

The Saturday Review

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Ten Years of UNESCO

EDITOR'S NOTE: *This week's guest editorial is by James Marshall, lawyer and author, lecturer in public administration at NYU, and trustee of the Institute for International Education.*

RECENTLY in New Delhi there was held the Ninth General Conference of UNESCO. Ten years have passed since the First General Conference was held in Paris. It is appropriate today to see where we have gone in that period. I say "we" because since the beginning we have all been a part of UNESCO, all of us who have been interested in the fields of education, science, and culture. I say we, too, because the United States is one of the seventy-seven member nations of that body. UNESCO, therefore, more than any other agency of the United Nations, is our world.

The Ninth Session met in a time of high political tension. England, France, and Israel had invaded Egypt. The Soviet Union had put the weight of its might against the liberalization of the regime in Hungary. At the Executive Board meeting before the conference opened, Greece had already raised the political problem of British interference with education in Cyprus. In opening the conference itself Maulana Abul Kalam Azad, the Indian Minister of Education and chairman of the conference, too ill to read his own speech, presented a paper some fifty minutes in length castigating the invasion of Egypt as a new form of colonialism. He appealed to the passions of Asia and Africa by playing on this theme and roused the passions of the West by omitting any mention

of the Soviet imperialism in Hungary.

Prime Minister Nehru in addressing the conference righted the balance by condemning Russia as well as the invaders of Egypt. This was before Krishna Menon at the Council meeting of the United Nations had voted against United Nations intervention and supervision of a free Hungarian election. After that Nehru supported Menon and became for a time apologetic for the Russians. (I do not believe that this was due to any sympathy with Soviet action in Hungary, but because U.N. supervision of Hungarian elections might have induced someone to call India's bluff on the long-promised plebiscite in Kashmir.)

EGYPT of course bitterly denounced England and France but, interestingly, omitted mention of Israel. In asking for condemnation of aggression in the Middle East (called West Asia by the Asians) the Egyptian delegate appealed for the separation of the problem from that of Hungary. Other nations of the East followed a similar line, some also addressing themselves to the business of UNESCO. The United States position endorsed the program of UNESCO and the administration of the Director General (the first time this country had done so since the election of the former Librarian of Congress, Luther Evans, over the dead body of the State Department). The United States also tried to convince the other nations represented that the issue between the United States and the West on the one hand and the Communists on the other was

not an ideological conflict between capitalism and Communism but that the issue was between freedom and the denial of freedom.

The representatives of the Soviet Union did some needling of the Western nations but on the whole they were moderate. England, France, and the non-Asiatic members of the British Commonwealth were also restrained. It was as though they and the Russians felt uncertain of their positions before the bar of world intellectual opinion. While none ate crow, they tended to eat humble pie.

The main business of the conference involved the ongoing program and approval of three major projects: the establishment of a center in Latin America for the development of elementary school programs and teacher training; the study of arid regions; and the exchange of works of art and other cultural expressions between the East and the West (on which Kenneth Clarke of the U.K. made a very scholarly address).

When it came to the budget, the smaller and Eastern nations voted to up it one million dollars over the objections of the nations of the West, which make the greatest contribution. This was a million dollars more than the Director General had asked, though it is probable that he might have asked for more if he had had a green light from the Executive Board in advance. The Soviet representative, not having timely instructions from Moscow, missed a trick of demagoguery by abstaining rather than voting in favor of the resolution. It is questionable whether without more notice the administration of UNESCO can find the proper personnel in time to spend this additional money.

On the whole the conference was businesslike and uninspired. One gained the impression that UNESCO itself had settled down to being a businesslike and uninspired undertaking. The lift and enthusiasm of the First General Conference ten years ago—and even more so of the conference in London in 1945 which drafted the UNESCO Constitution—were quite lacking. The beautiful, promising child had grown up to be not so beautiful or promising but definitely useful. This utility may not be apparent in the United States, but it is to those who have seen UNESCO pilot projects in Southeast Asia, Egypt, and Latin America or talked with people from those nations who have had contact with such projects.

One would like to live again in the glow of the great, spiritual values of the addresses made at the first

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LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

GREEK IDEAL

APPARENTLY MR. CIARDI did not like "The Unicorn and Other Poems," by Anne Morrow Lindbergh (SR Jan. 12). I would like to recommend to Mr. Ciardi a paragraph from the lead article in the same issue, "The Greek Freedom," by Edith Hamilton.

Arrogance, insolent self-assertion, was of all qualities most detested by the Greeks. *Sophrosune* was the exact opposite. That was the Greek ideal and the result was their freedom.

FORREST A. BOGAN.

Hamden, Conn.

NO GENTLEMAN?

DIDN'T THE FOLKS at Harvard ever teach Mr. Ciardi that one may chide a lady but no gentleman ever slaps her in the face?

EDWIN L. POOR.

Saratoga, Calif.

NOT LEGITIMATE

I KNOW NOTHING OF Mr. Ciardi or the repressions that have soured him. I can only say that the grossly insulting language he used in his comments on Mrs. Lindbergh's recent volume is offensive. I cannot imagine them as legitimate criticism.

V. A. ROBERTSON.

San Diego, Calif.

BEATEN CIARDI

I, UNLIKE MR. CIARDI, can either take Anne Lindbergh's poetry or leave it alone. He can do neither. I think the clue to what is chewing on Mr. Ciardi is given at the outset, where he mentions her personal distinction and popularity and the good sales that attended her other volumes of verse. To Mr. Ciardi this is not to be endured. He reminds me of a beaten fighter who in desperation starts fouling his successful adversary.

ALBERT R. MARTIN.

St. Joseph, Mich.

BLUE-PENCILLING BUTCHER

MAY ONE COMPLIMENT Professor Ciardi on his flair for destructive criticism. Using bluntness with the verve of a butcher he blue-pencils her work as if it were but the schoolboys' theses he is so used to reducing.

CHARLOTTE LOUISE GROOM.

Cincinnati, O.

NEW START

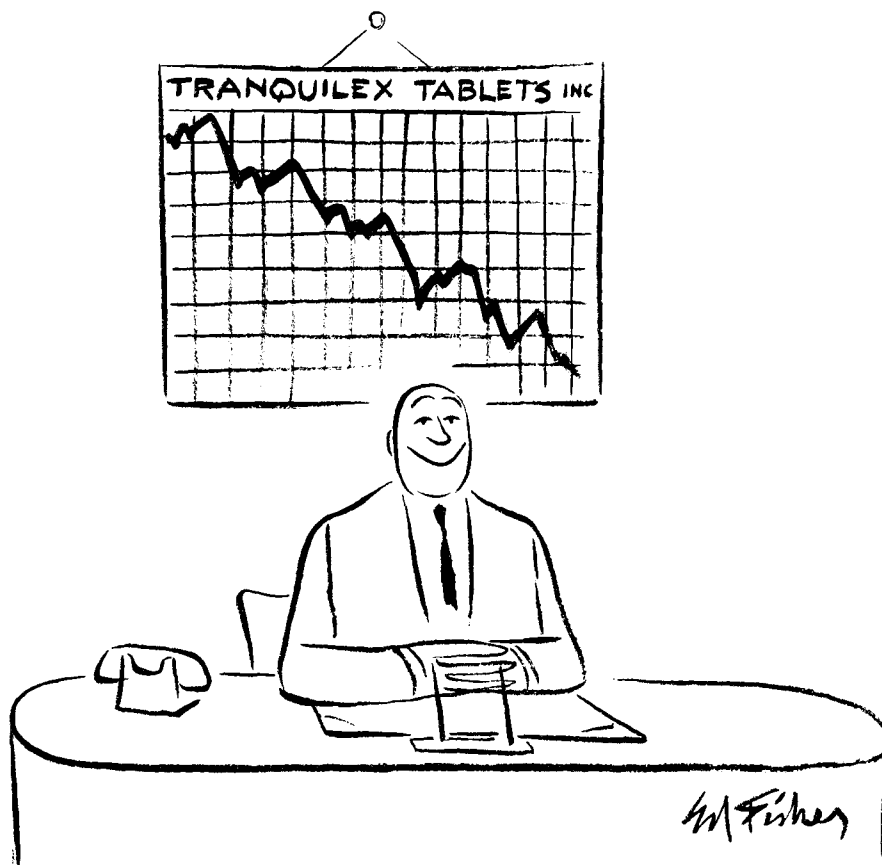
WHY DON'T YOU find a new poetry editor?

MARGARET G. CAREY.

Minneapolis, Minn.

UNINTERESTING TRASH

PERHAPS YOUR READERS would have found Mr. Ciardi's remarks more enlightening



had they not suffered through the idiotic verse in SR these past months. How is it possible for him to set himself up as such an authority, when at the same time he is publishing such uninteresting trash?

MRS. M. H. PERRY.

Pomona, Calif.

SNAKES FOR JOHN

I SHALL WATCH SR for a poem by Mr. Ciardi, and if he doesn't make his ideas walk like good tin soldiers (with their vizors down) he'll come a cropper. And God spare him if he should ever step on a snake! In all fairness, it should leap to his masculine chest and pierce him to the heart.

MARIE J. HOLT.

Newport, R. I.

WRONG TARGET

IF MR. CIARDI CRAVES clarity of thought and meaningful use of words and punctuation marks, he should not waste his time on Mrs. Lindbergh, who is surely a minor offender, if one at all. Let him address his demands to E. E. Cummings, T. S. Eliot, and their tribe.

NEWELL H. DAILEY.

Pella, Ia.

AML NO FRESHMAN

READERS OF SR EXPECT more of Mr. Ciardi's talents than his reminder to the poetess

"that freshman English students are required to take remedial courses when they persist in such illiteracies." I remind Mr. Ciardi that, in Mrs. Lindbergh, he's dealing not with a college freshman, but with a distinguished woman. She has a right to expect distinguished, non-freshman criticism.

ED WATERS.

Los Angeles, Calif.

A PURCHASER

WHILE MR. CIARDI ALIGNS his marks of punctuation and his exact words, I'll purchase a copy of "The Unicorn and Other Poems" and read it, content in the knowledge that a critic's opinion is not necessarily better than mine.

ELIZABETH L. DERR.

Mt. Vision, N. Y.

RATHER PROPER

I HAVE JUST FINISHED the review of Mrs. Lindbergh's book:

From Mr. Ciardi's words, I gather
He'd other things be reading, rather.

Please note proper placing of commas.
Jo HEMPHILL.

Washington, D. C.

TO MRS. LINDBERGH

We were not there to see, yet know,
your tears . . .