

Press saved his most controversial remarks for last. He cited a "negative balance of trade in training" in 1988 that enabled some 24 000 Japanese to study science and engineering at US undergraduate and graduate colleges and universities—ten times the number of Americans who go to Japan for such education. Even if many Japanese students pay their own tuition, Press observed, this doesn't cover the full cost. This gap is made up by

Federal research grants, state education funds and private endowments. Because most of the knowledge and know-how go home to benefit Japan, Press suggested that Japanese industries with subsidiaries in the US could correct the imbalance by anteing up as much as \$100 million per year for facilities and equipment at American universities.

Such a program would enable Japan to do the right thing by US

science and education, Press said. The idea is a trial balloon that Press is not sure will get off the ground. But it has merit if Japanese industry wants to win friends and influence Americans in academe. Press proposes to sound out his scheme among fellow members of the US-Japan Commission for the Next Century, a think-tank of corporate executives, economists and leading bankers.

—IRWIN GOODWIN

BUSH ADMINISTRATION DASHES HOPES FOR US REJOINING UNESCO—FOR NOW

Ever since the US pulled out of UNESCO at the end of 1984, the agency's future has been a tale of two cities—Washington and Paris. Once the Reagan Administration decided to break away from the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, the State Department assigned a team of observers to the agency's headquarters in Paris to maintain a vigil on the agency's programs and practices, which the US insisted were both mismanaged and politicized. Increasingly, since the election of Federico Mayor Zaragoza, an amiable and urbane Spanish biochemist, as UNESCO's new director general in 1987, dozens of prestigious American organizations, among them the United Nations Association of the US, the National Education Association, the National Academy of Sciences and The American Physical Society, have been pressuring Washington to rejoin. The organizations reason that Mayor has made many changes from the bad old ways and has other reforms on the way (see *PHYSICS TODAY*, February, page 111). Apparently ignoring the appeals, Secretary of State James A. Baker III declared on 17 April that "the time is not yet ripe to reopen the question of renewing US membership in UNESCO."

Baker's statement appeared in his introduction to the very first review of UNESCO's activities since the US decided to leave the agency—an action that included refusing to pay its 25% share of UNESCO's annual expenditures. The State Department was required by Congress to issue the report under its 1990 budget authorization (P.L.101-246), passed paradoxically while UNESCO's 25th General Conference was going on in Paris last October and November. In preparing the report, State Department observers examined the so-called Third Medium-Term Plan, covering the years

1990-95 and the biennial budget for 1990-91, held steady at \$398 million for the biennium. The General Conference endorsed both the plan and the budget, rejecting a request from UNESCO's Secretariat for a 2.5% budget increase. Despite Mayor's insistence that UNESCO can "do less, but in greater depth," the organization is in severe financial straits. That's one reason why Mayor wants to embrace the US and Britain. But both governments are still wary of returning to UNESCO's fold.

The State Department report says scarcely anything about the competence of UNESCO's professional staff, nor does it evaluate any of the current or proposed scientific and cultural activities, concentrating instead on managerial and political issues. In such matters, it finds UNESCO critically wanting.

Mix of data and diatribe

The report, in fact, is a curious mixture of data and diatribe. Rejoining now, it says, would be tantamount to accepting "promises of change in lieu of real reform." The report admits at one point that US withdrawal, followed immediately by the departure of the United Kingdom and Singapore, spurred some reforms—principally the election of Mayor, thereby ending the 13-year reign of Amadou-Mahtar M'Bow, former education minister in Senegal (*PHYSICS TODAY*, January 1988, page 52). Even so, the report claims the reputation of Mayor as a "well-intentioned but poor administrator" when he was M'Bow's deputy in the early 1980s "haunts him to this day."

The report's chief author is John R. Bolton, a Yale-educated lawyer who is Assistant Secretary of State for International Organization Affairs. A former Assistant Attorney General at the Justice Department, Bolton is labelled by sources in the Administra-

tion and in Congress as representing the views of the Heritage Foundation and of Senator Jesse Helms, a North Carolina Republican, both sharply critical of US participation in UNESCO and the United Nations.

Bolton's message is undiplomatically obvious: Mayor ought to be called to account for UNESCO's managerial mess. The report claims Mayor's administration is "characterized more by continuity than by change." Only a handful of senior officials have been reassigned, says the report, "leaving the M'Bow Secretariat basically intact. . . ."

Two independent panels, known by the names of their chairmen, Knut Hammarhjöld of Sweden and Peter S. Wilenski of Australia, both appointed by Mayor, recently agreed that UNESCO faced a leadership crisis. The Wilenski study concluded that "there is a grave danger that the contributions which UNESCO could make in our rapidly developing and changing world will be lost unless critical reforms to the Secretariat are instituted as a matter of urgency." On 2 February, the day the Wilenski report was released, Mayor told US officials in Paris that he was taking measures to reduce the secretariat by 30%, amounting to about 700 jobs. In fact, says the State Department's report, Mayor later distributed three "Green Notes" on restructuring his Secretariat, but instead of using the occasion to trim the staff, he announced he was creating 33 new positions—most at the highest grade levels and none by open recruitment.

Bolton considers UNESCO operations wasteful and ineffective because about 72% of its officials and staff work at the Paris headquarters, while the rest can be said to function in the field. (By contrast, the UN World Health Organization keeps 70% of its personnel abroad, and the UN High Commission for Refugees supports

65% in the field.)

The report contains a wordy bill of particulars. One item is UNESCO's "New World Information and Communication Order," which was supposedly scuttled at the General Conference last November, but seems to be "alive and well in 1990." The report claims it is still perceived by Third World UNESCO delegates as an "article of faith" in regulating and restricting members of the news media. In addition, UNESCO resolutions are "heavily biased against Israel and often based on false accusations." What's more, says the State Department report, while membership of the Palestine Liberation Organization has been deferred until the next General Conference in 1991, the PLO observer will be able to make direct requests for UNESCO participation, thereby possibly gaining greater control over the flow of funds to programs it favors.

The organization's charter is basically nonpolitical. It calls for the agency to reduce human illiteracy, support scientific research, preserve historic and religious sites, protect rain forests and ecosystems and perform other worthy deeds that are usually too expensive or ambitious for most nations to do on their own. Under UNESCO's new "no-growth" budget, imposed by the recent General Conference, the elimination and reduction of programs are considered by the State Department report to be nothing more than "a mere bureaucratic reshuffling."

A white paper issued on 13 March by the Foreign Affairs Committee of Britain's House of Commons argues that it is difficult to judge whether there has been real economies. The authors are, after all, diplomatic. "It may be too much to hope that program concentration can be achieved in a formal way," says the paper. It quotes Tony Brenton, head of Britain's Foreign and Commonwealth Office, as saying: "In my experience of the UN system it is usually for political reasons impossible to kill almost any program. The realistic test we should be making for UNESCO is not whether they are wiping out the more absurd of their programs, as I expect it is impossible for them to do so, but whether they are neutering the ones that are actively harmful and concentrating the bulk of their finances and personnel on the ones that are really beneficial."

On 2 April a memo to the House of Commons' committee from Tim Sainsbury, Parliamentary Under Secretary of State in Britain's Foreign Office, refers to Mayor's progress in reorganizing the agency's programs

as "ambiguous." It notes that the Third Medium-Term Plan shows a reduction of major program areas from 14 to 7, and within that number a further slash of programs from 52 to only 18. But the plan also indicates that the total number of subprograms has risen from 147 to 182—many just renamed. What's more, writes Sainsbury, "It is not possible to discern from the program and budget any substantial transfer of resources into, for example, the core areas of education and literacy."

Sainsbury seems concerned that only 1.25% of UNESCO's budget goes to its literacy program, which Mayor stressed as a key feature of his strategy. According to the report, Mayor hopes UNESCO's contribution to improving literacy will have "a catalytic effect," attracting funds from governments as well as from the World Bank, the UN Children's Fund and the UN Development Program. Even so, adds the report, "We will have to await the implementation of the Third Medium-Term Plan in the next couple of years to see whether Professor Mayor can match his own laudable objectives."

Wooing the Anglo-Saxons

Britain announced its decision not to rejoin a month before the US did and in far fewer words. Only 17 pages long, the Commons white paper is more probing and less polemic than Bolton's 43-page report. The Commons paper concludes on a calmer note: "We were very impressed by Professor Mayor when he gave evidence to us about his intentions and have no doubt of his determination drastically to change the structure and working of the organization Some more time is necessary before it will be possible to be certain of the Director General's ability to deliver the reforms which UNESCO badly needs. If there is real evidence within the next 12 months that he has so succeeded, we see no reason why the UK should not rejoin UNESCO in a year's time."

Indeed, in the past two years Mayor has campaigned vigorously among US and British scientific and cultural organizations to rouse their support for rejoining. He visited both countries so frequently in fact that the Paris newspaper *Le Monde* recently reported that some Third World staffers accuse Mayor of "wooing the Anglo-Saxons." Most of the scientific and cultural groups that are urging the US to rejoin UNESCO had hoped that President Bush, a former US representative at the United Nations, would be more amenable than his

predecessor, Ronald Reagan, who ordered the withdrawal.

Proponents for rejoining usually say the US would have more influence on agency reforms and programs if it had full voting rights. "Bluntly stated, UNESCO needs the United States as a member far more than the United States needs UNESCO," Bolton's report declares. By refusing to contribute its share of the cost of running UNESCO, which adds up to nearly \$50 million of the agency's \$189 million annual budget, the US exerts more "leverage . . . as a sought-after non-member . . . than we would wield simply by being one vote among 161 others."

In late April, Mayor was in Washington to attend the annual meeting of the National Academy of Sciences and to meet with members of Congress, including Gus Yatron, a Pennsylvania Democrat who is chairman of the House Foreign Affairs subcommittee on human rights and international relations, and Mervyn Dymally, a California Democrat who heads the Foreign Affairs subcommittee on international operations. In discussions and interviews, Mayor called Bolton's report "inaccurate," "biased" and "politically motivated."

Since the US and Britain left, more than 800 posts have been unfilled or frozen. UNESCO has saved some \$2.5 million in travel costs, out of which Mayor says he transferred \$2 million to the literacy program. In conversations with Yatron and Dymally, he defended his plans and corrected the statistics about hirings and expenditures used by the State Department and reported by the news media.

"I am committed to reform," says Mayor. "I am of the view that UNESCO is on the right route."

D. Allan Bromley, President Bush's science adviser, admits he is of two minds on UNESCO. "From the scientific and cultural point of view, a case can be made to rejoin. But when all the factors are weighed, the best course is to wait to see that the reforms are fully in place. It is true, though, that Mr. Mayor has raised our expectations that we can rejoin."

While awaiting that day, the US and Britain continue to fund UNESCO science activities through nongovernmental contracts. These include the Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission, the Man in the Biosphere project and various global science programs supported through nongovernmental bodies such as the International Council of Scientific Unions. US support for the programs will come to \$2 million this year.

—IRWIN GOODWIN