

BOOKS AND REVIEWS

Middle East and Asia to profit from experience acquired in the field of health and social welfare of young children in the Uzbekistan Republic.

It was decided, in agreement with the Ministries of the Uzbekistan Republic on the one hand and the representatives of the Executive Committee of the Alliance of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies of the USSR on the other hand, that participants would be chosen among directors of health services and of various departments responsible for education, pediatricians, psychologists and renowned specialists in other branches. . .

. . . Participants in the meeting, after listening to reports each day, were able to visit maternity wards, kindergartens, schools and hospitals, which constitute the medical and educational network of a modern system of health and nutrition. They were able to observe that a well planned economy had resulted in the elimination of the main communicable diseases and of illiteracy and had made possible the systematic prevention of chronic illnesses most frequently met with.

They had opportunity to study the activity of institutions for children, their organizations, budgets, staff problems and methods. They observed the high level reached by the services responsible for pre-natal care and midwifery which provide expectant mothers with complete medical assistance.

One field which was given importance was that of nutrition. Participants to the seminar at Tashkent saw that child nutrition problems no longer exist in Uzbekistan, as the Republic has all the necessary food and a highly developed infant food processing industry; suitable diets for children up to the age of one year are provided free by the State.

A considerable part of the programme was devoted to educational methods for pre-school-age children and based on fundamental principles applied in the USSR in this field and derived from studies of physical and psychological growth in young children. The aim is to achieve maximum development of children's aptitudes in order to fit them into the society in which they will become full members.

Cultural Rights as Human Rights, *UNESCO Chronicle*, Paris 1968, No. 12.

Just what are cultural rights? What conditions are necessary to make them effective? These were among questions discussed by experts from 13 countries at a meeting held at Unesco headquarters, from 8 to 13 July this year, attended by observers from four international non-governmental organizations.

The concept of "cultural rights" is relatively new: it followed the recognition of political and economic rights and is linked to the increasing industrialization and mechanization taking place in the world today, with the consequent need for some kind of creative activity. It is

also linked to the demands of the newly independent States seeking to rehabilitate or protect their traditional cultures. With the development of the mass information media, among other things, culture is no longer the privilege of the few. However, "cultural rights" are not easy to define.

The debates brought out the existence of a conflict between the right to culture and the rights of cultures. In the first case, what is involved is the individual's right to culture, a right of which he may be deprived by poverty or by political oppression; in the second, it is the right of cultures to survival in the face of radical changes taking place in the world today. The first of these rights calls for modernization: the second has much to fear from it.

This contradiction between the respect for man and the respect for cultures is related to a certain duality of meaning in the word "culture": it can be used in the "élite" sense, meaning something which is in short supply, especially for the underprivileged sections of mankind, or it can be used in the anthropological sense meaning, roughly, the distinctive mode of life of a given community. The élite meaning is relevant to the rights of individuals to culture, whereas the anthropological meaning concerns the right of cultures to survive.

There was unanimous agreement that, in the developing countries, the right to culture is in substance the right to education, and many participants felt that in these countries the improvement of economic and social conditions is the first, basic prerequisite for the existence of a culture and for the possibility of enjoying it. They also agreed that the problem of culture is just as acute in the affluent countries.

Other questions discussed at the meeting included mass culture, world culture, the democratization of culture, the existence of a cultural "non-public", the importance of cultural interchange, the relationship between artistic creation and the political and social environment, the artist and society, science, technology and culture, etc. The experts frequently referred to the powerful influences of the mass information media which, under existing economic conditions, constitute a barrier between cultural producers and the general public. The meeting concluded by preparing a Statement on Cultural Rights as Human Rights.

Water Pollution and the Law, *The UNESCO Courier*, Paris, January 1969.

Almost every country in the world has tried to meet the threats of water pollution by means of legislative action. But passing laws does not automatically bring the situation under control. Unless legislation is supported by a strong climate of public opinion and unless adequate funds and staff to enforce the regulations are provided, the results are usually disappointing.