

tionally imaginative self-dedicated men. These we can confidently expect to come forward wherever on this earth men are free to think and speak. Indeed, a distinguished group has already done so here and in Canada. Debate must be carried forward on the widest possible basis in order that true consent may be engineered in support of whatever modified proposal emerges from the total process of inquiry. These total processes of inquiry should deal with all proposals wherever originated, and utilize all media of education in all countries.

### Shall We Sleep This One Out?

Education all over the world was caught napping when the steam engine, the automobile, the airplane, the radio, and other revolutionary inventions or discoveries put in their appearances and

quietly began to transform society. No systematic effort was made to predict their probable social effects; no careful attempt to ferret out and act upon their resultant educational implications was undertaken. The effects proved to be revolutionary, but the school curriculum slumbered on. Little wonder, then, that many investigators have been forced to conclude that the schools typically educate in reference to "the educational, social and vocational realities of an era that is past."

Now we stand in the developing presence of atomic energy. Its revolutionary consequences give every promise of dwarfing all that have gone before. If we elect to sleep this one out, we shall in all probability be killed in our beds. Those of us who visited Hiroshima and Nagasaki can attest how awfully complete, and how completely awful, that end is likely to be!

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## TEACHING OF INTERNATIONAL UNDERSTANDING

*We present the following report of the World Conference of the Teaching Profession because we believe it is particularly pertinent to this issue and because we realize its great significance for all people concerned with international unity. This conference was held in Endicott, New York, August 17-30, 1946, and the recommendations cited were adopted by representatives of thirty-six teachers associations from twenty-eight different nations.*

### I.

The teaching of international understanding rests upon the cultivation of ideals and the development of a sense of personal responsibility for cooperation with others in all matters affecting human welfare. It does not involve the sacrifice of national culture or national citizenship, or the subordination of one to another. It requires thorough study of world problems, including the knowl-

edge of economic forces and historical backgrounds.

This Conference, therefore, declares that teachers should instruct the youth of all lands to act upon the following principles and should strive, alone or with others, to make these principles prevail in all areas of human relationship:

1. The fundamental needs of mankind for food, clothing, shelter, health, recreation, and security should be satisfied.

2. Every human being should enjoy, without any discrimination whatsoever, equal opportunity to develop physically, intellectually, and socially.

3. The pursuit of truth and the expression of opinion should be unrestricted, except when they interfere with the rights of others.

4. Respect for human life and for the religious convictions of other peoples should be fostered.

5. No nation should impose its culture upon any other nation, since no people possesses superiority by reason of divine gift, biological factors, or historical claims.

6. The natural resources of the earth should be developed by international planning and cooperation, and should be used for the general welfare of mankind.

7. The advances of science have now made all peoples neighbors, mutually interdependent and, therefore, morally responsible for each other's well-being.

8. The security of nations, their right to self-government, their cultural enrichment, and their economic prosperity can be realized only through international cooperation in an organization powerful enough to maintain peace and to facilitate worldwide economic cooperation.

## II.

To the teachers and teachers' associations of all nations, the World Conference of the Teaching Profession makes the following recommendations:

### 1. *On Education's Broad Responsibilities*

The responsibility of education for the promotion of international understanding among the peoples of all nations is a responsibility which must be shared by every teacher whether he be a teacher of children or of young people or of adults. Likewise, the obligation devolves upon every teacher no matter what his subject is. There is need for curriculum revision aimed at more direct instruction in international affairs;

but there is also need for the development of desirable international attitudes and world understanding as a byproduct of other lines of instruction which are not aimed primarily toward this objective.

This Conference recommends that teachers' associations in all countries take steps to bring together competent representatives of each of the several fields of instruction on each of the several grade levels for the purpose of defining their respective opportunities to contribute to the teaching of international understanding. In this undertaking the importance of coordination among the several subject fields and grade levels must be kept constantly in mind.

### 2. *On the Teaching of History*

History as a subject in the school curriculum provides unusually rich opportunities for acquainting students with the ways of living in lands other than their own, for helping them to understand the reasons for conditions that exist in the world today, and for helping them to recognize the interdependence of peoples. But history as too commonly taught fails to realize these opportunities by giving too much attention to wars and petty political struggles.

Therefore, this Conference recommends that the curriculum and method of teaching history should be such that it will give students a knowledge of the development of civilization throughout the world. Through history, students should become familiar with the life and work of men and women of all nations who have contributed to human welfare and should learn to appreciate the spiritual and cultural heritage which is theirs. History teaching in all countries should awaken young people to a sense

of their responsibilities to all mankind.

### 3. *On the Teaching of Current History*

While the history of former times is essential to a proper understanding of the present, such study is not in itself enough to equip today's citizens with the knowledge and attitudes which they must possess in order to have a sympathetic understanding of the complex and constantly changing world the future of which they will help to shape. Contemporary events must be studied directly—not only for the sake of acquiring immediately useful information but also as a means of developing a lively and intelligent interest in world affairs. Such information and such interest in world affairs are essential for young people if they are to fulfill their duties as citizens of their country and of the world.

For these reasons, this Conference recommends a place for the study of current history in the curriculum, particularly in secondary schools. The teaching of current history must be objective and conducted in a constructive spirit, but controversial matters should not be ignored.

### 4. *On the Teaching of Modern Languages*

Knowledge of a modern foreign language is more than a means of direct communication. The teaching of such a language offers opportunity to introduce the student to the life and habits of peoples other than his own; and, more important still, as language reflects thinking habits and character, the serious study of a modern language is a gateway to an understanding of the spirit of the people speaking it.

Therefore, this Conference recom-

mends that modern languages be taught in order to promote international understanding and that they should be learned so effectively that pupils will be enabled to enter into the spirit of the peoples speaking them. In making this recommendation, this Conference recognizes that each country has its own particular problems and must take into consideration its neighbors and local conditions, and this Conference is also aware of the need to guard against overcrowding the curriculum.

### 5. *On the Teaching of an International Language*

International understanding could vastly be advanced if one language were understood throughout the world, i.e., if one language could be agreed upon and recognized as international. Two solutions offer themselves: an artificial language or a living language. Should a living language be chosen, it would be taught in all countries without, of course, replacing national languages.

This Conference is of the opinion that a living language is preferable as an international language. However, recognition of the need for subjecting the entire question to the competent study of an internationally constituted body of experts prompts this Conference to recommend that a commission be appointed by the World Organization of the Teaching Profession. This commission should be composed chiefly of teachers with scientific linguistic training and practical experience in teaching and it should include sociologists and psychologists. The task of the commission would be: (a) to compare and evaluate the various artificial languages in existence; (b) to set forth what claims to internationality various living lan-

guages have, and to clarify such conceptions as "Basic English," without, however, making a recommendation for one specific language; and (c) to express views as to the advisability of adopting an artificial language as a first or secondary international language.

#### 6. *On the Teaching of Music, Art, and Literature*

Music and art are international in appeal. In large measure, this is also true of literature. Children should not only become acquainted with artistic reproductions, but they should also be led to understand the cultural environments and attitudes of mind of the creative artists whose work they study.

This Conference, therefore, recommends:

- (a) That art education include instruction about the creators of art as well as about works of art, such instruction to include the lives of artists and their respective peoples; and that the same principles should apply in the case of music education.
- (b) That art study should include not only painting, but also architecture, crafts, and other creative work characteristic of a country.
- (c) That folk lore and folk music from foreign lands be included in the school curriculum of each country.
- (d) That teaching of literature include attention to the finest examples of creative writing from many lands—in translation when necessary—and that teachers have a voice in selecting examples to be studied.

#### 7. *On the Improvement of Textbooks*

The need for eliminating from textbooks content characterized by nationalistic biases and propaganda designed to promote aggressive nationalism has long been recognized, but it has been very difficult to establish practical means for the solution of the problem.

It is, therefore, to be noted with approval that the Education Section of the Preparatory Commission of UNESCO has offered—in its memorandum headed "Analysis of Textbooks"—four concrete proposals designed to deal with the matter. This Conference endorses those proposals.<sup>1</sup> It urges teachers and teachers' associations in all countries to assist their respective "National Cooperating Bodies" to carry out the responsibilities that will be required of them in this connection and, when needed, to prompt those Bodies to initiate action.

This Conference further urges teachers and teachers' associations to go beyond the negative action provided for in the UNESCO proposals by taking constructive steps to have included in the textbooks used in the schools of their respective countries content which supports positively the ideals of international cooperation and world understanding.

This Conference rejects the idea of a single textbook, internationally prepared for use in all countries, as being impracticable except perhaps for a textbook on the United Nations and related international organizations. Also, in the opinion of this Conference, it might be feasible and desirable to have some internationally prepared handbooks for teachers on topics of international scope.

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<sup>1</sup> "First, analysis and revision of school textbooks . . . extended to all subject matters. . . . Secondly, National Cooperating Bodies should be entrusted with the task of "spotting" and reporting bad or good practices, through a single yet stringent procedure. . . . Thirdly, the Education Section will endeavor to secure the active cooperation of governments or of representative educational agencies and have them assume their full share of responsibility by adopting protective as well as constructive measures. Lastly, UNESCO should act as the coordinating center for all undertakings and provide general or technical information to all concerned."

### 8. *On an International Study of Teaching Practices*

Teachers in all countries can improve their programs of education for international understanding if they know more fully about the corresponding programs and practices which prevail in lands other than their own.

This Conference, accordingly, commends the proposal for an international survey of the teaching of international understanding set forth in the memorandum entitled, "Promotion of International Understanding through the Schools," prepared by the Secretariat of the Preparatory Commission of UNESCO.<sup>2</sup> This Conference, further, calls on teachers and teachers' associations in all countries to support and cooperate with the committee proposed in that memorandum.

### 9. *On the Extension of Literacy*

Campaigns to combat illiteracy and to promote mass education everywhere on the face of the globe merit the active support of teachers for many reasons—one of the more important being the contribution which the extension of literacy can make to the increase of international understanding. Democratically controlled relations among nations, like

<sup>2</sup> "UNESCO should encourage the member states to implement their obligations under the Charter by promoting international understanding through the schools. Therefore, a small committee of representative educators should be appointed to survey the content and methods of the national school systems of education and to find out, on the basis of experience, which methods of education are the best to promote international understanding through the primary and secondary schools. . . . By facilitating the exchange of ideas in this field, UNESCO can hasten the spreading of the knowledge of the most efficient methods and point out the inadequacy of some of the methods used. Recognizing the importance of preparing the children of the world for their responsibilities in an international community, the Education Section considers this project to be of high priority."

the practice of democracy within a nation, can be effective only to the extent that citizens are capable of keeping themselves constantly informed on world affairs, and of contributing their views to the formation of public opinion. For these purposes the citizen's ability to read and write is a minimum requirement.

In the light of these considerations, the efforts of national and international agencies to combat illiteracy and promote mass education are commended by this Conference, which further calls upon the World Organization of the Teaching Profession to cooperate in such efforts.

### 10. *On the Relations Among Students of Different Countries*

The value of direct experience as a means of learning is universally recognized by educators. Although opportunities for children and young people to have experience in international relations are, by the facts of geography, more limited than are corresponding opportunities in other areas of learning, there are, nevertheless, many ways by which the values of learning by experience can be utilized in the teaching of international understanding.

Among the means which this Conference recommends for consideration of teachers in all countries are the following:

- (a) Correspondence among students in different countries.
- (b) Exchange of student-prepared exhibits including such items as letters, cards, stamps, newspaper clippings, art exhibits, and school newspapers and magazines.
- (c) Encouragement of students in one country to send gifts and provide other practical help for students in other countries.

- (d) Provision for schools and student groups in one country to give hospitality to students from other countries during vacations.
- (e) Expansion of present practices for student exchange, which should include college students, secondary-school students, and possibly elementary-school students, without neglecting adult education.
- (f) Vacation trips for children and young people to foreign countries, to be carried out under school auspices.
- (g) Establishment of youth camps, which might eventually become international parks, along the common boundaries of neighboring countries.
- (h) Facilitation of visits to youth hostels by students from foreign countries.

#### 11. *On Teacher Travel and Exchange*

The individual teacher must be internationally informed and world-minded if he is to be an effective agent for the promotion of international understanding in the classroom. To this end, teachers, as well as students, need to have more firsthand contacts with the peoples of foreign lands.

To further the international education of teachers, this Conference recommends:

- (a) That ample facilities for systematic international exchange of teachers be provided.
- (b) That teachers' associations play a large part in the administration of programs of teacher exchange, that governments provide such associations with funds for helping to carry out such programs, and that a committee of the World Organization of the Teaching Profession be established to cooperate with UNESCO in this field.
- (c) That travel bureaus of teachers' associations in different countries be revived and expanded.
- (d) That governments be requested to

improve facilities for international travel by revision of passport and visa regulations and sailing permits and by aiding in reduction of rates for educational travel.

#### 12. *On the Educational Uses of Modern Media of Mass Communication*

The press, the radio, the cinema are instruments not only of amusement and recreation but also of education. The influence of the press is limited only by the extent of literacy; the radio leaps across national boundaries to inform and inspire all who have ears to hear; the cinema teaches its lessons, wholesome or detrimental, with a power and persuasiveness beyond those of the most skillful teachers and the most highly organized educational systems. These, and other modern media of mass communication, have in the past and may in the future work either with teachers or against them in their efforts to develop international understanding.

This Conference, therefore, recommends:

- (a) That teachers and teachers' organizations endeavor to enlist the public press, the radio, and the instruments of visual education as potent allies for the attainment of their purposes.
- (b) That the press, radio, film, recording, and television be used within the school to dramatize and invigorate the processes of teaching and learning about the modern world and that schools be furnished with the equipment needed for this purpose.
- (c) That national and international radio and television broadcasts to schools be arranged and that such programs be used to celebrate events of international significance, to render tributes to great men and women of all nations, and to create a sense of human brotherhood.
- (d) That films and recordings which are

truly representative of the life and culture of the various nations be produced, and that these films and recordings, with suitable adaptations in language or otherwise, be freely exchanged among schools of all nations.

13. *On the Work of a Central Office of Documentation and Exchange of Materials*

Various agencies are now in existence for the collection and exchange of publications among nations, and additional work of this type is expected to be undertaken by UNESCO. The activities of such agencies are already contributing significantly to international understanding and they could contribute even more if the proper authorities in charge of them would give consideration to the following recommendations of this Conference:

- (a) A central office should be set up with liaison offices in every country to collect and distribute internationally such materials as reference books, treatises, textbooks and other publications designed to be read by children and young people, and professional aids for teachers on curriculum problems and instructional methods.
- (b) Teachers should play an important part in the selection of all kinds of material. While the main task of distribution should be entrusted to the proposed central office and the liaison offices, teachers' organizations might also serve as media of exchange.

14. *On Research, Experimentation, and Evaluation*

Modern educational practice is ideally based on research, experimentation, and evaluation. The need for increasing international understanding through education requires new areas of specializa-

tion and the training of new experts, with continual scientific appraisal of prevailing practices including evaluation of methods and materials.

This Conference, therefore, recommends:

- (a) That research be undertaken into the bases of international understanding and, conversely, into factors detrimental to such understanding—such study to include attention to the historical, psychological, and sociological factors which have contributed to the success of outstanding "world citizens" of the past and present.
- (b) That systematic efforts be made to evaluate the effectiveness of such techniques as international exchange of students and teachers, international correspondence, and use of mass media of communication.
- (c) That the influence of students' home backgrounds on their international attitudes be carefully studied.
- (d) That the best principles and practices for the guidance of foreign students be experimentally determined.
- (e) That advanced international studies be emphasized in universities with special attention to investigations into methods of teaching international understanding.
- (f) That studies should be made as to ways and means of strengthening the international roles of universities and as to the feasibility and desirability of establishing an international university.
- (g) That summer courses and institutes be established for training teachers to teach international understanding.

### III.

This Conference recommends that an international committee on the teaching of international understanding be established within the World Organization of the Teaching Profession, and that un-

til such a committee is formally established the delegates to this Conference urge the associations which they represent to take appropriate informal action to aid international exchange of ideas and information in respect to the teaching of international understanding.

#### IV.

Finally, this Conference urges that

each one of its members aid in giving publicity to the foregoing recommendations on the teaching of international understanding. This Conference especially urges that delegates publicize the recommendations among the teachers of their respective organizations and that they take appropriate steps to encourage adoption of the recommendations by schools of their countries.

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## *No Age Barriers To World Understanding*

MARIE ANNA MEHL

*Learning to know your neighbor should not be postponed until adulthood. This learning becomes part of the child's life when he first begins to visit the folks next door. Education can do a great deal in fostering understanding and providing the experiences whereby the student can also learn about the customs, traditions, and languages of his neighbors over the sea as well as those next door. Marie Anna Mehl, elementary supervisor, Boulder City Schools, Colorado, has described an elementary social-studies program in the Boulder schools which has reorganized its courses in order to cultivate increased awareness in today's youth of our shrinking world boundaries.*

TODAY, WE CAN HEAR the voices of people thousands of miles from us telling us what they need, how they feel, and what is happening at the present time. We are not only close to each other as the result of our ability to communicate, but we live in physical proximity by reason of developments in transportation. By means of the airplane we can move within several hours to any person, to any place, or to any meeting. Thousands of hundreds who are less than twenty-four hours from us by air are depending upon us for food. We had not recovered from the shock of the news of the power of the atomic bomb when we read of the "ATOMIC POISON GAS, CAPABLE OF GREAT LETHAL QUALITIES", and the power of a possible cosmic

bomb. Today, as teachers, we find ourselves alternately amazed and frustrated by the speed at which things are happening. We cast about for bearings and know that, at the very least, learning experiences and instructional materials for children *must* take cognizance of this new and amazingly real and interdependent world.

### "Grass Roots" of World Understanding

We know that we are truly living in a world community and in order to be good neighbors in this world community, we must understand the peoples of the world. The "grass roots" of this understanding of a world neighborhood are in the elementary grades, beginning in the kindergarten and moving up

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