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LEAGUE OF NATIONS

INTELLECTUAL CO-OPERATION ORGANISATION

**MODERN MEANS OF SPREADING
INFORMATION UTILISED IN
THE CAUSE OF PEACE**

**Report by M. de Reynold,
on behalf of the International Committee on Intellectual Co-operation**

**ACTION TAKEN IN PURSUANCE OF THE RESOLUTION ADOPTED
BY THE ASSEMBLY ON OCTOBER 2ND, 1937**

At its eighteenth session (September-October 1937), the Assembly was invited by the International Committee on Intellectual Co-operation to consider suggestions that had been put forward by the Advisory Committee on the Teaching of the Principles and Facts of International Co-operation concerning the use of modern means of disseminating information to promote a better mutual understanding among the nations of their respective institutions and cultures.¹

The Assembly considered that some of these suggestions were deserving of thorough study and, with that object, adopted a programme of studies and consultations relating to the use of the cinematograph and to the use of broadcasting.²

A. CINEMATOGRAPH

The Assembly entrusted to the International Institute of Intellectual Co-operation and the International Educational Cinematographic Institute the execution of a programme of consultations and enquiries relating more particularly to the work of national organisations and the training of the taste of the public and of young people in regard to the cinematograph.

As the work of the International Educational Cinematographic Institute came to an end at the beginning of 1938, it was impossible to carry out the programme contemplated by the Assembly. Nevertheless, the International Institute of Intellectual Co-operation undertook some of the studies suggested by the Assembly, and the International Committee has been able to examine the results of these first efforts. After hearing the statement concerning the work undertaken which was made by the Director of the Institute, the Committee on Intellectual Co-operation adopted the following resolution :

“ The International Committee on Intellectual Co-operation, while noting the delay due to circumstances in carrying out the programme approved by the League Assembly in 1937, has considered what steps should be taken in order not to leave the main items of the programme in abeyance and, after examining the results of the work now proceeding, recommends the adoption of the following programme :

(1) *International Liaison.* — The Committee attaches the utmost importance to the efforts made to resume direct contact with existing film institutions, and with corporative organisations in the different countries, and institutions, groups or committees interested on various grounds in the intellectual and artistic progress of the cinema. It considers that the liaison and documentary work undertaken to this end by the International Institute of Intellectual Co-operation should be actively pursued and accompanied by continuous efforts to promote the establishment of new institutions in countries where they do not as yet exist. The principal recommendations in the

¹ See document C.327.M.220.1937.XII, Part II.

² See document A.68.1937.XII.



report of the Sixth Committee of the Assembly¹ to the effect that, in this sphere also, efforts should be made to “support national action in the different countries, and, if necessary, to co-ordinate these several activities, with the idea, not of exercising supervision, but rather of increasing their efficacy and suggesting fresh possibilities”, will be borne in mind.

“(2) *List of Educational Films.* — The Committee considers that the documentary work which is being carried out in regard to educational films meets a real need expressed by a large number of teachers’ organisations. It is therefore of the utmost importance that the national centres of educational information should continue to be associated with this work, with a view to the formation in the near future of an *international catalogue of educational films*, in accordance with the desire frequently expressed by users. The Committee is of opinion, however, that a publication of this kind calls for judicious and sound preparation, with careful selection on the responsibility of the competent national organisations concerned.

“(3) *List of Scientific Films and Film Archives.* — The Committee considers that, with the collaboration of the National Committees on Intellectual Co-operation, the Educational Information Centres, the scientific unions and certain organisations making a special study of scientific cinematography, enquiries in regard to scientific films should be undertaken without delay, starting with those made for some particular purpose, which are usually known only to the small circle by which they have been used (universities, laboratories, research institutes), with a view to the compilation of a list of such films.

“In a similar connection, attention should be paid to the problem of film libraries or, more accurately speaking, *film archives* dealing with any subject of scientific, documentary or historical interest, including cinematography itself from the point of view of its technical, artistic and intellectual development. The Committee considers that the International Institute of Intellectual Co-operation should endeavour to promote :

“(a) The multiplication of film archives in the different countries, and the extension to these archives of the advantages of the “Convention to facilitate the International Circulation of Films of an Educational Character ;

“(b) The carrying out of a census of the film archives existing in the different countries (official archives and private archives, general and specialised) ;

“(c) The publishing of lists of the films preserved in these archives.

“(4) Lastly, the Committee is gratified to note the progress in the documentary work that is being carried out by the International Institute of Intellectual Co-operation concerning the *intellectual rôle of the recreational cinema* and the *improvement of public taste in regard to the cinema*. It considers that the resultant reports might usefully serve as a basis for the discussions of a *meeting of representatives of intellectual circles, teachers and the various branches of the cinematograph industry*. It is therefore of opinion that, while actively pursuing and extending its documentary work, the International Institute of Intellectual Co-operation should forthwith take steps with a view to convening such a meeting, if possible in the autumn of 1939.”

B. BROADCASTING

In regard to broadcasting, the Assembly requested the International Committee on Intellectual Co-operation to set up an *ad hoc* Committee of Experts. It was to be the duty of this Committee to establish the bases of a programme of technical collaboration between the Intellectual Co-operation Organisation, the Information Section in respect of documentary material on the work of the League of Nations and the main institutions connected with it, and the national broadcasting organisations.

The Executive Committee secured the participation in the work of the Committee of Experts of representatives of national and international broadcasting organisations and intellectual workers who had devoted special attention to the educative and cultural aspects of broadcasting.

The composition of the Committee and the proposals it framed will be found in the annexed report.

The International Committee, having examined these proposals, is of opinion that they embody a programme of work which is in keeping with the Assembly’s intentions and will permit of the achievement of the object aimed at by the latter.

The International Committee accordingly submits to the Council the following resolution :

“The International Committee on Intellectual Co-operation,

“Having taken note of the proposals drawn up by the Committee of Experts, which it was instructed by the Assembly of the League of Nations to appoint :

“Approves these proposals and transmits them to the Council and Assembly of the League of Nations ;

¹ See document A.68.1937.XII.

“ Requests the Council to authorise the transmission to National Committees on Intellectual Co-operation of such of these proposals as provide for action by those Committees ;

“ In regard to the views expressed by the experts on special facilities for broadcasting reporters and Customs exemption of material for the exchange of sound records, the Committee requests the Council to refer the views expressed for study to the Communications and Transit Organisation and to the Economic and Financial Organisation of the League of Nations ;

“ Authorises the International Institute of Intellectual Co-operation to continue its enquiry into documentary material on international relations, science, letters and art, and to convoke small committees of experts in the course of the year to consider the results of its studies and to draw conclusions therefrom.”

ANNEX

COMMITTEE OF EXPERTS APPOINTED TO DRAW UP SUGGESTIONS ON THE USE OF BROADCASTING IN THE CAUSE OF PEACE

REPORT ON THE COMMITTEE'S WORK BY M. CARLOS ALBERTO PARDO

I. The Committee of Experts appointed to draw up for the International Committee on Intellectual Co-operation suggestions on the use of broadcasting in the cause of peace met at the Secretariat of the League of Nations, Geneva, on June 17th and 18th, 1938. It consisted of the following :

- (1) Mr. R. A. BURROWS, Secretary-General of the International Broadcasting Union, Geneva ;
- (2) M. Julien CAIN, Administrator-General of the National Library, Paris ;
- (3) Dr. Osorio DOUTRA, Consul of the United States of Brazil, Le Havre ;
- (4) Mme. L. C. DREYFUS-BARNEY, Liaison Officer of the International Council of Women with the Intellectual Co-operation Organisation ; Permanent Member of the Liaison Committee of the Major International Associations ;
- (5) M. H. FRISCH, Member of the Danish Folketing ;
- (6) M. André DE HLATKY, Programmes Director of the Hungarian Broadcasting Organisation, Budapest ;
- (7) Mr. Max JORDAN, Director of the European Office, Basle, of the National Broadcasting Company (United States of America) ;
- (8) General KALAFATOVITCH, Director-General of the Radio A.D., Belgrade ;
- (9) M. J. KUYPERS, Vice-President of the Board of Management of the Belgian National Broadcasting Institute ;
- (10) Dr. Paul LANG, Professor at the Cantonal School, Zurich ; President of the Broadcasting Commission of the Society of Swiss authors ;
- (11) Mr. R. D. MARRIOTT, Foreign Liaison Officer, British Broadcasting Corporation, London ;
- (12) Mr. Edward MURROW, European Director, Columbia Broadcasting Company, London ;
- (13) M. Carlos Alberto PARDO, Secretary-General of the Argentine Delegation accredited to the League of Nations, Geneva ;
- (14) Dr. C. SCHOUTE, Former Deputy-Director of the Netherlands Meteorological Institute ;
- (15) Dr. L. SOUREK, President of the Managing Board of the *Radio Journal*, Prague ;
- (16) Dr. John B. WHITTON, Director of the Geneva Research Centre ;
- (17) M. Sven WILSON, Foreign Director of the “ Radiotjänst ”, Stockholm ;
- (18) Sir Alfred ZIMMERN, Professor of International Relations in the University of Oxford ;

Observer : Mr. Tracy B. KITREDGE, of the Rockefeller Foundation.

The Committee elected M. Julien CAIN, representative of the International Committee on Intellectual Co-operation, as its Chairman, and M. Carlos Alberto PARDO as its Rapporteur to the International Committee on Intellectual Co-operation.

II. Before describing the results of the Committee's proceedings, it may be appropriate briefly to recall the decisions of the Assembly of the League of Nations of which it is the outcome.

At its eighteenth ordinary session (September 1937), the Assembly examined the proposals for the use of modern means of disseminating information in the cause of peace which were

prepared by the Advisory Committee for the teaching of the principles and facts of international co-operation and were transmitted to it by the International Committee on Intellectual Co-operation.

The Assembly considered that these suggestions were in keeping with the aim of the resolution adopted at the seventeenth session of the Assembly, providing for the study by the Intellectual Co-operation Organisation of the problem of the use of technical means of disseminating knowledge with a view to promoting the exchange between the nations of information regarding their respective institutions and culture. The Assembly was of opinion that, to enable the Intellectual Co-operation Organisation to give real practical effect to these suggestions, it would be necessary to have them examined in detail. For that purpose, it provided for the summoning of a Committee of Experts to advise on ways and means of establishing technical co-operation between the Intellectual Co-operation Organisation and national broadcasting organisations. On the basis of the advice thus tendered, the International Committee on Intellectual Co-operation might be able to draw up, for the nineteenth session of the Assembly, a programme of work for the future.

III. The Committee's agenda, which was drawn up by the Executive Committee of the International Committee on Intellectual Co-operation, was in accordance with the guiding principles laid down at the eighteenth session of the Assembly, as set out in document A.68.1937.XII. It was as follows :

1. International Convention concerning the use of broadcasting in the cause of peace.
2. Information and documentary material on the work of the League, and the main institutions connected with it, for the use of programme directors in broadcasting stations.
3. Information on contemporary international problems, and on the present position of science, letters and art.
4. Compilation by the Intellectual Co-operation Organisation, with the assistance of the national Committees on Intellectual Co-operation, of lists of persons in the various countries qualified to give radio talks, in the languages and for the information of other countries, on political, economic, social and cultural questions.
5. Establishment of gramophone-record repositories to permit of the organisation of an international service for the loan and exchange of records of a documentary and educational character (folk-music). Exchange methods.
6. Possibility of framing either bilateral agreements or an international convention to provide for the granting of special facilities to enable accredited broadcasting correspondents and reporters to enter foreign countries for professional purposes.

The Committee was largely guided by the numerous replies received by the International Institute of Intellectual Co-operation to the enquiries addressed by it to the National Committees on Intellectual Co-operation and individual experts (Institute's document B.63.1938).

It also took into account its members' replies to the Secretariat's questionnaire (document C.I.C.I./Com.Ex./95).

The Committee considered these opinions with great care, and found them a useful basis for discussion.

Special mention must be made of the valuable contribution by the Secretary-General of the International Broadcasting Union, both to the preparatory work and to the Committee's proceedings. The International Union, which embodies the majority of the national broadcasting corporations, has already acquired extensive experience of these matters in the course of its own efforts to promote mutual understanding between the nations by means of broadcasting.

The opinion of the Committee of Experts on the several points on its agenda is set out in the following paragraphs :

1. *International Convention concerning the Use of Broadcasting in the cause of Peace.*

The Committee of Experts considers that the most effective action for securing new accessions or ratifications is that of the official bodies of the League of Nations in respect of the Governments themselves.

It wishes, however, to lay stress on the importance of action by the Press, the major international associations jointly represented on the Joint Committee, and the National Committees on Intellectual Co-operation, for the purpose of interesting large sections of public opinion in the various countries in the Convention, with a view to its ratification by Governments or their accession to it.

In countries where the Convention is in force, broadcasting stations could, when suitable opportunities offered, indicate to the public the outstanding facts connected with its application.

In this connection, the Committee wishes to draw attention to the South-American Regional Agreement on Broadcasting — signed at Buenos Aires in 1935, and revised at Rio de Janeiro in 1937 — which is based on the principles embodied in the Convention.

2. *Information on the Work of the League and the Main International Institutions connected with it.*

The Committee of experts, after hearing a statement on the above subject by the Director of the Information Section of the League of Nations Secretariat, held a discussion, in the

course of which representatives of national broadcasting organisations made interesting suggestions as to how the information service might be developed. The experts were glad to learn that the Assembly of the League of Nations has included in the budget of the Information Section a credit for a broadcasting specialist: such a step is calculated to promote the spread of information on the work of the League.

In the light of the discussion, the Committee arrived at the following conclusion :

(a) The Information Section should get into direct touch with national broadcasting organisations in order to ascertain their requirements, while at the same time informing them of the regular assistance and the facilities with which it could itself provide them ;

(b) It would be useful to send to the major broadcasting organisations a periodical bulletin containing information on the work of the League.

The Committee also considered that it would be useful for the broadcasting organisations to receive regular information from the Paris Institute regarding the activities of the Intellectual Co-operation Organisation. Such information could be communicated to the National Committees on Intellectual Co-operation, which would be invited to obtain the collaboration of representatives of the broadcasting organisations in their respective countries.

(c) National broadcasting organisations should endeavour to arrange for short periodical broadcasts on the work of the League of Nations and the main institutions connected with the League ;

(d) The Information Section should place at the disposal of the national organisations gramophone records of talks and speeches, and a list of such records should be sent regularly to those organisations, together with information as to how the records could be obtained ;

(e) The Committee for Communications and Transit should study the facilities to be granted to broadcasting reporters wishing to use the broadcasting equipment of the League of Nations ;

(f) The Information Section should indicate in advance the day and hour of its broadcasts and also, as far as possible, the text of talks from Radio-Nations, so as to enable broadcasting authorities to take them into account when preparing their programmes and to enable listeners' groups to make their arrangements accordingly.

(g) Collaboration between the Information Section and the national broadcasting organisations of oversea countries should be continued and developed through the use of international relays.

3. *Information on Contemporary International Problems and on the present position of Science, Letters and Art.*

An exhaustive discussion took place on the problem of the documentary material which, in the matter of international relations, science, letters and art, could be prepared by the qualified representatives of these various branches and brought before the public by means of broadcasting.

A series of detailed suggestions were made, in addition to those already contained in the report prepared by the International Institute of Intellectual Co-operation on the first results of its current enquiry.¹ Further information was added on the experiments already made in various countries and the proposals to promote further attempts, particularly in the matter of science.

The practical difficulties of broadcasting were explained by the experts of the national broadcasting organisations and the Secretary-General of the International Broadcasting Union, who also stated what experiments and studies were being carried out in that field.

The Committee recommends that the International Institute of Intellectual Co-operation should take the following action :

(1) Ask the National Committees on Intellectual Co-operation to undertake to contribute in their respective countries to the documentary material periodically or occasionally issued by the broadcasting organisations on questions of art, science and letters ;

(2) Point out to the institutions specialising in the study of international relations how desirable it would be for them to endeavour to obtain for the broadcasting organisations of their respective countries, on request, information regarding problems of historical and of current interest ;

(3) Continue the enquiry it has undertaken¹ and utilise for this purpose the remarks and suggestions embodied in the Minutes of the Committee's discussion ;

(4) Give wide publicity to the results of the enquiry, communicate them in particular to the organisations concerned and obtain, if necessary, the latter's observations with a view to a subsequent programme.

¹ See the Institute's document B.63.1938.



4. *Compilation by the Intellectual Co-operation Organisation, with the Assistance of the National Committees on Intellectual Co-operation, of Lists of Persons in the Various Countries qualified to give Radio Talks, in the Languages and for the Information of Other Countries, on Economic, Social and Cultural Questions.*

The Committee hopes that the International Committee on Intellectual Co-operation will invite the National Committees to draw up, if they think it expedient to do so, in co-operation with the national broadcasting organisations, lists of persons qualified and able to give radio talks in foreign languages on economic, social and cultural problems.

Such lists might be either exchanged by the national broadcasting organisations direct or circulated through the International Broadcasting Union.

5. *Establishment of Gramophone Record Repositories to permit of the Organisation of an International Service for the Loan and Exchange of Records of a Documentary and Educational Character.*

(a) The Committee considers as of great importance, from the point of view of exchanges between the national broadcasting organisations, the collections of gramophone and other sound records which those organisations are forming for their own use, particularly collections consisting of records of a cultural and educational character (folklore, etc.).

It hopes that, if possible, the national organisations will exchange information on a more extensive scale regarding the catalogues or card-indexes of such collections.

(b) The Committee also noted the importance of general collections of records compiled by official or private initiative.

It hopes that the International Committee on Intellectual Co-operation will recommend the development of such collections, particularly with a view to international loans and exchanges, which may prove to be invaluable auxiliaries to broadcasting.

(c) The Committee is of opinion that the question of granting exemption from Customs duty on gramophone and other sound records exchanged by national broadcasting organisations and calculated to promote mutual understanding among the nations should be investigated by the competent technical bodies of the League of Nations.

6. *Possibility of framing either Bilateral Agreements or an International Convention to provide for the Granting of Special Facilities to enable Accredited Broadcasting Reporters to enter Foreign Countries for Professional Purposes.*

The Committee, having proceeded to an exchange of views on the considerations adduced on this subject in 1937 by the Advisory Committee for the teaching of the principles and facts of international co-operation :

Recognises how important it is that facilities should be granted to reporters in the exercise of their profession abroad, particularly when the object of their journeys is to promote mutual understanding among the nations ;

Recommends :

That in the granting of personal travelling facilities to such reporters (journeys, visas, etc.), the privileges of this kind granted to journalists should be taken as a basis ;

That as regards the professional material of such reporters (lorries, microphones, amplifiers, recording apparatus) a liberal regime as regards transport and Customs formalities should be established, preferably on a basis of reciprocity.

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Formation of Public Taste in Matters of Broadcasting.

The Committee's attention was drawn to the question of the formation of public taste in matters of broadcasting. The importance of broadcasting considered as a medium of teaching, and particularly that of special courses and associations of listeners, was given particular prominence. The education of listeners seems to be one of the most important factors in the development of the cultural rôle played by wireless with a view to the promotion of better mutual understanding among the nations.

This problem is brought to the notice of the International Committee on Intellectual Co-operation with a view to a study to be carried out in consultation with the major international associations, and with the assistance both of such national broadcasting organisations as may be prepared to co-operate and of the International Broadcasting Union.



