IN RECENT YEARS OF MANY OF THOSE DEVELOPMENTS WHICH NOW WE MOST DEPLORE. WE CANNOT DISCOUNT THE DIFFICULTIES INVOLVED IN A WESTERN MINORITY TRYING TO TURN ROUND ANY PART OF THE UN SYSTEM OR PRETEND THAT FOR ONE REASON OR ANOTHER UNESCO IS AN EXCEPTION. AND WE HAVE TO ACCEPT THAT THERE CAN BE NO QUESTION OF BEING ABLE TO SECURE "GUARANTEES OF IRREVERSIBILITY" FOR THE FUTURE PURELY ON THE BASIS OF WHAT WE HAVE SO FAR ACHIEVED.

4. WITHIN OUR IMMEDIATE TIME SCALE WE SHOULD RECOGNISE THAT WE HAVE NOT BEEN ABLE TO ACHIEVE 100 PERCENT OF OUR OBJECTIVES. THERE ARE SOME AREAS, NOTABLY DISARMAMENT AND FURTHER PROGRESS TOWARDS PROGRAMME CONCENTRATION, WHERE WE WILL BE PROBABLY LESS THAN COMPLETELY SATISFIED BY THE RESULTS OF SOFIA. WE SHOULD ACKNOWLEDGE THAT THE WAY THE GENERAL CONFERENCE WAS CONDUCTED DID NOT REPRESENT A MAJOR TURNING POINT IN THE ORGANISATION'S HISTORY. NONETHELESS, AS EVEN ROSEMARY RIGTER HAS RELUCTANTLY ADMITTED IN THE TIMES, MAJOR PROGRESS HAS BEEN MADE TOWARDS REALISING OUR AIMS. I SHALL NOT ATTEMPT TO DUPLICATE THE DETAILED ANALYSIS BEING PREPARED IN WHITEHALL. ARITHMETIC PROJECTIONS ARE DIFFICULT AND PROBABLY MISLEADING. NONETHELESS I SUGGEST THAT PERHAPS 70-90 PERCENT OF OUR OBJECTIVES HAVE BEEN ACHIEVED.

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5. HAVING MORE OR LESS STARTED ON AN EQUAL BASE WE ARE NOW WELL AHEAD OF OTHER WESTERN COUNTRIES (EXCEPT THE US) IN TERMS OF THE CHANGES WE CONSIDER NECESSARY BY THE END OF THIS YEAR. SUBJECT TO CONFIRMATION AT COMMUNITY AND INFORMATION GROUPS MEETINGS SCHEDULED HERE FOR 18 NOVEMBER, OTHER LIKE-MINDED COUNTRIES ARE LIKELY TO BE WELL CONTENT WITH THE RESULTS OF SOFIA. THE CANADIAN AND JAPANESE PRIME MINISTERS HAVE ALREADY ANNOUNCED THAT THEIR COUNTRIES WILL STAY IN. EVEN IF WE LEAVE, IT SEEMS IMPROBABLE THAT THE DUTCH, GERMANS, DANES OR THE SWISS WILL FOLLOW SUIT. THEY ARE FAR MORE LIKELY TO CONCLUDE THAT WE ARE BEING SIMPLY UNREASONABLE. THIS DOES NOT MEAN THAT THEY CONSIDER THE REFORM SEASON CLOSES ON 31 DECEMBER. RATHER THEY ARE CONVINCED THAT REFORM IS A LONG TERM PROCESS WHICH NEEDS FURTHER EFFORTS FROM INSIDE WITHIN THE NEXT TWO YEARS AND PROBABLY BEYOND. ALMOST CERTAINLY THEY WILL APPEAL TO US TO STAY IN TO HELP THEM IN THIS PROCESS. IT IS FOR US TO DECIDE WHETHER UK REQUIREMENTS ARE SO DIFFERENT FROM THEIRS, AND UNESCO IN FOREIGN POLICY TERMS SUCH A DIFFERENT ANIMAL FROM OTHER INTERNATIONAL BODIES, AS TO JUSTIFY US PLAYING THE ROLE OF LONE COWBOY RIDING OFF INTO THE SUNSET WHILE THE REST OF THE PARTY STAYS BEHIND.

And the US?
Who else
might follow?

6. BUT WHATEVER THE VIEWS OF THE WESTERN COUNTRIES, THE KEY TO UNESCO-REFORM LIES IN THE HANDS OF THE THIRD WORLD MAJORITY. THE CHANGE IN THE VIEW POINT OF THESE COUNTRIES HAS BEEN STRIKING: IT HAS GONE FROM A MIXTURE OF DOUBT, SUSPICION AND HOSTILITY TO CONVERSION WITH VARIOUS DEGREES OF ENTHUSIASM TO THREE OF OUR MAIN REQUIREMENTS (LESS POLITICISATION, MORE EFFECTIVE PROGRAMMES AND IMPROVED MANAGEMENT) AND RELUCTANT ACCEPTANCE OF THE FOURTH (ZERO REAL GROWTH, ETC). THE KEY EXPERIENCE HERE HAS BEEN THE TEMPORARY COMMITTEE, WHERE WESTERN PROPOSALS FOR REFORM WERE INITIALLY RESISTED, SUBSEQUENTLY ACCEPTED AND FINALLY CHAMPIONED ENTHUSIASTICALLY BY THE THIRD WORLD PARTICIPANTS. ALL OF THEM STRONGLY WANT US TO STAY IN. PROVIDED WE DO SO THE MAJORITY OF THIRD WORLD COUNTRIES WILL WORK WITH US FOR FURTHER REFORM.

How unlikely

7. MORE SPECIFIC INDICATORS FOR THE FUTURE ARE TO BE SEEN IN THE INDEPENDANT AND REFORM-MINDED APPROACH OF THE CHAIRMAN AND MANY THIRD WORLD MEMBERS OF THE NEW EXECUTIVE BOARD, AND IN THE INTENTION OF THE CHAIRMAN (VARGAS, BRAZIL) AND MAJORITY OF MEMBERS OF THE REVAMPED SPECIAL COMMITTEE TO CONTINUE THE PIONEERING WORK OF THE TEMPORARY COMMITTEE. EQUALLY IMPORTANT, KEY WESTERN AND THIRD WORLD COUNTRIES (SO FAR THE NORDICS, FRANCE, GERMANY, BRAZIL, CHINA, INDIA AND ARGENTINA) ARE ALREADY STARTING DISCUSSIONS BETWEEN THEMSELVES ON HOW TO MAKE THE NEXT MEDIUM TERM PLAN A MORE EFFECTIVE VEHICLE FOR INTERNATIONAL CO-OPERATION AND DEVELOPMENT. THE MOOD IS STRONGLY FOR FAR MORE CONCENTRATED AND PRACTICAL ORIENTATED PROGRAMMES, VERY MUCH ALONG THE LINES THAT WE OURSELVES HAVE BEEN PREACHING.

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8. THE UNDOUBTED MAJOR REMAINING STUMBLING BLOCK IS M'BOW HIMSELF. HIS FUTURE WAS LESS DISCUSSED THAN MIGHT HAVE BEEN EXPECTED AT SOFIA. BUT HERE TOO THERE HAS BEEN ENCOURAGING DEVELOPMENTS BEHIND THE SCENES. WE NOW KNOW THAT THE FRENCH AND THE RUSSIANS ARE OPPOSED TO A THIRD TERM AND FROM INFORMAL DISCUSSIONS WITH NEW BOARD MEMBERS THAT THE MAJORITY OF THEM (INCLUDING ANGLOPHONE AFRICANS AND THE ASIANS) ARE SIMILARLY OPPOSED. THERE IS GOOD REASON TO SUSPECT THAT ONLY THE FRANCOPHONE AFRICANS REMAIN M'BOW'S CONVINCED SUPPORTERS. THERE IS NOW EVIDENCE (SEE MIPT) THAT M'BOW HIMSELF HAS DECIDED NOT TO RUN. WE NOW NEED FURTHER DISCUSSION WITH OTHER INTERESTED COUNTRIES, NOTABLY OUR COMMUNITY PARTNERS, TO SEE IN MORE DETAIL WHAT CAN BE ACHIEVED. GIVEN THE IMPORTANCE OF THE ISSUE I HOPE WE CAN AVOID TAKING OUR DECISION UNTIL THESE HAVE BEEN COMPLETED.

9. IN THESE CIRCUMSTANCES I BELIEVE THAT A DECISION TO LEAVE COULD NOT (NOT) BE JUSTIFIED IN UNESCO TERMS. THE REMAINING STAPLE ANTI-UNESCO LOBBY ARGUMENTS ABOUT THE "IRREFORMABILITY" AND "ANTI-WESTERN" NATURE OF THE ORGANISATION DO NOT BEGIN TO STAND UP TO SERIOUS EXAMINATION AND WOULD BE DESERVEDLY TORN TO SHREDS BY OUR CRITICS. MANY COUNTRIES WOULD BE ANGERED THAT THEIR EFFORTS TO WORK WITH US HAD BEEN TO NO AVAIL AND WOULD FIND IT DIFFICULT TO BELIEVE THAT WE HAD LEFT FOR ANY OTHER REASON THAN IDEOLOGICAL PREJUDICE AND/OR BLIND DESIRE TO PLEASE THE US. WE WOULD BE ACCUSED OF DERELICTION OF DUTY AND OF ABANDONING UNESCO AT A TIME WHEN THROUGH OUR OWN EFFORTS IT WAS ON THE VERGE OF MAJOR REFORM. IT IS HARD TO BELIEVE THAT OUR DEPARTURE WOULD SPEED UP EVEN BY A DAY THAT OF M'BOW. NOR WOULD IT BE LIKELY TO LEAD, AS SOME WOULD WISH, TO THE COLLAPSE OR MORE RAPID REFORM OF THE ORGANISATION. AS ALREADY SUGGESTED OTHERS WOULD PROBABLY NOT FOLLOW. THE MOST LIKELY CONSEQUENCE WOULD BE NEGATIVE THIRD WORLD BACKLASH, FOLLOWED BY A LONG PERIOD OF DRIFT, WITHOUT HOPE OR OBVIOUS WAY OUT IN WHICH SOVIET AND EXTREMIST THIRD WORLD INFLUENCE WOULD GRADUALLY EXPAND. OUR BILATERAL RELATIONS WITH THE FRENCH AND MANY OTHER COUNTRIES WOULD UNDOUBTEDLY SUFFER. EUROPEAN POLITICAL CO-OPERATION WOULD RECEIVE A SETBACK, ESPECIALLY IN TERMS OF CURRENT EFFORTS TO BUILD UP COMMON POSITIONS IN THE UN SYSTEM. BRITISH STAFF WOULD BE SACKED, CONTRACTS LOST AND OUR LONG ESTABLISHED INFLUENCE ON UNESCO PROGRAMMES THROUGHOUT THE WORLD PROBABLY IRRETRIEVABLY WEAKENED. IT IS HARD ON ANY RATIONAL GROUND TO SEE HOW THERE COULD BE ANY SIGNIFICANT BALANCING BENEFITS TO OUR NATIONAL REPUTATION OR MATERIAL INTERESTS FROM SUCH A COURSE.

10. I CONCLUDE THAT THE POLITICAL AND PRACTICAL ARGUMENTS FOR STAYING IN UNESCO ARE OVERWHELMING. BY SO DOING WE WOULD BE CONTINUING A PROCESS WHICH HAS SO FAR BROUGHT SIGNIFICANT RESULTS BUT WHERE TIME IS STILL NEEDED IN ORDER TO COMPLETE THE REFORM PROCESS AND ENSURE THE APPOINTMENT OF A NEW DIRECTOR GENERAL WHOM WE CAN TRUST TO POINT THE ORGANISATION IN THE RIGHT DIRECTION FOR THE FORESEEABLE FUTURE. WE WOULD BE RIDING ON THE CREST OF WHAT OTHERS

Monsieur

??
No - it will slip back into its old habit as soon as we decided to stay.

CONFIDENTIAL

SEE AS A BRITISH DIPLOMATIC TRIUMPH AS THE ACKNOWLEDGED LEADERS OF THE REFORM PROCESS AND BACKED BY STRONG EVIDENCE THAT BOTH WESTERN AND THIRD WORLD COUNTRIES WOULD CONTINUE TO WORK WITH US FOR FURTHER CHANGE. SUCCESS HERE WOULD ENHANCE OUR PRESTIGE AND CHANCES OF SUCCESS IN OTHER UN BODIES SHOULD WE WISH TO PURSUE SIMILAR REFORM CAMPAIGNS IN THESE - AND FROM THE EVIDENCE OF THE RECENT UN GENERAL INSPECTORATE REPORT IT WOULD APPEAR THAT THE NEED IS THERE AS WELL. THE DECISION TO STAY IN COULD ONLY BENEFIT OUR RELATIONS WITH THE FRENCH, WITH THE COMMUNITY AS A WHOLE AND WITH A BROAD RANGE OF COMMONWEALTH AND THIRD WORLD COUNTRIES WHICH FEEL STRONGLY ABOUT THE IMPORTANCE IN UNESCO AND OF THE UK REMAINING A MEMBER.

GORDON

YYYY

FCO PLEASE PASS SAVING BONN

(REPEATED AS REQUESTED)

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10 DOWNING STREET

From the Private Secretary

11 November 1985

UNESCO

The Prime Minister was disturbed to learn from FCO tel. no. 585 to Paris about the proposed meeting with the French and German governments "to consider how we can most effectively pursue the reform objectives we share". She has commented that this is a dangerous meeting, particularly before Ministers have had a chance to consider collectively the outcome of the recent Conference. Nothing should be said at it which would give the French and German governments reason to think that our decision in principle to leave UNESCO is at all likely to be reversed.

(CHARLES POWELL)

L.V. Appleyard, Esq.,
Foreign and Commonwealth Office.

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FM UKDEL UNESCO SOF:IA

TO DESKBY 081000Z ODA

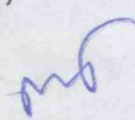
TELNO MODEV 25

OF 080625Z NOVEMBER 85

AND TO DESKBY 081000Z FCO

INFO ROUTINE TO PARIS, BONN

SAVING TO UKDEL UNESCO PARIS, WASHINGTON, TOKYO, BERNE,
SAVING TO UKMIS GENEVA, UKMIS NEW YORK, REYKJAVIK, WELLINGTON,
SAVING TO OSLO, LISBON, MADRID, STOCKHOLM, CANBERRA, VIENNA,
SAVING TO OTTAWA, HELSINKI, EC POSTS, ANKARA.

**UNESCO GENERAL CONFERENCE**

1. THE CONFERENCE IS SCHEDULED TO END THREE DAYS EARLY ON 9 NOVEMBER. THERE ARE STILL ONE OR TWO IMPORTANT DECISIONS TO BE CONFIRMED IN PLENARY, BUT WE DO NOT EXPECT ANY MAJOR PROBLEMS PROVIDED THE TEXTS WHICH EMERGE FROM THE PLENARY DRAFTING GROUP ARE ACCEPTABLE TO ALL. YOU MAY THEREFORE LIKE TO HAVE A REPORT BEFORE THE WEEKEND OF THE MAJOR RESULTS OF THE CONFERENCE COMPARED WITH THE KEY UK OBJECTIVES APPROVED BY MINISTERS BEFORE IT STARTED. MIFT CONTAINS A SUMMARY. FINAL REPORT FROM SOF:IA WILL FOLLOW EARLY NEXT WEEK.
2. THE ATMOSPHERE HAS GENERALLY BEEN FAIRLY LOW KEY WITH LITTLE POLITICAL VENOM. THE UK DECISION HAS BEEN THE DOMINANT UNDERLYING THEME. ALTHOUGH MOST DELEGATES REMAIN CONVINCED THAT A DECISION TO LEAVE HAS ALREADY BEEN TAKEN, THERE HAS BEEN MUCH CONCERN FROM ALL QUARTERS TO GIVE US A GOOD ENOUGH RESULT TO KEEP US IN IF AT ALL POSSIBLE OR AT LEAST NOT TO GIVE US AN EASY EXCUSE, AS THEY SEE IT, FOR LEAVING. THIS HAS MEANT THAT IN MANY AREAS THE RESULTS ARE CLOSE TO THOSE WE WERE AIMING FOR.
3. BUT THERE ARE TWO GENERAL AREAS OF CONCERN LARGELY UNRELATED TO SPECIFIC TOPICS OF PROGRAMME OR MANAGEMENT REFORM. FIRST, OUR EXPECTATION THAT THE M'BOW SUCCESSION WOULD BE A MAJOR TOPIC FOR DISCUSSION IN THE MARGIN'S HAS BEEN DISAPPOINTED. INSTEAD THERE IS A WIDESPREAD FEELING THAT HE IS TRYING TO STAY, AND INDEED THAT THE TOTAL ECLIPSE OF THE ANGLOPHONE AFRICANS IN THE EXECUTIVE BOARD ELECTIONS, AND M'BOW'S APPARENT ATTEMPT TO INFLUENCE THE CHOICE OF THE NEXT BOARD CHAIRMAN, ARE PART OF THIS PROCESS. THIS INEVITABLY CASTS DOUBT ON WHETHER THE REFORMS ALREADY AGREED WILL STICK AND WHETHER THE MOMENTUM FOR FURTHER REFORM WILL BE MAINTAINED.

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4. THE OTHER AREA OF CONCERN IS THE GENERAL CONFERENCE ITSELF. SOME OF THE PROPOSALS PUT FORWARD BY THE TEMPORARY COMMITTEE HAVE HAD A GOOD EFFECT, NOTABLY ENFORCEMENT OF STRICT TIME LIMITS FOR SUBMISSION OF DRAFT RESOLUTIONS AND, PARTICULARLY, THE IDEA THAT THE DIRECTOR GENERAL'S COMMENTS ON EACH DRAFT RESOLUTION SHOULD BE DISCUSSED WITH THE SPONSORING DELEGATION BEFORE ISSUE. THIS HAS HELPED US ON A NUMBER OF OCCASIONS, PARTICULARLY IN MAJOR PROGRAMME XI-III. THE PLENARY DISCUSSION ON YOUTH WAS ALSO A SUCCESS. BUT THE OVERALL IMPRESSION IS OF LITTLE REAL IMPROVEMENT IN THE CONDUCT OF BUSINESS IN THE PROGRAMME COMMISSIONS WHICH REMAIN THE HEART OF THE GENERAL CONFERENCE. IT STILL REMAINS TOO DIFFICULT, EVEN IF NO LONGER IMPOSSIBLE (WE HAD SOME SUCCESS IN DOING SO), TO OBTAIN CHANGES IN PROGRAMMES, OR TO FOCUS DISCUSSION IN THE COMMISSIONS ON ISSUES OF MAJOR IMPORTANCE.

5. POSTS SHOULD AWAIT INSTRUCTIONS FROM LONDON BEFORE DISCUSSING THE OUTCOME OF THE CONFERENCE WITH THEIR GOVERNMENTS OR THE PRESS.

DODD

FCO PLEASE ADVANCE COPIES PS/MR RAISON AND PS/MR EGGAR.

FCO PLEASE PASS SAVING TO ALL SAVING ADDRESSEES.

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OCMIAN 4181
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PP PARIS
FM FCOLN TO PARIS
071600Z NOV
GRS 183

The purpose of this meeting is transparent.

UNCLASSIFIED
FM FCO
TO PRIORITY PARIS
TELNO 585
OF 071600Z NOV 85

A very dangerous meeting. We

UNESCO: LETTER FROM M. DUMAS

1. I RECEIVED VIA THE FRENCH EMBASSY A MESSAGE DATED 4 NOVEMBER FROM M. DUMAS SUGGESTING A MEETING IN PARIS ON 8 NOVEMBER BETWEEN FRENCH, GERMAN AND BRITISH OFFICIALS CONCERNED WITH UNESCO TO FORM A COMMON VIEW ON THE PROBLEMS REMAINING AFTER THE GENERAL CONFERENCE. SUBSEQUENT CONTACT AT OFFICIAL LEVEL HAS REVEALED THAT A DATE IN THE FOLLOWING WEEK WOULD SUIT ALL CONCERNED BETTER. ARRANGEMENTS ARE BEING MADE THROUGH THE FRENCH EMBASSY IN LONDON FOR A MEETING IN PARIS ON 12 OR 13 NOVEMBER.

must come out of UNESCO

2. MEANWHILE PLEASE PASS THE FOLLOWING MESSAGE FROM ME TO M. DUMAS:
BEGINS

THANK YOU FOR YOUR MESSAGE OF 4 NOVEMBER SUGGESTING A MEETING IN PARIS BETWEEN FRENCH, GERMAN AND BRITISH OFFICIALS ABOUT UNESCO. WE HAD A WORD ABOUT THIS IN HANOVER.

I WOULD BE HAPPY FOR OUR EXPERTS TO GET TOGETHER AS YOU SUGGEST TO CONSIDER HOW WE CAN MOST EFFECTIVELY PURSUE THE REFORM OBJECTIVES WE SHARE. I UNDERSTAND THAT OFFICIALS ARE IN TOUCH TO ARRANGE A MUTUALLY CONVENIENT DATE.

WITH BEST WISHES.

ENDS

HOWE

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10 DOWNING STREET

From the Private Secretary

12 October 1985

Peter Ricketts sent me a copy of Mr. Raison's speech at UNESCO on 14 October. The Prime Minister would like to see the last sentence of the penultimate paragraph altered to read:

"Without it, our intention to withdraw will be confirmed".

Would you please ensure that Martin Dinham is informed of this in time for Mr. Raison's departure early tomorrow.


(C.D. Powell)

Resident Clerk,
Foreign and Commonwealth Office



PRIME MINISTER

UNESCO

I have been concerned for some time about attempts to change the presumption that we shall in all probability withdraw from UNESCO at the end of this year. I therefore asked to see a draft of Tim Raison's speech to the UNESCO General Conference which begins on Monday in Sofia.

I do not need to trouble you with the full text but I attach a copy of the last page and would draw your attention in particular to the last sentence of the penultimate paragraph. It seems to me that this shifts the presumption towards staying in before we have evidence of any real reform. I have little doubt that this is what a lot of people in the ODA and elsewhere want. I should like, if you agree, to ask that the end of that paragraph be altered to read:

"They are why we insist on thorough-going and comprehensive reform. Without it, our intention to withdraw will be confirmed".

It would be helpful to know your views this evening if possible since Tim Raison leaves early tomorrow.

ESP

(C.D. Powell)

12 October 1985

The practical reforms, important as they are, are not everything. What we in the United Kingdom, and we believe others, are really searching for is a return to that spirit, that mixture of idealism and practical action, which inspired that founding Conference in the heady days of 1945.

Mr Chairman, Article 1 of UNESCO's Constitution defines the purpose of the Organisation as being "to contribute to peace and security by promoting collaboration among the nations through education, science and culture in order to further the universal respect for justice, for the rule of law and for the human rights and fundamental freedoms which are affirmed for the peoples of the world, without distinction of race, sex, language or religion, by the Charter of the United Nations". Thus justice, the rule of law, human rights and fundamental freedoms, all of which are of paramount importance to the individual, scientist, teacher, artist and communicator, as well as to those they serve, have a special place in UNESCO's constitution. Again let me stress freedom of expression and quote once more from John Milton. As he said of truth, "Let her and falsehood grapple; who ever knew Truth put to the worse in a free and open encounter?".

It is this concern for freedom and the rights of the individual, taken together with our own belief that UNESCO is nowhere near sufficiently focussed on the practical development of education, science and culture, which lie at the heart of the serious and carefully-considered steps we have taken. They are why we insist on thorough-going and comprehensive reform. If the UK is ever to contemplate staying in, we shall need to be convinced at the end of this Conference that UNESCO has achieved it.

Mr Chairman, the tide of reform is running. It must not be stemmed. If - but only if - we are prepared to be brave now, we can both safeguard a worthy future for this Organisation and ensure that future generations can look back on the Sofia General Conference as a real victory for UNESCO. A UNESCO that cannot rise to the challenge is not a UNESCO that will command our allegiance.

PRIME MINISTER

M

UNESCO

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"They are why we insist on thorough-going and comprehensive reform. Without it, our intention to withdraw will be confirmed".

It would be helpful to know your views this evening if possible since Tim Raison leaves early tomorrow.

Emphatically yes - I noted

the F.O. is slipping. If we

are short of cash - we need

this / 5m

M.

(C.D. Powell)

12 October 1985

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Mr Chairman, the tide of reform is running. It must not be stemmed. If - but only if - we are prepared to be brave now, we can both safeguard a worthy future for this Organisation and ensure that future generations can look back on the Sofia General Conference as a real victory for UNESCO. A UNESCO that cannot rise to the challenge is not a UNESCO that will command our allegiance.



Foreign and Commonwealth Office

London SW1A 2AH

11 October 1985

Dear Charles,

QJ 13/11

UNESCO

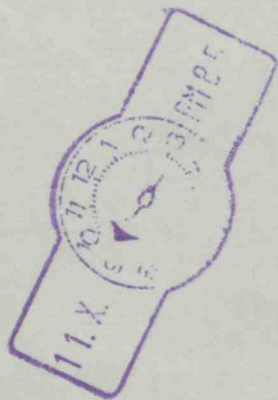
/ I enclose the text of the speech which Mr Raison proposes to give at the UNESCO General Conference on Monday 14 October. This text reflects discussion between Mr Raison and the Foreign Secretary in Blackpool. The Foreign Secretary is broadly content with it.

Yr ever,

Peter Ricketts

(P F Ricketts)
Private Secretary

C D Powell Esq
No 10 Downing Street



UNESCO 23RD GENERAL CONFERENCE: DRAFT SPEECH FOR THE MINISTER

Next month sees the 40th anniversary of the founding Conference of UNESCO, held, as it happens, in the Institution of Civil Engineers, London. The Constitution for our organisation drawn up at that Conference has stood the test of time and must inspire the work of this Conference. We do not seek to change it.

Before coming to Sofia I again studied carefully the Constitution, particularly the preamble and Article 1 which sets out the purpose and functions of UNESCO. I was impressed by the feeling that UNESCO was about people rather than Governments, a theme I shall return to later in this speech. But what struck me most forcibly was the success with which the draughtsmen had blended the high idealism of such famous phrases as the one in the preamble about wars beginning in the minds of men, with the strictly practical concerns for education, science, culture and communication expressed in Article 1. And it is this blend, this amalgam of idealism with practical activity, which was clearly the image of UNESCO in the minds of the founding fathers, which must now be restored.

There is certainly a foundation on which to build. Many of us in this hall have been rightly preoccupied with reform over the last two years. However, we do not forget that UNESCO has continued to do some valuable work.

For example, in the field of Natural Sciences UNESCO has provided research and training services in mathematics, physics, chemistry and life sciences, and perhaps particularly in geology, hydrology and oceanography.

In education the major regional programmes in Africa and in Latin America and the Caribbean are developing soundly. Training has been provided, through individual fellowships, training seminars and the International Institute for Educational Planning. Handbooks for teachers and other teaching materials have continued to be produced in such subjects as chemistry, physics, mathematics, biology and various aspects of technical and vocational education.

In culture UNESCO's long-standing reputation in promoting the preservation of monuments and the development of museums has been maintained. The programme of translating of literary works, particularly into widely spoken languages, has been strengthened.

These are examples of the sort of programmes of benefit to all Member States on which we think UNESCO should concentrate. It is towards areas like these that UNESCO should switch the bulk of its energy and effort. It is in this way that it could again become the kind of Organisation foreseen in 1945 and could again attract universal support.

It is to achieve these objectives that a number of countries including the United Kingdom have worked so hard for reform. We believe that a more effective Organisation must be in the interests of all Member States, especially the poorer ones for whom UNESCO has the potential to do so much. But UNESCO must be able to command our wholehearted support, and not just our lip service. It does no service to the UN cause to accept the inadequate; and we will not.

Let me at this point deal with a number of mistaken ideas about our attitudes and policy.

First our approach is not, nor has ever been, governed by political motives unconnected with UNESCO itself. It is not, nor ever has been, an attack on multilateral institutions or international cooperation. Let me draw attention to a speech made by our Foreign Minister, Sir Geoffrey Howe, in Britain earlier this year to mark the 40th anniversary of the United Nations.

He said "The United Nations at forty has much to its credit. It has evolved over the years in ways not foreseen when the Charter was written. In this fortieth year the Member States need to make a determined effort to correct the weaknesses and build on the real strengths. The United Kingdom has a special responsibility here, as an architect of the Charter and as a permanent member of the Security Council. Sustained by the high levels of interest in the issues throughout this country we shall certainly be playing our part in these efforts".

Equally our approach should not be seen as an element in East/West power politics or as a wish to use UNESCO as a vehicle for North/South confrontation. Quite the opposite; our intention has been exactly to keep out such confrontations from UNESCO so that it can concentrate on its own proper tasks in education, science and culture. We want to leave these other issues to other international institutions, like the General Assembly and Security Council, created precisely so that they can concentrate on solving the political problems of the world.

Next, our decision to give notice of withdrawal was not taken on the spur of the moment, nor did we suddenly put in our notice without warning, leaving UNESCO too little time to respond. On the contrary, UNESCO has faced problems of inefficiency, politicisation, and obscure programming for many years. Many delegations have raised these issues at previous Sessions of the General Conference. In some areas improvements were made, but no comprehensive programme aimed at setting the Organisation to rights had ever been undertaken. We reviewed our policy before the General Conference in 1983, and again after it.

In the letter I wrote to the Director-General on 2 April 1984 I set out in broad terms the areas in which we believed changes were necessary. We did not believe that it was either necessary or desirable to propose in immense detail all the means by which those changes might be achieved. I did however make specific proposals in my letter and British Government representatives in Paris have, since then, put forward other requirements for the reform process within the Executive Board and its Temporary Committee. I may, I think, reasonably claim that the proposals contained in my letter largely set the agenda for reform. I would like to pay tribute to all those who participated in the work of the Temporary Committee. It made some progress. Now its reforms must be made to stick. And they must be carried further.

Let me turn to the substance of what we would like to see come out of this Conference, all of which directly relates to the proposals contained in my letter of 2 April 1984. Our concerns, which I believe are shared by many others, can be summarised under four main headings - better programmes; political bias; a responsible attitude to money matters; and improved management.

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Under programmes the need is for clear priorities with resources concentrated on the most valuable activities; fewer abstract studies and meetings; less activity in Paris and more in the field. There have been achievements. The draft programme for 1986/87 improved on its predecessors in the way it indicates priorities at the level of programme activities. The General Conference should confirm the Executive Board's recommendations for changing priorities with their thrust towards increased action and relevance. But, given the short time at its disposal and the fact that detailed consideration of the draft 23C5 had only just begun in our National Commissions, it was not possible for the Board to go far enough along this particular road. For this reason, it seems to us necessary that the Conference has to go still further in shifting the emphasis of the programmes towards those which are at the heart of UNESCO's activities - particularly towards education to help developing countries and the Natural Sciences. We have submitted a draft resolution to this effect. And here I must stress that the purpose of our proposals is to maintain to the greatest possible extent those activities, such as training, to which both the Board in its recommendations and previous sessions of the Conference have attached the greatest importance.

Another major area of concern to many delegations, including my own, is the extent to which political bias has crept into some of UNESCO's activities.

Of course UNESCO's constitution does not rule out politics - it could not. Its work deals with issues which are subject to vigorous political debate and which go to the heart of Member States' political, social and cultural life. But the values and ideals for which UNESCO itself stands and which are, or should be, shared by all its membership, are those set out in UNESCO's own constitution and in other international instruments of universal application which have been adopted within the UN framework. I have

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particularly in mind the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the two International Covenants on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights and on Civil and Political Rights. It is vital that UNESCO should do nothing to call into question the importance of the ideals and values enshrined in these Instruments.

UNESCO's prime role must surely be in [redacted] activities which will promote the upholding of those values to which we have all subscribed.

Of course UNESCO also has a legitimate interest in promoting exchanges and contacts in areas where our opinions differ. But in doing so two constraints must be borne in mind. Firstly, UNESCO should not duplicate work that is properly the function of other, more technically competent, bodies of the UN system. And secondly, it must not seek to impose upon Member States ideological doctrines which they find unacceptable.

Avoiding duplication particularly applies to UNESCO's activities in the field of disarmament. There is a legitimate function for UNESCO in promoting exchanges in this area, just as in any other area of intellectual life. But there are other UN bodies, for example the Conference on Disarmament and the UN Institute for Disarmament Research, whose proper role it is to undertake substantive work in this complex and sensitive field. UNESCO can help ensure that the work of these bodies is better known. But it is not part of UNESCO's job to undertake work itself.

Similarly, UNESCO must recognise the plurality and variety of Member States' social and political systems and of the values which are enshrined in them. I am proud, as a British citizen, of the particular political heritage of my own country and of the importance within it of certain values relating to the liberty of the individual, to freedom of expression and of thought, to tolerance and to pluralism. I know that these

values form part of the mainstream of the societies of many other countries represented here. But we do not in the United Kingdom seek to impose all our values, our practices and our standards on others. We realise that political and social circumstances in other countries are often different. In return, however, we ask that others should not seek to impose upon us values which are alien to our tradition, which are unacceptable to our public opinion, and which are contrary to those international instruments to which I have already referred. And we all have a duty to uphold the specific ideals of UNESCO's constitution.

This applies, for example, in the area of communication. I recognise the importance which many developing countries attach to this. I sympathise with their wish to ensure that a more varied range of information about the Third World is made available. I therefore welcome the activities which UNESCO undertakes in providing advice, training and other assistance to help developing countries improve their communications system.

As these systems develop, the world will see a more varied and balanced flow of information. What we cannot accept, because it is fundamentally incompatible with the very nature of our society, is any implication that States have an obligation, or even a right, to prescribe to their media what should or should not be broadcast or written, or to impose conditions on the exercise of the freedom of the press.

/ To accept this

To accept this is flatly to contradict the commitment, in the preamble to UNESCO's constitution, to the "unrestricted pursuit of objective truth" and "the free exchange of ideas and knowledge". We must therefore reject any move which implies the drafting of codes of conduct, guidelines or whatever which limit the absolute freedom of expression. As our poet John Milton put it, "give me the liberty to know, to utter, and to argue freely according to conscience, above all liberties".

To meet these concerns the Conference must first ensure that UNESCO's efforts in communications concentrate on practical assistance. It should also amend the proposals concerning UNESCO's disarmament and human rights activities to emphasise UNESCO's particular competences in these important areas and to develop relevant activities, while avoiding duplication or the imposition of unacceptable values. We have with others submitted important draft resolutions which meet these points.

There is also a need for a greater stress on political objectivity and strict intellectual standards in the preparation of documents by the Secretariat. There have been a number of examples of politically biased documents, of extremely poor quality - to give but one example, a working document for the World Congress on Youth held recently in Barcelona.

I have said that we wish for a responsible attitude to money matters. All Member States have a real interest in achieving better value for money by improvement of programmes and greater financial stringency. In particular we and others sought zero real growth in 1986/87 and no increased contribution for Member States as a direct or indirect consequence of withdrawal of the United States. This remains our firm position.

/ I am

I am pleased to note that the draft Programme and Budget for 1986/87 has been prepared by the Director General on the basis of zero real growth. Moreover, its layout makes it relatively easy for the governing bodies to shape the budget to allow fully for the shortfall arising from US withdrawal. The Executive Board has endorsed these approaches:

It is essential now that the General Conference confirm the decisions of the Board. It must also ensure that the effect is not diluted by decisions taken on some technical financial issues.

Let me turn to management. A widely recognised need has been to make UNESCO less slow-moving, less over-centralised, less top-heavy and with better procedures and delegations of authority. Some reforms were agreed in 1984. Among these were the establishment of the Central Evaluation Unit, delegation of more authority by the Director General, the speeding-up of recruitment, and reorganisation of UNESCO's public information and publication units.

This General Conference should recognise the importance of prompt, effective, implementation of the management reforms already agreed and accept that the momentum should not be lost. There is a need for clear evidence that UNESCO is becoming a more de-centralised and better-run Organisation. The independent character of UNESCO's evaluation activities should be confirmed if they are to be meaningful. The implementation of the administrative reform should proceed in line with the revised calendar prepared by the Temporary Committee as adopted by the 122nd Session of the Executive Board. We agree that the Board should set up an effective mechanism to continue in the future the task of encouraging and monitoring which has been done so well by the Temporary Committee during the past year.

RESTRICTED



10 DOWNING STREET

From the Private Secretary

21 November 1984

British Policy towards UNESCO

The Prime Minister has considered the Foreign Secretary's minute of 20 November proposing that HMG should give notice at the end of this year of its intention to withdraw from UNESCO by the end of 1985. She agrees with this recommendation and also that the decision should be announced in the House on 22 November.

I am copying this letter to the Private Secretaries to members of OD, to the Secretaries of State for Education and Environment and to Richard Hatfield (Cabinet Office).

(C.D. Powell)

Len Appleyard, Esq.,
Foreign and Commonwealth Office

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OD 21/11

Treasury Chambers, Parliament Street, SW1P 3AG
01-233 3000

21 November 1984

Charles Powell Esq
10 Downing Street
LONDON
SW1

Dear Charles

BRITISH POLICY TOWARDS UNESCO

The Chancellor has seen the Foreign Secretary's minute of 20 November. *attached*

He strongly supports the Foreign Secretary's proposal to announce tomorrow that he will now give notice of withdrawal from UNESCO, to take effect at the end of 1985. However, he does not think we should give any commitment to reconsider our decision in the light of progress with reforms. In his view, the time has come to take a fixed decision to withdraw.

I am copying this letter to the Private Secretaries to the other members of OD, to Elizabeth Hodkinson (DES), John Ballard (DoE) and Richard Hatfield (Cabinet Office).

Yours ever
David

DAVID PERETZ
Principal Private Secretary



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21 NOV 1984



PM/84/173

PRIME MINISTER

Prime Minister
 Agree that we
 should give notice of
 our intention to withdraw
 from UNESCO and
 announce this in Parliament
 on Thursday?
 CDP 20/11

Yes not

British Policy Towards UNESCO

1. The Government announced in January this year that it would stay in UNESCO and fight for reform from within but that the situation would be reviewed carefully towards the end of 1984 and if satisfactory progress had not been made, UK withdrawal would again be seriously considered.

I consider that I need to be in a position to announce our decision on future policy in the House in the course of the public expenditure debate on 22 November.

2. The present British contribution to UNESCO is about £5 million per annum. This falls to the ODA annual budget, reflecting the fact that UNESCO's efforts have turned more to promoting practical help and advice for its developing country members. UNESCO also continues to have a role as a centre for intellectual exchange to which many countries attach importance.

3. As in other UN organisations, political issues have increasingly affected UNESCO's work. Over the last two decades UNESCO's programmes have given progressively less real value for money, and the organisation has been increasingly used to attack Western values. Too high a proportion of its expenditure is concentrated in Paris.

4. In recent years the UK and the US have taken a leading role in combating UNESCO's shortcomings. Before the last UNESCO General Conference in November 1983, we had decided that we should seriously consider withdrawal if the results
 /were



were unsatisfactory in any major way. We succeeded in neutralising the attempts of the Communists and the radical non-aligned to use UNESCO to regulate the press. We achieved reduction in the proposed budget. The US nonetheless gave notice of their intention to withdraw at the end of 1984 (UNESCO rules stipulate a full calendar year's notice of withdrawal). No other country besides the US put in its notice.

5. Mr Raison wrote to the Director-General of UNESCO, Mr M'Bow (Senegal), on 2 April giving a clear account of the reasons for our dissatisfaction and detailing the reforms we wished to see. The letter warned UNESCO that we would find it increasingly difficult to justify our membership of UNESCO unless we could point to real improvements in its operations and that we would review our position before the end of this year.

6. The Americans did not propose specific reforms until quite late in the process and those they suggested were not well prepared. Because we had put forward specific and well thought out proposals, Mr Raison's letter has been used as the agenda for reform. A special Committee, the "Temporary Committee" was set up to examine all reform proposals.

7. As a result of this sustained activity on our part, there has been progress in a number of areas. The movement for a New World Information and Communications Order (NWICO) has been put on one side, although vigilance is needed to keep it that way. Mr M'Bow has been persuaded to accept some important management changes. It has been agreed that any shortfall in the 1985 budget due to the US withdrawal should not lead to supplementary assessments on Member States.

8. On the other hand, there are major areas where more progress is needed. We have not yet got the commitment we

/want



want to reduce the more politically offensive programmes. We have not got a commitment to reduce the 1986/87 programme by the amount of the American shortfall if they withdraw. In too many areas we still have no more than words; these still have to be transformed into action.

9. There are arguments for staying in UNESCO. Commonwealth countries without exception value UNESCO's work. A significant number of programmes, particularly in the fields of education and the natural sciences, are worthwhile. The organisation has been a useful international vehicle for the promotion of the English language and could be more so. Some of its most valuable activities, especially in the scientific field, can only be undertaken by a multilateral agency. There is a clear acceptance of the need for change by most member states and, if only for tactical reasons, by the Director General. We also need to consider the risk of leaving the field clear to the Soviet Union.

10. The issue at this stage is how best to keep up the pressure for sufficient change while enabling us to make a final decision at the earliest sensible opportunity. There are two options. We can submit formal notice of withdrawal now, to take effect on 31 December 1985; or we can leave this decision until after the next General Conference. In that case, we would have to pay our subscription for 1986 even if we decided to pull out at the end of 1985.

11. To put in our notice now would show that we continue to mean business. If Commonwealth and other countries genuinely want us to stay, it might make them work harder to keep us in. It would ensure that if the reforms we wanted were not achieved by the end of next year and we withdrew, we would not have to pay our contribution for 1986. It is the course favoured by a considerable weight of press and parliamentary opinion in this country. It would be open to

/us



us to rescind our notice if substantial changes are recorded during the year.

12. Inevitably, giving notice of withdrawal would mean that we would not get elected to any of UNESCO's International Councils, some of which are important to us. It would also mean that we would play no effective part in informal discussions about the next Director-General (Mr M'Bow's term of office expires in 1987) although our threat to leave could influence those discussions. The main point would be to maintain an incentive for the reform movement to continue by making clear when giving our notice that we would continue to work for the reforms we thought essential over the next year, and would be prepared to reconsider our decision, but only if substantial progress had been made in specified areas.

13. It would also help maximise the impact of putting in our notice now if we were in the company of at least one or two other Western countries. But all our European partners (and others, like Canada, Australia and Japan), although they share most of our reform objectives, do not agree that giving notice of withdrawal is the right course now. The Dutch have shown themselves closest to our own position: the Foreign Minister has suggested that we should try to persuade the Americans to extend their notice of withdrawal as part of a package which would involve the UK and several Europeans putting in notice as well. Our Embassy in Washington have taken extensive soundings: their assessment is that the US Administration are most unlikely to adopt that course.

14. An extensive lobbying campaign to persuade us to stay in has been mounted by Commonwealth countries. The Commonwealth Secretary General wrote to me on 13 November. The Swazi High

/Commissioner



Commissioner followed this up with a letter on behalf of all Commonwealth High Commissioners in London, urging us strongly to stay in.

15. Despite the scale of press and party support for giving notice, this is not a decision on which all the arguments point one way. But after considering them all, I believe that we should give notice at the end of this year to withdraw, even if we have no support from other Western Governments in doing so. Without that, the impetus for reform may be dissipated. Indeed we could do much to encourage it if we made the kind of public statement I have described. This course of action would also ensure that if we concluded after the 1985 General Conference that we should complete our withdrawal, we would not be obliged to pay our 1986 subscription.

16. There is considerable public expectation of an early decision and announcement. The debate in the House on 22 November would be a natural opportunity to announce our decision, even though it does not have public expenditure implications in 1985. May I therefore assume that you and our colleagues on OD are content that I should act as I propose, unless I hear to the contrary by close of play on 21 November?

17. I am copying this minute to members of OD and to the Secretaries of State for Education and Environment, and Sir Robert Armstrong.

GEOFFREY HOWE

Foreign and Commonwealth Office

20 November 1984

Memo

From: ALAN WALTERS

To: Prime Minister

Date: Nov 19 1984

Prime Minister
He shd. be satisfied with
Gregory Heine's statement this afternoon.
CDP

UNESCO

The general view - among Democrats as well as Republicans - is that the U.K. will find some "compromise" to save M'Bow and "work from within". It is thought that the FCO officials are adamant against issuing notice of withdrawal and that the government will be pusillanimous.

The view here is that if M'Bow escapes the European threat of withdrawal then there is no chance of reform of UNESCO and little opportunity to prevent the degradation of other UN agencies
AW

UNESCO's Bunker Mentality

By JAMES H. SCHEUER

In international organizations, especially those in the United Nations system, events often move around cosmic questions of war and peace and the survival of whole nations or the planet itself. At other times, events turn on more ordinary planes of greed, corruption and incompetence.

The U.N. Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization is almost a textbook case of gross mismanagement and political failure. Founded in 1946, UNESCO set itself what an idealistic postwar generation felt would be a noble and ambitious goal—the sharing and exchange of the intellectual achievement of the developed, industrial states with the developing Third World and its unquenchable thirst for knowledge and technology.

Bone-crunching battles and the drawing of blood are left to the U.N. General Assembly and the lethal exchanges are the province of the Security Council. It is strange, therefore, to see consensus break down as utterly as it has at UNESCO. The real problem at UNESCO is straightforward and simple: An international organization that for 10 years has been under the increasingly authoritarian and erratic direction of one man, its director-general, Mr. Amadou Mahtar M'Bow of Senegal, has strayed far from its original goals, has become increasingly hostile to Western values and is grossly mismanaged.

Hailed and Condemned

Consensus has disappeared. The agency has been degraded, debased and nearly destroyed. Its staff is demoralized, its civil servants terrorized, its programs chaotic, its spending out of control and the simplest bookkeeping and personnel systems have become nightmares of inefficiency, favoritism and boondoggling. The U.S. has announced its withdrawal (along with the 25% of UNESCO's annual budget it provides). Since 1980, scores of high-ranking, respected international educators, scientists and administrators have quit in disgust with what they have described as UNESCO's corruption of spirit and soul.

Meanwhile, Mr. M'Bow—hailed as a living icon by some, and roundly condemned as either an incompetent administrator or petty tyrant, or both, by others—continues his reign as though UNESCO's crisis were nothing more than a passing rainstorm.

A soon-to-be-completed report from the U.S. General Accounting Office supports many of the institutional criticisms of the organization voiced by internal critics and Western observers. It should be stressed that the GAO report and an internal UNESCO study that Mr. M'Bow refuses to release publicly have circumspectly avoided many of the allegations of personal corruption and abuse of office that have been leveled at the director-general.

The picture is not pretty. The charges detailed in the GAO report are of the sort that would cause the immediate downfall of any agency administrator in most any government—a cabinet minister would resign within hours. A private corporation would not tolerate the management results that the GAO has described at UNESCO. Yet Mr. M'Bow seems to have triumphed for the moment through a combination of circumstances: his utter contempt for criticism and his insistence that it is a result of plots and racism; confusion and mixed signals from the major Western allies, and the U.S.'s unproductive posture since announcing its withdrawal.

The U.S. has weakened the leverage its withdrawal gave Western countries by

I am forced to conclude that there is only the slimmest of chances that UNESCO can come to grips with the problems choking it under its present leadership.

avoiding the mismanagement and corruption charges and focusing on politicization and ideological problems, thus playing into Mr. M'Bow's hands. The UNESCO dispute has degenerated into an East-West confrontation, with the Russians backing Mr. M'Bow and equating him with anti-imperialism and anti-colonialism. Mr. M'Bow has also sought to portray himself as the champion of the South. The North-South aspect of the dispute is all the more preposterous because it is the Third World itself that is being ripped off by him.

Over the past 10 years, and particularly in the last four years, Mr. M'Bow has gradually shifted personnel, money and resources away from the delivery of services in the field (literacy programs, promotion of cultural exchange) and concentrated them at UNESCO's Paris headquarters on such politically contentious issues as disarmament and increasing state controls over journalists. By radically increasing the ratio of support staff—such as gardeners, chauffeurs and secretaries—to professional staff, Mr. M'Bow's UNESCO appears primarily preoccupied with the sustenance and maintenance of its bloated headquarter's bureaucracy.

The GAO report and the still unreleased internal UNESCO report are as much indictments of Mr. M'Bow's failure to avoid debilitating confrontations as they are of the mismanagement mess itself.

Last March, I held a press conference in Paris to release the texts of letters Mr. M'Bow and I had exchanged to allow the GAO investigators "full and unrestricted access" to UNESCO's books and records. I promised that if the GAO, the highly respected investigative arm of Congress, gave Mr. M'Bow and UNESCO a clean bill of health, I would return and, with Mr.

M'Bow beside me, declare that the attacks on his management were unfounded and should cease. I never had to go back to Paris.

More in sorrow than in anger, I am forced to conclude that there is only the slimmest of chances that UNESCO can come to grips with the fundamental problems that are choking it under its present leadership. Mr. M'Bow has spent most of his time reacting, parrying and fending off reform. He has poured his efforts into deflecting any scrutiny of his tenure as director-general and has hired a Washington public-relations firm to convince people that cosmetic exercises in window dressing are actually substantive reform.

There is also little doubt that the Rea-

gion has been indistinguishable from Mr. M'Bow's cheerleaders. These civil servants seemed, for a time, to have convinced the politicians at home that real reform was under way at UNESCO. Fortunately, the transparency of the cosmetic reform program engineered by UNESCO's executive board has not fooled the British public or press, and they, in turn, have begun to put pressure on government ministers to take the next logical step by serving notice. A pusillanimous reaction by the British government will be seen as hypocrisy and weakness by other countries looking for leadership in getting their collective act together.

There has been speculation that one or two smaller European states are trying to work out a "package" approach along the following lines: The United Kingdom and four or five other countries announce they will withdraw at the end of 1985, and the U.S. then announces that it is delaying its own withdrawal one year to coincide with the other countries' Dec. 31, 1985, withdrawal date. Thus, 1985 would be the time to see if all the protestations by Mr. M'Bow of a genuine and sincere interest in reform are actually pursued or not. The combination of the leverage of a threatened mass exodus, the crippling financial loss and aggressive, unified Western efforts aimed at achieving real consensus, real reform and new leadership could be irresistible.

An Embarrassing Caricature

Perhaps the Reagan administration will shrink from risking the wrath of its own conservative hard-liners by altering its direction at the eleventh hour. But with the American election over, politically astute and thoughtful administration and State Department officials may now be free to urge an active role for the U.S. in working with its allies to bring those Third World moderates with whom it does have credibility into a new consensus for reform.

However, if a "package" cannot be orchestrated prior to the scheduled date of U.S. withdrawal at the end of December, it is essential that the U.S. follow through on its withdrawal.

Mr. M'Bow has said that he will not quit as director-general "even if there are only 10 member states left." In essence, Mr. M'Bow is declaring that his survival as director-general with his perks intact, rather than UNESCO's survival with the integrity of its mission intact, is the issue. He is inviting disenchanting member states to put him to the test. Logic, politeness and principle demand that the Western allies accept the invitation.

Mr. Scheuer (D., N.Y.), chairs a House science and technology subcommittee.

Russell Kirk: Conservatism's Seasoned Sage



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22 NOV 1984

UNESCO's Bunker Mentality

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The U.S. has weakened the leverage its withdrawal gave Western countries by

M'Bow beside me, declare that the attacks on his management were unfounded and should cease. I never had to go back to Paris.

More in sorrow than in anger, I am forced to conclude that there is only the slimmest of chances that UNESCO can come to grips with the fundamental problems that are choking it under its present leadership. Mr. M'Bow has spent most of his time reacting, parrying and fending off reform. He has poured his efforts into deflecting any scrutiny of his tenure as director-general and has hired a Washington public-relations firm to convince people that cosmetic exercises in window dressing are actually substantive reform.

There is also little doubt that the Rea-

at times, been indistinguishable from Mr. M'Bow's cheerleaders. These civil servants seemed, for a time, to have convinced the politicians at home that real reform was under way at UNESCO. Fortunately, the transparency of the cosmetic reform program engineered by UNESCO's executive board has not fooled the British public or press, and they, in turn, have begun to put pressure on government ministers to take the next logical step by serving notice. A pusillanimous reaction by the British government will be seen as hypocrisy and weakness by other countries looking for leadership in getting their collective act together.

There has been speculation that one or two smaller European states are trying to work out a "package" approach along the following lines: The United Kingdom and four or five other countries announce they will withdraw at the end of 1985, and the U.S. then announces that it is delaying its own withdrawal one year to coincide with the other countries' Dec. 31, 1985, withdrawal date. Thus, 1985 would be the time to see if all the protestations by Mr. M'Bow of a genuine and sincere interest in reform are actually pursued or not. The combination of the leverage of a threatened mass exodus, the crippling financial loss and aggressive, unified Western efforts aimed at achieving real consensus, real reform and new leadership could be irresistible.

An Embarrassing Caricature

Perhaps the Reagan administration will shrink from risking the wrath of its own conservative hard-liners by altering its direction at the eleventh hour. But with the American election over, politically astute and thoughtful administration and State Department officials may now be free to urge an active role for the U.S. in working with its allies to bring those Third World moderates with whom it does have credibility into a new consensus for reform.

However, if a "package" cannot be orchestrated prior to the scheduled date of U.S. withdrawal at the end of December, it is essential that the U.S. follow through on its withdrawal.

Mr. M'Bow has said that he will not quit as director-general "even if there are only 10 member states left." In essence, Mr. M'Bow is declaring that his survival as director-general with his perks intact, rather than UNESCO's survival with the integrity of its mission intact, is the issue. He is inviting disenchanted member states to put him to the test. Logic, politeness and principle demand that the Western allies accept the invitation.

Mr. Scheuer (D., N.Y.), chairs a House science and technology subcommittee.

I am forced to conclude that there is only the slimmest of chances that UNESCO can come to grips with the problems choking it under its present leadership.

avoiding the mismanagement and corruption charges and focusing on politicization and ideological problems, thus playing into Mr. M'Bow's hands. The UNESCO dispute has degenerated into an East-West confrontation, with the Russians backing Mr. M'Bow and equating him with anti-imperialism and anti-colonialism. Mr. M'Bow has also sought to portray himself as the champion of the South. The North-South aspect of the dispute is all the more preposterous because it is the Third World itself that is being ripped off by him.

Over the past 10 years, and particularly in the last four years, Mr. M'Bow has gradually shifted personnel, money and resources away from the delivery of services in the field (literacy programs, promotion of cultural exchange) and concentrated them at UNESCO's Paris headquarters on such politically contentious issues as disarmament and increasing state controls over journalists. By radically increasing the ratio of support staff—such as gardeners, chauffeurs and secretaries—to professional staff, Mr. M'Bow's UNESCO appears primarily preoccupied with the sustenance and maintenance of its bloated headquarter's bureaucracy.

The GAO report and the still unreleased internal UNESCO report are as much indictments of Mr. M'Bow's failure to avoid debilitating confrontations as they are of the mismanagement mess itself.

Last March, I held a press conference in Paris to release the texts of letters Mr. M'Bow and I had exchanged to allow the GAO investigators "full and unrestricted access" to UNESCO's books and records. I promised that if the GAO, the highly respected investigative arm of Congress, gave Mr. M'Bow and UNESCO a clean bill of health, I would return and, with Mr.

gan administration failed to take advantage of the U.S. withdrawal leverage to nudge UNESCO toward reform. Efforts by pragmatic reformers such as our able and forthright ambassador to UNESCO, Jean Gerard, were stymied at several junctures either by State Department bureaucrats who get queasy at the very thought of withdrawing from an international organization, or by other more ideological colleagues in the administration whose real agenda begins and ends with getting out of UNESCO. To the ideologues, Mr. M'Bow is the perfect foil—as long as he stays, there is no chance of reforms sufficient to cause the U.S. to change its decision to quit.

UNESCO ended its October executive board meeting in Paris in disarray and indecision. Now the real future of UNESCO will, in all likelihood, be decided in another city: London. One unconfirmed report has Foreign Secretary Geoffrey Howe planning to take Britain out of UNESCO, effective the end of 1985. This accurately reflects my own conversations with British officials and would be a welcome development.

The United Kingdom has a pivotal role. If the British do give notice of withdrawal, as many as five or six other major Western states will probably follow suit. These countries would represent more than the indisputable breakdown of consensus, because they contribute, along with the U.S., more than half of UNESCO's budget.

Of course, the British still have a small civil war of their own to settle. While British politicians and government ministers have taken a firm line on the abuses and failings at UNESCO, Foreign Office civil servants have muffled, diluted and obscured the message repeatedly during the last few months. Mid-level civil servants of the British delegation to UNESCO have,

Russell Kirk: Conservatism's Seasoned Sage

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file



cc: Sir P. Craddock

10 DOWNING STREET

From the Private Secretary

21 May 1984

UNESCO

The Prime Minister has seen the Foreign and Commonwealth Secretary's minute of 18 May.

Mrs. Thatcher has commented that she believes that we should review our position on our membership of UNESCO well before the end of this year so that we can keep open the possibility of giving notice of the termination, by the end of 1985, of our membership.

A. J. COLES

Peter Ricketts, Esq.,
Foreign and Commonwealth Office.

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Prime Minister

Agree that we review our position before the end of the year and, unless we decide to leave them, take a final decision at the next general conference in 1985?

PM/84/81

PRIME MINISTER

We must review our position well before the end of this year so that we can keep open the possibility of joining UNESCO by end 1984.

copy attached at A

FERB

18.5.

1. In his letter of 1 May to my Private Secretary, John Coles said that you would like my views on whether the UK should withdraw from UNESCO as Lord Eccles recommended in his speech during the UNESCO debate in the House of Lords on 25 January.
2. I would not by any means rule out withdrawal from UNESCO. We have for some time been dissatisfied with the way the Organisation is run and have taken a leading role in drawing attention to its shortcomings in many areas. Proposals for a new regime to regulate the press were unacceptable to us, as were proposals that would have had the effect of undermining basic human rights. We were deeply concerned about the proper lack of budgetary control and the fact that too much of the money is spent in Paris. And we were far from sure that we were getting good value for money. We did achieve some limited reforms by the middle of 1983. But before the General Conference of November 1983 we had decided that we should seriously consider withdrawal if the results of that Conference were unsatisfactory in any major way.
3. In fact, our position and the fact that the United States was also known to be considering withdrawal seem to have helped to make that particular Conference less unsatisfactory than previous ones. We and other like-minded countries successfully resisted any further advances towards a New World Information

/and



and Communication Order or any other action against the freedom of the media. The proposals for the budget were reduced, even if not by as much as we had wanted. The outcome on human rights was less clear cut but no lasting damage was done to the Western position. There were even welcome signs of increased support for our policy of making UNESCO's programme more relevant to the needs of developing countries.

4. We considered our position in the light of this. Tim Raison, who deals with our relations with UNESCO, held a meeting of the UK National Commission for UNESCO, an advisory body consisting of some 70 eminent people in the fields covered by the Organisation. There was general agreement that the way things had been developing in UNESCO was very unsatisfactory, but the majority were in favour of staying in on the grounds that to leave would be to turn our back on an important channel of communication and cooperation with developing countries.

5. I was myself prompted to consider the question at that time as a result of reading Lord Eccles' speech in the Lords. I concluded that the balance of argument was a fine one. The sum we spend on UNESCO might be better spent in other ways; our subscription is about £5 million a year. But, although the US was considering withdrawal, this course had no support from any other European country. In the end I decided that the right course for the time being was to stay in and fight from within to get reforms and we told the US about our decision before they took their own.

6. Lord Eccles believes that with the Americans outside we are going to have very little influence inside; but I believe that the threat of American withdrawal (their decision to

/withdraw



withdraw does not take effect until the end of this year) will be a powerful spur to the Organisation to adopt the reforms we are proposing. The American announcement has already had a considerable impact. This does give us an opportunity to get genuine changes.

7. We have set about doing this in a systematic way. Tim Raison has written a letter to M'Bow, the Director-General of the Organisation giving a clear account of the reasons for our dissatisfaction with UNESCO and detailing the reforms we wish to see. Tim Raison said that the Organisation had to concentrate on useful programmes and get away from ideological confrontation, in particular from attempts to shackle the media. He made it clear that we wanted value for money and smaller budgets, that UNESCO should be more effectively targeted on developing countries and that it should make a real effort to decentralise its activities. An appendix to the letter spelt out in detail the sort of concrete measures we wanted taken. Tim made it clear that withdrawal from the Organisation was still one of the options we were considering, that we would review our position before the end of the year (withdrawal takes effect at the end of the calendar year following the year in which formal notice of withdrawal is made so there is no point in reconsidering our decision earlier) and would find it increasingly difficult to justify our membership of UNESCO unless we could point to real improvements in its operations.

8. The letter was discussed with all members of the Western Group at UNESCO before it was sent and also with the UK National Commission. I enclose a copy. Tim Raison saw M'Bow in London before Easter and reinforced this message. There are signs that the Director-General realises he must take action and indeed he has recently made some proposals for management reform himself. But much will depend on the attitudes of Third World

/Member



Member States. The indications so far are that many of them are ready to agree that reforms are necessary. It will be uphill work and we have to recognise that the possibility of real movement this year is limited. If there is no genuine movement we can decide to withdraw then. Decisions on many of the major reforms we are seeking cannot be taken until the next general conference which is not until 1985. That would be our final point of decision as to whether to stay or go.

9. Finally, I understand that you were impressed by Lord Eccles' statement that 75% of every Dollar in UNESCO's income is spent in Paris. So was I. I do not know where he got this figure from, but it could well be of this order. We do not have a precise breakdown of expenditure undertaken in Paris and elsewhere. But there is no doubt that the Organisation is much too centralised and one of the points which Tim Raison has made forcefully to M'Bow is that we would like to see a significant shift of resources and functions away from headquarters.

(GEOFFREY HOWE)

Foreign and Commonwealth Office
18 May 1984



10 DOWNING STREET

From the Private Secretary

1 May 1984

UNESCO

With your letter of 26 March you enclosed a draft letter for the Prime Minister to send to Lord Eccles about his speech in the House of Lords during the UNESCO debate.

The Prime Minister has now decided not to write to Lord Eccles. But she has asked me to bring to the attention of the Foreign and Commonwealth Secretary the fact that she has much sympathy with the line taken in Lord Eccles' speech. In particular, she is inclined to share his view that we are unlikely to achieve a successful reform of UNESCO from within the organisation. Mrs. Thatcher believes that it would be more productive to withdraw, with the Americans, from the organisation and then rejoin when its activities have been put on a more satisfactory basis. She was particularly impressed by the statistic referred to in Lord Eccles' speech that 75% of every dollar in UNESCO's income is spent in Paris.

The Prime Minister would be grateful for the Foreign and Commonwealth Secretary's views and in particular his advice on whether it would not be better to adopt the policy towards UNESCO advocated by Lord Eccles.

A J COLES

Peter Ricketts, Esq.,
Foreign and Commonwealth Office.



OVERSEAS DEVELOPMENT ADMINISTRATION
ELAND HOUSE
STAG PLACE LONDON SW1E 5DH.

Telephone 01-213 5409

From the Minister

2 April 1984

Mr Amadou-Mahtar M'Bow
Director General
United Nations Educational, Scientific
and Cultural Organisation
7 Place de Fontenoy
75700 PARIS

Dear Director General,

I am writing to let you know the position which we have reached in a comprehensive review of British policy towards UNESCO which has been under way since mid-way through 1983. I thought it right that I should let you have the considered views of my Government as soon as possible and not wait for either the 119th Executive Board, or the preparation of a full reply to your consultation letter. I also know that you will be coming to London soon to attend an ACC meeting. I hope that it will be possible for us to meet during your visit to discuss informally UK relations with UNESCO and I believe that you would wish to have this indication of our current views of the organisation before such a meeting takes place.

I must first emphasise that the UK remains firmly committed to the ideals and principles which are set forth in the UNESCO Constitution - a document which we continue to hold in London, the seat of the Organisation's founding conference. We have welcomed the growth in membership and the consequent change of emphasis in programmes in favour of the developing countries. At the same time, within this perspective we believe firmly that these basic ideals and principles are as valid today as they were when they were drawn up here nearly 40 years ago.

It has therefore been with particular regret that my Government, and more generally public opinion in the UK, have noted over the years a number of tendencies developing inside the Organisation which we cannot believe are in its longer term interests or compatible with its original spirit. We have felt unease about the political aspects of certain programmes, about the way in which UNESCO fora seem to be used increasingly by some to attack values and ideals set out in the constitution and about the growing size of the UNESCO budget. Above all we have increasingly questioned whether many of UNESCO's programmes represent good value for money, which in these difficult times must surely be of concern to all Member States, large or small. I must emphasise that this last point does not arise solely from our concern with the direct UK financial stake in UNESCO's work but reflects our view that UNESCO's performance in assisting the developing countries to find solutions to their problems in education, science and culture, and in promoting international cooperation within its fields of competence, could be improved significantly. In particular it seems to us that far too high a proportion of expenditure is concentrated on headquarters costs in Paris and far too little on effective action in the field.

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It was against this background that a review of British policy towards UNESCO was conducted last year. This was a national initiative and was not influenced by the actions or attitudes of others. The United Kingdom National Commission for UNESCO played a significant role in the review. We also paid particular attention to the outcome of the 22nd General Conference before reaching our conclusions. A number of policy options were considered. It was a mark of our deep concern that, notwithstanding our long history of support for UNESCO, these included the possibility of withdrawal. The outcome of the review will form the basis of the UK reply to your circular letter of 31 January about the preparation of the next Programme and Budget for 1986/7.

My Ministerial colleagues and I decided that the United Kingdom should remain a member of UNESCO for the time being but that we should intensify our efforts to achieve the radical improvements in UNESCO's programmes and procedures we believe to be needed. The urgent need for change has I believe been highlighted by the subsequent announcement of withdrawal by the United States of America.

Attached to this letter is a paper setting out in broad terms those areas in which we believe that such changes are necessary. In some cases we have made specific proposals but the main aim of the paper is to indicate objectives rather than the means whereby these might best be achieved. This paper has been prepared on my instructions and has my full endorsement.

I recognise that most of these issues are more for the governing bodies than for you and that in any case final decisions on a number of these cannot take place until 1985 when the draft Programme and Budget for 1986/7 issues and the 23rd Session of the General Conference takes place. However we expect to see significant indications of change by the end of 1984, particularly in the context of management action and of the Executive Board's consideration of the Director General's preliminary proposals for the Programme and Budget for 1986/7. I have told Parliament that we shall review our position before the end of this year.

I fully accept that many of UNESCO's programmes in the core areas of education, science and culture are worthy of support. But it is important that UNESCO concentrates its efforts on those programmes where meaningful international cooperation is possible and eschews those which can all too easily become a platform for ideological confrontation. The value of UNESCO's work, and its reputation, can only be diminished by undue attention to issues of political controversy. A good example is UNESCO's increased involvement with communication and media issues in recent years to which my Government has been obliged to give particular attention. I must emphasise that I am not seeking to challenge the broad consensus on the Second Medium Term Plan. But it must realistically be recognised that any such plan may need to be revised in the light of subsequent major developments, as was indeed envisaged in the resolution of the 21st General Conference in 1980 which laid down guidelines for the preparation of the Plan.

There is also the crucial issue of how best to convert the plan into practical programmes. As was said in the Plenary speech made on my behalf at the last General Conference, we need to recognise that however laudable the aims and objectives of a programme may be it can only be effective if it is efficiently implemented. This is where, for a variety of reasons many of which I recognise are outside your direct control, I believe that UNESCO needs to improve its performance, and thereby regain the confidence of the international community as a whole. You and your colleagues in the Secretariat have

/a crucial



a crucial role to play here in helping to translate these objectives into effective and economical programmes, drawing upon the full range of skills available in the Member States. The management procedures and practices of the Organisation are also, in my view, in need of critical examination. I look forward to co-operating with you in promoting a programme of reform which I believe to be essential to secure the long term future of UNESCO.

In this spirit I believe that it is important that the views of the British Government on UNESCO are made widely known at this time. The serious factors which led to our review and the extensive criticism of UNESCO in this country, call in my view for plain speaking and concrete action. Certainly it will become increasingly difficult to justify our membership of UNESCO unless we can point to real improvement in its operations. Nor can we ignore the serious and unprecedented situation arising from the US withdrawal.

I should mention that there is considerable Parliamentary and public interest in UNESCO in Britain at the current time. I am committed to placing this letter in the Libraries of both Houses of Parliament once I know it has reached you.

Since many of the comments in this letter and its enclosure will be of interest and concern to Member States I am instructing the UK Permanent Delegate to circulate these texts to the Permanent Delegates of other Member States.

Finally, I request that this letter and its enclosure should be considered at the 119th Session of the Executive Board.

Yours sincerely,
Timothy Raison
TIMOTHY RAISON

UNESCO - UK PROPOSALS

1. Specific Programme issues

Implementation of the current programme should take account of continuing western concerns about Major Programme III (on communication and media questions) and XIII (on human rights, peace and disarmament). The draft programmes for 1986/7 should give greater priority to the core programmes in education, science and culture. Lower priority should be given to Major Programme I (on future studies) and to Programmes III.1 (studies of communication) and XIII.1 (peace and disarmament) as currently constituted. Programme XIII.2 (human rights) should contain nothing which would have the effect of down-grading or diminishing the universally recognised human rights set out in the Universal Declaration and the two covenants.

2. Discussion at the 22nd General Conference showed a wide divergence of views on the programmes proposed for Major Programme XIII (on peace disarmament and human rights). In the light of this and of the implications of the US withdrawal, consideration should be given to the possibility of a revision of the relevant text in the Second Medium Term Plan. Such a review should take into account, inter alia, the need to ensure that the activities proposed are fully within UNESCO's constitutional mandate and that they do not overlap or duplicate the activities and competences of other UN bodies.

3. There should be a review of the operations of the Office of Public Information. External professional advice should be sought on means of increasing its effectiveness in making UNESCO's achievements better known in Member States, particularly amongst major financial contributors - although not by the mere proliferation of paper.

4. The Governing Bodies

These should be enabled to fulfil their respective constitutional functions more effectively. In particular, the Executive Board should consider measures aimed at improving its examination of the programme of work submitted by the Director General and at enabling it to carry out its overall responsibilities in relation to the execution of the programme more efficiently, perhaps by means of a regular periodic review of the work of each Sector or Major Programme. Further improvements in the working methods of the General Conference should also be sought. In particular means should be found of ensuring that the General Conference benefits to a greater extent than hitherto from the policy

guidance produced by the Executive Board and by the various specialist inter-governmental bodies. More use should be made of the Permanent Delegates, individually and collectively.

5. Budgetary questions

US withdrawal should not lead to extra offsetting contributions by remaining Member States either during the current biennium or in the future, nor to appropriation of the currency fluctuation surplus. The Working Capital Fund should not be utilised to meet any shortfall in 1984, nor should it be increased to compensate for the US withdrawal. The balance in Part VIII of the 1981-3 Budget should be returned to Member States in accordance with the provisions of the relevant Appropriation Resolution and the Financial Regulations. We are also opposed to any borrowing to meet any shortfall in 1984/5 arising from the US withdrawal if this could involve UNESCO in future repayments or interest payments. We would expect the Executive Board at one of its 1984 Sessions to consider how the shortfall in 1984/5 can best be met. Proposals submitted to the Board should include administrative economies and cuts in low priority programmes substantially reflecting the points in paragraph 1 of this note, rather than a pro rata reduction across the programme.

6. If the US notice is not withdrawn, the Programme for 1986/7 should be appropriately reduced in order to avoid any real increase in the burden borne by remaining Member States. If the US notice of withdrawal is rescinded before the Programme and Budget is prepared we would, as indicated in Mr Raison's letter to the Director General of 15 September 1983, expect the 1986/7 budget to be prepared on the basis of zero real growth. We believe that there is sufficient room for adjustment of resources away from low priority programmes to those of higher priority together with improvements in cost effectiveness and productivity to keep the overall UNESCO budget within this limit. We also seek further improvements in the method of calculation and presentation of the budget particularly as regards the calculation of the base figure for 1986/7 and inflation costs. As regards the former we propose that a small group of budgetary experts should establish with the appropriate officials in the Secretariat an agreed base for 1986/7 indicating clearly how this has been derived and which terms have been included in it.

7. General programme matters

For 1986/7 there should be increased concentration of the programmes, and a shift of resources from reflection towards action. In particular there should be fewer studies and more action oriented projects of direct benefit to the developing countries. Those

/studies which

studies which remain should be better planned and more relevant to both the urgent needs of Member States and the action oriented elements of the programme. There should be fewer meetings. There should be fewer documents produced. The whole question of the dissemination of the results of UNESCO's work should be examined with the help of outside experts. UNESCO periodical publications should, so far as possible, be self-financing. We would also expect strict adherence to the Board's decision at its 113th Session that UNESCO's standard setting activities should concentrate on areas in which consensus appears possible and in which the need for universal norms is widely felt in the international community. Positive efforts should be made to improve co-ordination with other UN bodies, with the aim of maximising the overall effectiveness of the UN system, reducing the areas of possible overlap and duplication and respecting the competence of other UN bodies with the leading role for particular topics.

8. We would hope to see specific discussion on the policy issues involved in each of the areas mentioned in paragraph 7 at one of the 1984 Sessions of the Board followed by appropriate references in the Board's decisions on the preparations of 1986/7 Programme and Budget, fixing specific targets if this is possible, with proper reflection of the Board decision in the Draft Programmes. We would in particular urge the preparation of long term plans, similar to that already in operation for recruitment of staff, to set specific targets for a reduction in the number of separate sub-programmes, and programme activities within these programmes, and moves towards decentralisation during the balance of the Second Medium Term Plan period.

9. Evaluation

An aspect of management which we regard as being of special importance is improved evaluation machinery. Following a United Kingdom initiative the Fourth Extraordinary Session of the General Conference adopted a resolution calling inter alia for clear concise and precise statements of objectives, specific targets to be achieved, the use of qualitative and quantitative indicators, and the increased use, on a selective basis, of independent external evaluation. We would expect to see clear indications that implementation of this resolution is proceeding in a satisfactory manner and that it is fully operational by the start of 1986/7 Programme. We would also expect comprehensive information on the results obtained by the existing self-evaluation and the improved system to be made known to Member States together with a clear indication of how this

information has been made use of in the preparation of the 1986/7 Programmes. The 1985 General Conference should be given the opportunity to hold a substantive discussion on the performance, effectiveness, and development of UNESCO's evaluation procedures.

10. Other management issues

There are we believe serious problems here which have an adverse effect on the efficiency of the Secretariat. In particular the organisation is too centralised, both in geographical terms, and in terms of decision making. We would like to see a significant shift of resources and functions away from Headquarters unless it can be demonstrated that activities carried out in Paris are more cost effective. Such decentralisation should not of course add to administrative costs nor further complicate the process of management. We urge that serious consideration be given to the possibility of drawing on outside advice, eg the Joint Inspection Unit, or Management Consultants, in such key areas as decentralisation, decision making and personnel questions. High priority should be given to filling the vacant post of Deputy Director General and the appointee should be given the necessary autonomous powers to relieve the burden on the Director General. Recruitment standards should be tightened and procedures should be improved and speeded up. The Board should be encouraged to broaden its discussion of personnel matters beyond the current concern with geographical distribution. The Board should also be given the opportunity to discuss in depth the work of the Inspectorate General in monitoring activities carried out by the Secretariat. The external auditor should be encouraged to devote more attention to the value for money aspects of his work.

11. Third Medium Term Plan

The 1985 General Conference will also have to take basic decisions about the method of preparation of the next Medium Term Plan. This should be discussed at one of the 1985 Sessions of the Board before the Conference. We would expect the Conference decision to call for a major exercise of consultations with Member States as was done in 1981 for the Second Plan, together with proposals for consideration of the Plan which would involve better opportunities for Member States to comment on the draft than occurred in 1982 and a real chance of substantive amendments being made before its adoption.



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10 DOWNING STREET

From the Private Secretary

13 February, 1984

UNESCO

I enclose a copy of a letter, together with its attachments, which the Prime Minister has received from the Director-General of UNESCO.

I have acknowledged Mr. M'Bow's letter and shall assume that no further action is required unless you advise me to the contrary.

A. J. COLES

R. Bone, Esq.,
Foreign and Commonwealth Office

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FILE

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10 DOWNING STREET

From the Private Secretary

13 February, 1984

The Prime Minister has asked me to thank you for your letter of 31 January enclosing copies of your exchange of correspondence with Mr. George Shultz, Secretary of State of the United States of America, and the text of UNESCO's Constitution.

The Prime Minister has noted that you have asked that the provisional agenda of the 119th session of UNESCO's Executive Board should contain an item relating to the communication you have received from Mr. Shultz.

A. J. COLES

Mr. Amadou-Mahtar M'Bow

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The Director-General

Reference: DG/7/053

31 January 1984

E. 1/2

Madam,

... I am enclosing herewith the text of the letter dated 28 December 1983 by which Mr George P. Shultz, Secretary of State of the United States of America, notified me of the withdrawal of the United States ... from Unesco as from 31 December 1984, together with the text of the reply, dated 18 January 1984, which I sent to the Secretary of State.

I have asked for the following item to be included in the provisional agenda of the 119th session of the Executive Board, due to open on 9 May 1984: 'Communication from the Secretary of State of the United States of America concerning the withdrawal of the United States of America'.

... For your further information, I am also sending you the text of Unesco's Constitution which lays down, particularly in the Preamble, the ideals pursued by the Organization and states the Organization's aims and functions and the way in which it operates.

Accept, Madam, the assurances of my highest consideration.

Enclosures: 3 annexes

A.-M. M'Bow

Amadou-Mahtar M'Bow

The Rt. Hon. Mrs Margaret Thatcher
Prime Minister
10 Downing Street
London
United Kingdom

United Nations

Foreign and Commonwealth Office

London SW1A 2AH

16 October 1980

*NBRN
Thurs 16/10**Dear Michael,*UNESCO General Conference, Belgrade:23 September to 28 October: Communications Questions

The UNESCO Conference (which began when the Prime Minister was in Yugoslavia) is now starting to consider the contentious communications question. The argument between Western countries which support a free press, and those (the majority) which favour state intervention may attract the attention of the British press over the next few weeks, and you may therefore wish to know how things stand.

The discussion centres on:

- (i) the proposal to establish an International Programme of Communication Development under UNESCO's auspices;
- (ii) the so-called "MacBride Report", - (the Report of the UNESCO International Commission for the Study of Communication Problems).

The proposals for the International Programme have emerged from the demands of developing countries for a so-called 'New International Information Order'. Some developing countries feel that their communications resources are weak and should be strengthened. They allege that their weakness means that they cannot get their message across; that the world sees them through Western spectacles and that only their bad news gets reported.

The Belgrade Conference is to set up the International Programme. Our attitude (generally shared by our Western partners) is:

- (i) we accept that many poorer countries are badly off in terms of communications resources;
- (ii) their weakness can best be remedied by practical measures (such as the training of journalists). If countries receiving British

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aid wish some of it to be used for this purpose (some already do) we shall have no objection;

- (iii) we shall oppose attempts to turn the Programme into a vehicle for agitprop;
- (iv) we shall support measures which would encourage the free flow of information, and oppose those which would stop it.

The "MacBride Report" (to the Director-General of UNESCO by an independent Commission under the Chairmanship of Sean MacBride, former Irish Foreign Minister) is diffuse, obscure and generally anti-capitalist. Although it contains sections which support freedom of information, the general line is to favour State intervention and control.

The British media are worried that UNESCO might pass resolutions which could, however indirectly, curtail their freedom. They welcome the Government's stand against this. We are in close touch with their leading representatives. They are, by and large, willing to accept our delegation's advice on tactics. These are directed at producing resolutions which we can at least live with. We have of course made it clear already that we will not support any resolutions or programmes which could have the effect of limiting press freedom.

Mr Blaker attended the initial proceedings as Leader of the British delegation (I enclose a summary of his speech). He is cutting short his tour of the South Pacific to return to the Conference on 20 October, so that he can be on hand as the Conference tackles the most important issues.

Yours ever
Roderic Lyne

(R M J Lyne)
Private Secretary

M O'D B Alexander Esq
10 Downing Street
London SW1

MAIN POINTS FROM MR BLAKER'S SPEECH AT UNESCO, 30 SEPTEMBER

1. UNESCO's mandate is very wide. It cannot tackle all the problems of education, science and culture. It must therefore be selective, concentrating on down to earth problems and constantly examining priorities. Its efforts to increase the level of world literacy is a good example of the sort of practical programme we want to encourage.
2. We deplore the introduction of political and ideological propaganda into UNESCO, which can only divert attention from the productive tasks UNESCO can undertake.
3. In a world recession, international organisations need to exercise thrift. In our view there should be no growth in real terms in UNESCO's expenditure in 1981/3. UNESCO, like others, must cut out waste and ensure that programmes give good value for money.
4. Communication is an important area for UNESCO - in which other international organisations also have an interest. We favour all efforts to encourage the free flow of information. We recognise that poorer countries find it difficult to develop their own communication capacities.
5. The MacBride report draws much material together on the subject. It is not a definitive work, nor were its authors in a position to propose a global strategy which is not in any case needed. There are passages in it in support of freedom of the press which are admirable. But we have many serious reservations about the Report, and cannot accept the general impression it leaves that imbalances in the field of communication can be corrected by increased State intervention.
6. Nor can we accept the Report's often perjorative approach to communication structures in developed market economies or its unsubstantiated assumption that commercial considerations will always produce adverse consequences in the media.

7. The view that communication is subservient to the political, social and cultural policies of Governments who prohibit information which they feel their citizens should not know is of course totally unacceptable to us. An example is the jamming of the BBC and other Western broadcasts by the USSR during the recent events in Poland. "Freedom of opinion and to seek and exchange information are fundamental human rights, and we cannot be party to resolutions or programmes which derogate from them". Nor can we accept that it is a function of UNESCO to seek to develop international norms in the field of communication, e.g. in regard to protection of journalists.

8. UNESCO must be concerned to develop greater capacities for communication and leave aside political rhetoric, concentrating on practical matters. Its proposed International Programme could help coordinate aid and reassess priorities in the communications field. Britain stands ready to share her expertise and assist where she can. We have a long record of extending help in this field, both from the State and the private sector. The contribution which we and other developed countries make from non-governmental sources is immensely important: it has been seriously neglected in the MacBride report.

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