

UNESCO

SS/Memo/54/4823
6 January 1954

To : Dr. Luther Evans, Director-General
From: Otto Klineberg ^{OK}
(Department of Social Sciences)

F 10 MAY 1954
LWZ

Subject: Treatment of South Africa
in Unesco's publications
on race .

In view of the questions you raised regarding the manner in which the South African situation is presented in the series of pamphlets on "The Race Question in Modern Science", I have tried to gather together some of the facts which may be of interest to you.

The most direct criticism which Unesco has received appears to relate to the pamphlet entitled "Race and Society", written by Dr. Kenneth L. Little, Professor of Social Anthropology at the University of Edinburgh. The pamphlet analyzes four cases of race relations: South Africa, Brazil, Hawaii and Britain. On April 23, 1953, Mr. Quintin Whyte, Director of the South African Institute of Race Relations, addressed a letter to the Director-General of Unesco, drawing his attention to what were termed "certain inadequacies in the section dealing with South Africa". The actual errors appeared at the time to Dr. Métraux, and also to me on reading the correspondence, not very serious, but, of course, I would admit that it is always regrettable if factual errors enter into any of our publications. Mr. Whyte, who, at the same time, spoke with great warmth of Unesco, pointed out - correctly, in my opinion - that "the task of those working for greater harmony in South Africa is not made any easier by inaccurate presentation, made with all the authority and backing of Unesco". Mr. Métraux, answering Mr. Whyte's letter, on April 29th, pointed out very distinctly that this was not due to any wilful distortion on Unesco's part. He indicated that an expert had been chosen to write this pamphlet and that the task had been given to "a reputable scientist, with considerable experience in the field of race relations", and that he himself, Métraux, had no idea that "some of Dr. Little's facts were inaccurate". The letter from Mr. Whyte was sent to Dr. Little and he answered in considerable detail, in a letter to Dr. Métraux, on May 25, copy of which was forwarded to Mr. Whyte. In Dr. Little's letter, he admits the justice of some of Mr. Whyte's criticisms and expresses his "very sincere regret for the errors to which Mr. Whyte has very rightly called attention". At the same time, he prepared a number of corrections which will be taken into account in any future edition of "Race and Society". It so happens, however, that, in the meantime, only a fairly small proportion of the first edition has been sold and that there is therefore no immediate prospect of a new edition.

Another pamphlet in the series, that entitled "The Roots of Prejudice", by Professor Arnold M. Rose, of the University of Minnesota, has been banned by the Government of South Africa and listed among publications which are "objectionable, indecent or obscene". The Legal Adviser of Unesco sent a memorandum to the

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Director-General, on September 29, 1952 (ODG/SJ/7873), suggesting that Unesco should protest officially against the measure taken by the Government of South Africa with regard to a Unesco publication. I do not know whether anything was ever done in this connection. The pamphlet in question does not deal specifically with South Africa, but makes a few references to such things as the stereotypes about Negroes in South Africa and the United States, stating that "the strongest prejudice and the largest number of false beliefs about Negroes are to be found among the whites of South Africa" and describing South Africa as a country "where prejudice is entrenched". These are the only references to South Africa which I could find in the publication.

It is inevitable, I believe, that South Africa would be unhappy about our publications in the field of race and I feel, personally, that we must pay that price for what I regard as an important Unesco activity. It is of course not desirable that any factual error concerning a Member State should enter into any of our publications and I certainly agree that, whenever possible, such facts must be checked before publication. This, for example, was done recently in connection with a chapter on Brazil which is being included in a forthcoming volume on "The Cultural Contribution of Immigrants". Our Department had some doubts about a few facts in that article and had them checked by a younger associate of Carneiro's in the Brazilian Delegation. It is not always possible to check every single fact and we do have to rely on a wise choice of experts and contributors, but the Little episode does indicate that we must exercise the greatest possible care in this connection.

Please let me know if there is any further information which you would like to have.

UNESCO

ODG

Y07.211 (68.01)

ODG/GNC/Memo 18501

10 February, 1954.

D.G.

To : M. René Maheu,
Office of the Director-General.

From : Lorna McPhee,
Governments and National Commissions Division, ODG.

Subject : Union of South Africa - Membership of Unesco

I should be glad if you would kindly inform the Director-General that this afternoon I received a telephone call from Mr. D. B. Sole, First Secretary of the South African Embassy, on the above subject.

He informed me that the Ambassador had received a cable from his Government stating that it had been decided that the Union of South Africa should not withdraw from Unesco, at least for the present. He added that the Ambassador was personally very happy to receive this news; it was a source of satisfaction to him that his representations despatched after his interview with the Director-General on 29 December had borne fruit.

Mr. Sole further stated that His Excellency would be glad to return the Director-General's call as soon as possible after his return from his mission abroad, and asked that I should contact him to arrange this interview as soon as is convenient to the Director-General.

*Re sd.
Not am.
Mr*

Lorna McPhee

Lorna McPhee

cc. Mlle. Soler, ODG.

LMCP/nw

*Lorna McPhee
A-V. Council 15/2
to 12h
OK*

*Telephoned Sole 12.30 10/2,
Ambassador pleased to accept
McPhee*

10/211 (6801)

MM/jbb
17.vi.55

cc. Mr. S.V. Arnaldo, NYO
Miss L. Mathie, ODG

Handwritten scribble or signature.

Handwritten signature.

ODG/532.469

June 1955

Dear Mr. Hammarskjöld,

I mentioned to you during the AGC meetings in Geneva the most regrettable decision of the Government of the Union of South Africa to withdraw from Unesco (under a procedure adopted by the General Conference last year, this decision, unless reversed, automatically takes effect at the close of 1956).

It may well be that the Executive Board when it meets again next November, or the General Conference a year later, will wish to address an appeal to the Government of South Africa to consider the matter anew. But the longer time passes, the more a decision of this nature is likely to crystallise, all the more since the Minister announced that the funds corresponding to the Union's contribution to this Organization would be diverted to other purposes.

It has occurred to me that on the occasion of the San Francisco celebrations, when the universality of the United Nations and of the specialised agencies will be very much in the minds of the participants, you might be willing to approach the Minister of External Affairs on this matter. I attach a note recently prepared here which shows how we have dealt with questions of racial discrimination and segregation.

This shows very clearly that we have stood very firmly on the stipulations of our own Constitution (including Article I,3 which debar us from intervening in domestic matters), the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, Economic resolution 116(VI)(B), and the relevant resolutions of our own General Conference. In the considerable volume of studies and publications we have produced on these subjects, there have, of course, been shortcomings and some errors of judgment or of fact. But all Member States have ample opportunity to obtain satisfaction for these occasional lapses, and it remains a fact that this whole programme has had the whole-hearted approval of the General Conference at every succeeding session.

I should greatly value your support in this matter if you feel able to give it to me.

Yours sincerely,

Mr. Dag Hammarskjöld
Secretary-General
United Nations
New York 17, New York

Luther H. Evans
Director-General

532.469

D R A F T
CMB/jbb

14 June 1955

RM/16/v

Dear Mr. Hammarskjöld,

I mentioned to you during the ACC meetings in Geneva the most regrettable decision of the Government of the Union of South Africa to withdraw from Unesco (under a procedure adopted by the General Conference last year, this decision, unless reversed, automatically takes effect at the close of 1956). ~~I have myself, of course, done no more than to obtain official confirmation of the Government's decision and the text of the statement made by the Minister for External Affairs, Mr. Louw, in the House of Assembly on 5 April last, rendering the decision public.~~

It may well be that the Executive Board when it meets again next November, or the General Conference a year later, will wish to address an appeal to the Government of South Africa to consider the matter anew. But the longer time passes, the more a decision of this nature is likely to crystalize, all the more since the Minister announced that the funds corresponding to the Union's contribution to this Organization would be diverted to other purposes.

It has occurred to me that on the occasion of the San Francisco celebrations, when the universality of the United Nations and of the Specialized Agencies will be very much in the minds of the participants, you might be willing to approach the Minister of External Affairs on this matter. I attach a short note setting out the facts as we see them here; but I think the major point that might be made is that withdrawal cannot enhance the stature of the country concerned, when the Organization offers its members every opportunity to assert their position on any given issue and, if necessary, to submit it to such criticism as it may be thought to deserve.

I should greatly value your support in this matter if you feel able to give it to me.

Yours sincerely,

L.H.E.

MINUTE SHEET - NOTE DE TRANSMISSION

Letter

No. _____

DATE	TO - A (NAME & DEPT.)	COMMENTS - OBSERVATIONS	FROM - DE (NOM ET DEPT.)
15 June 1955	TO : Mr. Claude Berkeley FROM : Lis Hasager	M. Mahen.	
<p>With reference to our conversation yesterday afternoon, I am sending you herewith a draft statement on Unesco, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the field of trade relations.</p>			
<p style="text-align: right;"><i>Lis Hasager</i> _____ Lis Hasager.</p>			
<p><i>Projet d'annonce à la lettre à Kam-mokjold. Devenir attaché à l'affaire.</i></p>			
<p style="text-align: right;"><i>lm B</i> _____ 15/vi</p>			

The principles of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights are the very mainspring of the action to which Unesco is committed.

Ever since the adoption of the Universal Declaration on 10 December 1948, Unesco has, therefore, sought to make the Declaration more widely known and implemented. It has endeavoured to promote human rights in legislation and to ensure the effective enjoyment in existing social conditions, of rights affecting Unesco's own fields of competence ; the right to education, the right to participate in cultural life, the right to information, the right to share in scientific advancements and its benefits, the right to the protection of the moral and material interests resulting from scientific, literary or artistic production.

In Unesco's efforts to contribute to peace through education, science and culture scrupulous attention has been given to Article I, paragraph 3 of its Constitution, in which it is laid down that "With a view to preserving the independence, integrity and fruitful diversity of the cultures and educational systems of the States Members of this Organisation, the Organisation is prohibited from intervening in matters which are essentially within their domestic jurisdiction".

In the field of race relations Unesco's policy is based on : a) Article I, paragraph I, of its Constitution, stating that "The purpose of the Organization is to contribute to 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 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."

b) Article I, paragraph 2 (b) stating that "To realise this purpose the Organisation will give fresh impulse to popular education and to the spread of culture ; by collaborating with Members at their request, in the development of educational activities ; by instituting collaboration among the nations to advance the ideal of equality of educational opportunity without regard to race, sex or any distinctions, economic or social ;

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(page 3)

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c) Resolution 116 (VI) B, iii, adopted by the United Nations Economic and Social Council at its Sixth Session, asking Unesco "to consider the desirability of initiating and recommending the general adoption of a programme of disseminating scientific facts designed to remove what is generally known as racial prejudice" ;

3
d) The following resolutions adopted by the General Conference of Unesco in response to the request of the ~~United Nations~~ Economic and Social Council referred to above under c)]:

"The Director-General is instructed to study and collect scientific materials concerning questions of race ; to give wide diffusion to the scientific information collected ; to prepare an educational campaign based on this information". (4C/Resolution 4.2)

"Member States are invited to develop teaching in the Social Sciences, to disseminate among the public the findings of these sciences, and to promote in particular teaching and dissemination of data likely to overcome racial prejudices" (5C/Resolution 3.21)

7
"The Director-General is authorized to organize in Brazil a pilot investigation of contacts between races or ethnic groups, with the aim of determining the economic, political, cultural and psychological factors, whether favourable or unfavourable to harmonious relations between races or ethnic groups" (5C/Resolution 3.22)

"Member States are invited :

to ensure, through teaching and information generally, the dissemination of scientific knowledge relating to collective conditions and attitudes, likely to assist in reducing social tensions" (6C/Resolution 3.21)

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"The Director-General is authorized : to undertake, in collaboration with Member States concerned, a critical inventory of the methods and techniques employed for facilitating the social integration of groups which do not participate fully in the life of the national community by reason of their ethnical or cultural characteristics or their recent arrival in the country". (6C/Resolution 3.22).

"Member States are invited to promote studies relating to the application of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, to publicize the results of these studies and, in particular, by the dissemination of information and by teaching, to combat racial prejudice and discrimination" (7C/Resolution 3.261)

"The Director-General is authorized : to continue to assemble and disseminate available knowledge likely to combat racial prejudice and to gather scientific information about the progress achieved, through education, by members of ethnic groups in the process of integration into modern society". (7C/Resolution 3.2621)

"The General Conference, bearing in mind that discrimination, as enumerated in Article 2 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, on the basis of race, colour, sex, language, religion, political or other opinion, national or social origin, property, birth or other status, is one of the greatest dangers to peace and human dignity ;

Noting that Unesco has already taken some commendable steps in producing excellent publications on the subject of race and race relations ;

Regretting that discrimination in very ugly forms continues to vitiate relations between human beings in certain areas of the world ;

Calls upon all Member States and National Commissions for Unesco to eradicate in all possible ways the evil of discrimination, and

Authorizes the Director-General, in carrying out the programme of Unesco, to give special attention to measures designed to eliminate all such discrimination and, more particularly, in 1955, to measures calculated to eradicate race prejudices". (8C/Resolution IV, 1.3.423)

The research programme undertaken by Unesco in the field of race relations has thus been aimed at analysing the factors which, in many cases have led to the gradual integration of minorities or mutual tolerance and understanding between different ethnic groups. It has concerned itself with the positive aspects of the question and stressed progress achieved rather than actual conflicts.

Every care has been taken to state facts. When dealing with such a highly controversial problem as that of race differences it is obvious, however, that whatever precautions are taken mistakes can occur, but they are purely accidental and if they are made, steps are taken to avoid any misunderstanding being caused as a result thereof.

X07. 21 (68.01) 01

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UNITED NATIONS EDUCATIONAL, SCIENTIFIC AND CULTURAL ORGANIZATION
ORGANISATION DES NATIONS UNIES POUR L'ÉDUCATION, LA SCIENCE ET LA CULTURE

In your reply, please refer to :
En répondant, veuillez rappeler :
N°

CL/1174

15 FEB 1957

Subject: Membership of the Organization

Sir,

I have the honour to inform you that in accordance with the terms of Article II, paragraph 6 of the Constitution of Unesco, as amended by the General Conference at its eighth session, the withdrawal of the Union of South Africa from the Organization, of which I received formal notice on 5 April 1955, took effect on 31 December 1956.

I have the honour to be,

Sir,

Your obedient Servant,

Luther H. Evans,
Director-General

(G.NC)