

# **U.S. and U.K. Re-entry into UNESCO (October 1995?): A Reportorial Description and a Theoretical Analysis**

by

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## **Introduction**

"The Department (of State) is taking a fresh look at UNESCO. It recognizes that UNESCO has successfully addressed many of the political and management problems that led to (the U.S.) withdrawal (in 1985). It will now review the Organization's Program and Budget for 1994-1995 to gain a better understanding of UNESCO's potential and to determine if the benefits of membership would justify the costs. The true value of membership depends on the effectiveness of UNESCO's programs and their relevance to the great issues of the 1990s such as democracy building and the environment" (24).

This was the early 1993 position of the new Democratic administration in the United States with regard to re-joining UNESCO. It stood in contrast to the mid-1992 position of the Republican administration, which said it was "not considering a return to UNESCO in the near future of a budgetary request for UNESCO dues for (fiscal year 1994). Rather it will pursue fully its current policy of working with other countries and with the UNESCO Secretariat to promote reform in the hope that it will lead ultimately to sound management and effective program activity becoming integral parts of UNESCO's culture" (19:p. 169).

Rep. Esteban E. Torres, D-Calif., a former ambassador and U.S. permanent representative to UNESCO under President Jimmy Carter, introduced a resolution in the U.S. House of Representatives calling on the Clinton administration to rejoin UNESCO before the end of 1993 in the context of the positive changes that had occurred within the organization as confirmed by the GAO report (2).<sup>1</sup>

By late 1993, it appeared almost a certainty that the United States would return to UNESCO by a target date set for October 1995. After presidential approval of the move, the Congress was expected to vote on the estimated \$65 million U.S. yearly contribution to the organization's operating expenses. Earlier, a task force headed by Assistant Secretary of State Douglas Bennet

had recommended that the United States revive its UNESCO membership (15).<sup>2</sup> UNESCO Director-General Federico Mayor told the press in October 1993 that the State Department had forwarded a recommendation to rejoin the agency in early September to the National Security Council (16).

Meanwhile, the Conservative government in the United Kingdom was under pressure from the Parliament to re-join UNESCO from which it withdrew in 1986. The Foreign Affairs Committee of the House of Commons recommended in mid-1993 that the United Kingdom should now seek to rejoin UNESCO (3: p. xiv). A House of Commons resolution, adopted on 4 Dec. 1992, considered "that a speedy return by the United Kingdom to UNESCO is in the national interest" (7: col. 564). But the government has not yet taken any decision on a resumption of U.K. membership because of the cost of membership — about £8 million for 1993 and almost £10 million a year thereafter in addition to the "indirect cost of additional staff in London and Paris (12)."

The history of the U.S. and U.K. withdrawals from UNESCO is documented elsewhere (e.g., 9, 10 and 11). This paper primarily reports, in the journalistic tradition, the political moves during the two-year period 1992-1993 that built up pressure on the U.S. and U.K. administrations to make a decision on re-joining UNESCO. It also attempts, in the academic tradition, to look at the unfolding moves through the social control theory of Harold Innis (13, 14) and through systems analysis.

It seems best to outline the pertinent theoretical perspective before moving on to describing the developments in the United States and the United Kingdom respectively. At the end, we shall analyze the withdrawals and the subsequent pressures to rejoin within this theoretical framework.

### **A Theoretical Perspective**

Fortner (1: pp. 26-31) has outlined a theoretical basis for international communication centered on the work of Innis, who believed that the space or time bias of the means of communication defined the nature of society. (Media that were difficult to transport but lasted long, such as carved stone, were time-biased; while easy-to-transport, disposable media, such as papyrus, were space-biased. The space-biased media favored imperialism because they helped expansion of political authority geographically; while the time-biased media favored tradition and continuity). Societies established and attempted to maintain "monopolies of knowledge" using these two types of media, which provided them with a measure of social control. This control was strongest near the political center of a society, and weakest on its fringe, where other means of communication might threaten central control. People in the fringes of society would create alternative monopolies of knowledge, and eventually challenge the dominant monopoly.

Social control could exist within a national (or domestic) framework as well as within an international (or global) framework. Nationally, the state

or the political and economic elites could attempt to achieve control over the people through definition of social objectives, establishing and enforcing behavioral norms, and so on. Internationally, powerful countries could attempt to exercise control over others by influencing their foreign policies, trade and cultural practices, technical standards relating to telecommunications, and so on. The control of colonial powers over their global colonies had now translated into the power of the Western industrial states over the developing countries.

Governments around the world have used information as a powerful ideological and political weapon both nationally and internationally. The idea of a "free flow of information" in the United States itself reflected a measure of social control. All countries, including the United States, controlled communication to exercise social control in varying degrees. The essential difference between the United States and many other countries was that she allowed private owners of communication channels to exercise primary social control; the state was the primary controller in other countries.

Strategies for social control included disinformation campaigns and propaganda, and the more straightforward practice of denying access to information. Examples of the latter category were attempts to control the import of technology or "software," attempts to establish conventions to prevent unwanted satellite spillover; attempts to control the activities and journalists and diplomats, and so on. Providing information to people otherwise denied access to it was also an effort to exercise social control. Efforts to exercise social control existed in both economic and political spheres. The social control exercised, either domestically or internationally, varied depending on the strength of the central elites or the state, and the completeness of the monopoly of knowledge.

The "monopoly of knowledge" perspective could extend itself to a systems analysis approach to the study of international communication that would provide the basis for understanding the interrelationships among the various parts of the system: technical components (e.g., wires, recorded materials, radio waves); economic components (e.g., trade issues, tariffs, taxation); political and regulatory components (e.g., portrayals of nations and peoples, dependence on other nations for cultural products); and social control components (propaganda, information flow, the right to communicate). These components linked together the various participants in international communication: governments, regulatory and representative agencies, corporations, and audiences (1: pp. 36-39).

#### **U.S. Position (1992-93)**

##### ***A. Moves Under Clinton (Democratic) Presidency 1993:***

During the second half of 1993, the Clinton Presidency was actively weighing the pros and cons of returning to UNESCO. Following a request by the

National Security Council, an Interagency Working Group, headed by the Department of State, submitted a report on 7 June reviewing the U.S. policy on UNESCO (20). The IWG came to eight conclusions:

- \* UNESCO had made major progress in solving the problems of excessive politicization, poor management, and lack of budgetary restraint that led to the U.S. withdrawal in December 1984.
- \* UNESCO needed to define better its mission as a technical agency or a forum for intellectual cooperation or a workable combination of the two.
- \* UNESCO had too many programs for its current budget level. Many programs were inadequately funded and of marginal utility.
- \* UNESCO provided a constitutional mandate and existing worldwide infrastructures and networks in education, science, culture and communications that could be utilized effectively to promote a wide range of social and political values of central importance to the United States.
- \* The U.S. private and public sector constituencies in education, science, culture and communications were near unanimous in their recognition of positive change in UNESCO and in their conviction that enlightened and active U.S. participation in the organization would further their professional goals.
- \* Membership in UNESCO would benefit the U.S. national interest because it would provide to U.S. public sector and private sector specialist access to global networks and infrastructures — not available elsewhere — for intergovernmental and NGO cooperation in key areas of education, science, culture and communications.
- \* A consensus existed that re-entry into UNESCO would require the United States to make a commitment to provide effective leadership and funding support at appropriate levels through the UNESCO budget process to sustain high priority programs such as the Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission, the World Heritage Convention, the Convention on the Illicit Import, Export or Transfer of Cultural Property, the International Institute of Educational Planning and the International Program for the Development of Communications.
- \* The cost of re-entry would be substantial. Because no funds for UNESCO membership had been budgeted or were available, it would be difficult to fund re-entry before the 1996 financial year.

- \* Given the current budget environment, even a delayed re-entry into UNESCO would, in all likelihood, further crowd out overseas operational requirements in the 1996 financial year and beyond.

Among the *recommendations*, the IWG asked that the United States:

- *plan to rejoin UNESCO as of 1 Oct. 1995*
- *re-establish the U.S National Commission for UNESCO immediately*
- *undertake consultations with Congress to support re-joining UNESCO*
- *consult the United Kingdom before announcing new policy toward UNESCO*
- *provide voluntary funding to supplement implementation of programs such as the IPDC and the IOC*

The IWG said the stipulated re-entry deadline would enable the United States to seek election to the Executive Board and other intergovernmental bodies at the October 1995 General Conference. Between now and then, the United States should urge UNESCO to pursue vigorously further reform, in particular: effective follow-up to recommendations of the 1993 and 1992 reports of the General Accounting Office (21,22); satisfactory clarification of UNESCO's post Cold-War mission; substantial further concentration of its program; the institution of provisions to ensure full transparency and accountability in the Participation Program; and reform of the human rights procedures of the Committee on Conventions and Recommendations in light of the expanding role of the U.N. Center for Human Rights.

The IWG said that it was not possible to rejoin UNESCO as of 1 Oct. 1993 because the minimum funds of US\$83 million — US\$14 million for 1993 regular budget, US\$63 million for 1994 regular budget and US\$6 million for working capital fund — required to do so were not available. However, the United States would have to review the final decision to rejoin in the context of the budget process for the 1996 financial year. It might be possible to accomplish re-joining UNESCO within the deferred payment policy.

While the United States had benefited tangibly by saving about US\$400 million in assessed contributions since January 1985, she had suffered from her absence from UNESCO “by not being a full and active participant in U.N. intergovernmental cooperation in education, science, culture and communications.”

The GAO also played a significant role in spurring the Clinton Presidency to take another look at UNESCO. In late March, it produced a follow-up report (21) on the progress UNESCO had made in implementing the 12 recommendations cooperation in education, science, culture and communications.”

UNESCO has implemented or made good progress toward implementing 8 of the 12 recommendations made in our June 1992 report, particularly in the areas of evaluation, human resource management, and budget presentation. UNESCO has made moderate progress in addressing decentralization issues and developing programs plans that identify expected impact and has made little progress in developing operational plans to decentralize.

Beyond our recommendations, UNESCO has (1) made evaluation and element of each professional's performance rating, (2) separated staff because their positions were no longer needed, and (3) improved its budget presentation. We have some concern about UNESCO's oversight of the Participation Program, which funds projects and grants on a cost-sharing basis with individual member states.

Overall, UNESCO's member states, Director General, managers, and employee associations have demonstrated a commitment to management reform through their actions. This commitment will need to continue over the long term if UNESCO is to fully implement our recommendations and solidify its recent management improvements (21: pp.1-2).

#### *B. Moves Under Bush (Republican) Presidency 1992:*

##### *1. Position of the State Department*

John R. Bolton, U.S. assistant secretary of state for international organization affairs, clarified the Bush administration's policy on UNESCO at a joint hearing before three sub-committees of the U.S. House of Representatives on 25 June 1992 (19:pp. 17-34; 156-190).

Bolton said that since the time the United States withdrew from UNESCO because of the organization's excessive politicization, poor management, and long-term lack of budgetary restraint, the United States had maintained a presence at UNESCO through her Observer Mission of two professional staff, had attended every meeting of the organization's governing bodies, and had made voluntary contributions of about US\$2.5 million per year in support of high-value activities for the United States such as the work of the Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission, the World Heritage Convention, the Man and the Biosphere program, the Universal Copyright Convention, and the International Hydrological and Natural Hazards programs. UNESCO staff included 84 U.S. citizens including 49 in the professional ranks. The United States was an active participant in the Western Information Group and, therefore, had a very active presence in Paris. Moreover, she was in the Geneva Group, the 13 largest contributors to the U.N. system, that met twice a year to discuss overall U.N. system reform.

The 1992 GAO Report (22) had stated that it was too soon to judge the effectiveness of some of the UNESCO reforms. Knut Hammarskjold, who chaired the six-person independent commission on UNESCO that the

director-general appointed in December 1988 (18), and Peter Wilenski, who subsequently chaired a panel of international advisers to review the Hammarskjold report, had said much the same thing in a follow-up report in January 1992 (17). The State Department endorsed the Hammarskjold/Wilenski recommendations calling for the introduction of a consistent and fair promotion system based on merit, a better career development system and equal opportunity for women. However, the proportion of female professionals at UNESCO had increased from 20 percent in 1984 to 26.8 percent in 1991.

The GAO Report had stated that UNESCO had not solved long-standing problems with consultants and program evaluation; the report had made 12 recommendations (relating to responsive and accountable management, program focus and planning, personnel system reform, budget policies and practices, and financial management) each of which was consistent with the goals sought by the Department of State. UNESCO should have given particular attention to the recommendation on better application of the rules on the use of supplementary staff and fee contracts to control the contract authorization procedure more effectively. There had to be a change of culture at UNESCO. When the United States had criticized what she believed to be excessive use of consultants, the director-general's response had been, "I have to go outside the organization to get new ideas." UNESCO used too many consultants with the supplementary staff costs totalling 9.6 percent of the regular budget staff and personnel costs (US\$21.8 million) during the 1990-91 biennium. Fee contracts had cost an additional US\$47.9 million during the same biennium. UNESCO did not have written instructions on the specific steps needed to determine the employment of a consultant.

To satisfy the concerns of the Department of State, UNESCO must fully implement the GAO Report's recommendations on program focus and planning, and on personnel system reform. The GAO Report had stressed the need for significantly better program evaluation. UNESCO had conducted only 16 impact evaluations since 1986, covering a mere 8 percent of its activities. UNESCO lacked a system that allowed activities to be tracked and monitored from biennium to biennium. The time had arrived for UNESCO to develop a systematic approach to decentralization considering that 73 percent of UNESCO's total staff of 2,697 people were located in Paris while a high proportion of funds were expended in the field. One of UNESCO's problems remained a continuing lack of focus in its programmatic structure. Concentration of programs had been driven more by budget constraints than by a conscious policy of identifying priorities. UNESCO needed to focus more clearly on what its mission was and what it should be and be less all over the lot.

The United States was not considering a return to UNESCO in the near future or a budgetary request for UNESCO dues for the 1994 financial year. The State Department believed that much remained to be done and

that what had been accomplished needed to settle in and be institutionalized. The United States did not believe the changes thus far adopted warranted opening the question of whether to rejoin UNESCO, at an expenditure of about US\$55 million per year. While the budgetary issue was a concern, it was certainly not the only concern. A dispute remained with the UNESCO Secretariat whether the United States owed an additional US\$42 million from the time of her withdrawal at the end of 1984— the middle of a budget biennium.

The United States had a tactical consideration as well: that if she went back in, the initial progress that UNESCO had made might come to a stop. Therefore, this was not the time to go back in. The Third World governments had not abandoned entirely the new world information and communication order and a whole range of other things. The West had to go through "a very difficult struggle" to get rid of the last reference to NWICO in the annual resolution of the Committee on Information in the U.N. General Assembly in 1990. The United States agreed with the November 1991 statement of the World Press Freedom Committee that UNESCO was starting to do good things in favour of press freedom.

Member governments such as Japan and others had undertaken steps which the United States supported. Japan had actively promoted management reforms. She had successfully proposed a constitutional amendment in November 1991 which designated member states - and not individuals — as Executive Board members. She had also called for working groups to meet between formal sessions of the board to facilitate its work. Japan had asked the United States to consider re-entry. Argentina, Ivory Coast, Italy, Portugal, Turkey and the former Soviet Union also had asked the United States formally to re-join UNESCO.

Other areas of UNESCO policy had also deeply concerned the United States, particularly a UNESCO/UNDP mission that spent two weeks in Iraq in February 1992.

UNESCO appeared to be courting Israel as a way of enticing the United States to re-enter the organization. Thus Israel was benefitting from the absence of the United States.

The United States met with the U.K. counterparts on a regular basis to discuss U.N. issues, including UNESCO but the two countries did not coordinate their policies. The United Kingdom had informed the United States by letter on 24 Sept. 1991, that she had not shifted her policy toward UNESCO even though during a House of Commons debate on 22 May 1992, some members of parliament had supported re-entry. The United Kingdom continued to fund some UNESCO programs in the same way the United States did including the WHC, the IOC and a management study of the UNESCO Office of Public Information.



## 2. The GAO Report's 12 Recommendations

The U.S. General Accounting Office, in its June 1992 report (22), made 12 recommendations covering five areas of UNESCO reform.

- a) Progress in developing more responsive and accountable management:
  - \* develop criteria laying out the factors and conditions under which activities and resources should be decentralized;
  - \* complete the country data bases that would be necessary to develop operational plans for decentralizing; and
  - \* develop operational plans that would lay out specifics for decentralization, including what activities and resources to decentralize, where to locate these resources, and what time frames to follow (22: p. 28).
  
- b) Progress in program focus and planning, and evaluation:
  - \* develop and implement a system of computer coding that allows activities to be tracked and monitored from biennium to biennium.
  - \* ensure that work plans and other planning documents include expected impact, quantitative indicators for measuring success, and specific target groups; and
  - \* develop an evaluation plan that ensures a representative selection of UNESCO's programs is evaluated and that specifies the scheduling of evaluations, funding sources for the evaluations, and who will do the evaluation (22: p. 36).
  
- c) Personnel system reform, and implementation:
  - \* continue to monitor progress through periodic external reviews;
  - \* develop a unified personnel data base that is accurate, complete, and includes regular and supplementary staff in all locations and from all sources of funding; and
  - \* develop procedural checklists for the application of the rules on consultants, supernumeraries, and fee contracts to better control the contract authorization procedure and make it more transparent and uniform (22: p. 47).
  
- d) Progress in improving budget policies and practices:
  - \* ensure that a table comparing budgeted and actual expenditures by object of expenditure be included in a draft of the budget presentation for the governing bodies, and
  - \* elaborate on the differences between the constant rate of exchange and the actual rate in effect when the budget is published and add a footnote in the summary budget table denoting the changes in exchange rate (22: pp. 53-54).

## e) Financial management:

- \* ensure that payroll controls contain a positive verification of hours worked, such as employees recording and signing a schedule of work hours and having a supervisor verify it as correct (22: p. 58).

Frank C. Conahan, assistant controller general of the GAO, testified on the GAO Report before the joint hearing (19: pp. 34-45). He said that following on the 1984 GAO Report (23), UNESCO reforms were of very recent vintage. In some cases, it was too early to reach final conclusions whether these reforms were going to stay. In some areas, UNESCO got a long way to go, though, in summary, UNESCO had taken steps in the right direction. He highlighted reforms in four key areas.

***Oversight, accountability and responsiveness:***

UNESCO had taken significant steps toward improving its overall management in the areas of oversight, accountability and responsiveness. Its governing bodies, particularly the Executive Board, had taken a much more active role in overseeing operations. It had improved the recruitment of women for professional occupations. It had strengthened financial regulations and given increased authority to field offices.

The Executive Board now scrutinized proposed budgets more carefully. In 1991, UNESCO's governing bodies had formed a small group of financial and administrative experts to review all budgets in depth. The board now made sure of the implementation of the recommendations of UNESCO's external auditor. UNESCO had strengthened its accountability through enhancing the role of its inspector general and strengthening the authority of its administrative officers. The director-general had delegated authority to managers thereby making the managers more responsive. UNESCO was developing plans to decentralize by strengthening its field offices.

***Program management:***

UNESCO's habit of changing activity descriptions and identification codes from one budget period to the next had created a problem because it made it extremely difficult to determine what activities had actually been cut, merged or enhanced. A computer analysis had shown that UNESCO had reduced the number of activities from 2,041 in the 1988-89 biennium to 1,354 in the 1990-91 biennium — a 34 percent reduction. UNESCO needed a tracking system.

To improve its program planning, UNESCO now required planners to follow U.N. criteria: identifying objectives, priorities and steps needed to attain objectives. Now, UNESCO needed to develop an evaluation plan.

**Personnel management:**

UNESCO had proposed a new promotion system based on merit and competition. But its control of consultants and other temporary staff remained a problem. UNESCO needed to develop a unified personnel base that was accurate, complete and included all staff.

**Budgeting:**

The real growth in UNESCO's budget at the time of the U.S. withdrawal (1984-85) was 7.9 percent. Since then, the annual real growth rates of UNESCO had improved its budget presentation.

**3. Testimony from Others<sup>4</sup>**

Democratic Rep. Esteban Torres testified that the U.S. pullout from UNESCO was an executive branch decision made at the political level, overriding the recommendations of federal agencies and nongovernmental organizations active in UNESCO's substantive fields. The executive branch cited paralyzing management and budgetary growth as two of the three reasons for leaving UNESCO. The third — and at the time the foremost — reason for withdrawal was U.S. objection to the discussion of "political" issues in UNESCO, most notably on the flow of information. The reports of the U.N. Association had addressed these in convincing detail. It was not fair to throw up new, narrow, bureaucratic demands as new benchmarks for determining whether the United States should return. Of all the U.N. agencies, UNESCO was the best positioned for stimulating the partnerships for promoting collaborative action on intercultural respect and peace, and for directly addressing issues such as multi-ethnic tolerance. The U.S. government should utilize a strategic position within the agency to press unambiguously for democratic values, which found expression in the UNESCO constitution and programs. Quibbling over details of UNESCO's management was an inefficient basis for a national policy. (19: pp. 3-13)

Knut Hammarskjold, who had chaired the independent commission for UNESCO reforms, testified that the financial argument invoked as a kind of last resort obstacle to participation was simply not believable. A new culture was evolving at UNESCO — a culture that included flexibility, responsibility and accountability. "I believe UNESCO is now ready to be used as a constructive instrument for the solution of present and future global and local challenges," he said (19: pp. 80-81)

Hammarskjold said that the independent commission he headed (18) addressed three main areas: management style and effectiveness; organizational structure and system; and human resources, management and personnel policies. The 1992 Consolidated Report (17) had concluded that UNESCO's administrative reforms were well on track; that the major need now was a determined effort to bed down and institutionalize the reforms so

that they could become the natural working process of the organization (19: pp. 46-82)

UNESCO Deputy Director-General C.L. Sharma testified that the continued absence of the United States from UNESCO no longer evoked any sympathy or understanding, only consternation at what was seen as extreme ambivalence — an inexplicable unwillingness to recommit to a U.N. agency of which she was a principal founder and which was now fully committed to the principles of free inquiry, press freedom and democratic cultural values of pluralism in education as an essential element of freedom and economic progress. The State Department testimony was a “little disturbing” because it concurred with things that really did not exist. It was not correct to say that much remained to be done. The UNESCO General Conference of 1989 had decisively killed and buried the concept of the New World Information and Communication Order (19: pp. 83-85).

Sharma added that none of the reasons for the U.S. withdrawal in 1984 — politicization and ideological bias of certain programs such as in the field of mass media and human rights; lack of concentration and of clearly defined priorities; poor coordination with the other U.N. agencies — existed any longer. UNESCO had got into the forefront of the movement to support press freedom and democratic political change, not only in Eastern Europe but in many countries of the developing world, following the new communication strategy that the General Conference adopted in 1989 to “promote the free flow of ideas by word and image” (19: pp. 98-99). There would be no complete revitalization of UNESCO without an active involvement and support of the United States (19: p. 103). UNESCO had already started working on the GAO recommendations, most of which were of a procedural nature (19: p. 118).

Philip Smith of the National Academy of Sciences testified that the reforms that had taken place in UNESCO were impressive. From the perspective of science, engineering and technology, an organization like UNESCO was more needed in the world today as a multilateral organization in the 1990s than heretofore (19: p. 119).

Richard Getzinger of the American Association for the Advancement of Science testified that the AAAS continued to be impressed by the breadth and scope of UNESCO’s science-related activities. Developing countries benefited considerably from these programs through technology transfer. This, in turn, brought benefits to the entire global scientific community (19: p. 129).

## **U.K. Position (1992-93) Under Prime Minister Major**

### ***A. Parliamentary Moves in 1993***

Money seemed to be the major consideration for holding up the United Kingdom from rejoining UNESCO in 1993. The Foreign Affairs Committee<sup>5</sup> of

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the House of Commons, in its fifth report on UNESCO released on 21 July 1993, recommended "that the United Kingdom should now seek to rejoin UNESCO."

Based on two days of testimony<sup>6</sup> and written evidence it received<sup>7</sup> the committee came up with three conclusions (3: pp. xiii-xiv):

- \* The Government's contention that we cannot afford to rejoin UNESCO is unconvincing. The Government does not appear to have reviewed, with the same intensity, the contributions to other international organizations. We are not persuaded that the issue of whether to rejoin UNESCO should be pressed as a simple choice between spending money on UNESCO or the size of the United Kingdom's bilateral aid program.
- \* The Government's claim that we cannot afford to rejoin UNESCO is incompatible with the suggestion that an American decision in UNESCO's favour would require the United Kingdom to consider following suit. We believe that the United Kingdom should form its own judgment, decide its own priorities and not make its policy upon the coat-tails of the USA.
- \* The debate about UNESCO's policy, budgeting and management problems has been settled, broadly in the organization's favour. Although further decentralization is needed, we recommend that the United Kingdom should now seek to rejoin UNESCO.

The committee pointed out that the House of Commons itself had agreed on 4 Dec. 1992 that a speedy return of the United Kingdom to UNESCO was in the best national interest. Moreover, the Early Day Motion No. 1220 (supported by 263 members of parliament) carried substantially the same message. Douglas Hogg, the minister of state, Foreign and Commonwealth Office, had reiterated the principle of universality as it applied to membership of the United Nations and affiliated agencies. Hogg himself had told the committee that were the United Kingdom currently within UNESCO, she would not have withdrawn.

Although the Fourth FAC Report in 1990 had considered that some more time was necessary before it would be possible to be certain of the director-general's ability to deliver the reforms that UNESCO so badly needed, the predecessor committee had seen no reason why the United Kingdom should not have rejoined UNESCO within a year had the director-general demonstrated success within the ensuing 12 months.

The committee said that the British government's objections to UNESCO's policies had been overcome. The only serious criticism of UNESCO still outstanding was the complaint that the organization's

expenditure and personnel were still concentrated at UNESCO's headquarters in Paris rather than being evolved to the field in those countries where UNESCO was working. In effect, the government's case against rejoining now centred on the stated competition for resources between the assessed contribution to UNESCO (Around US\$10 million) and the alternative spending projects developed by the Overseas Development Administration since the United Kingdom's withdrawal in 1985. The committee said, "The crystallization of the Government's policy around the question of finance limits the scope for further debate about the problems of UNESCO but opens up a whole new debate about the attitude of the Government to its expenditure priorities" (3: pp. viii-ix).

The committee said the Foreign and Commonwealth Office/Overseas Development Administration appeared not to have prepared contingency plans for possible cuts in the bilateral aid program to fund the assessed contribution to UNESCO, and "we take this to mean that for as long as the argument is based upon public expenditure priorities, the Government will not move from its current position" (3: p. vi).

The committee pointed out that the United Kingdom was still a member of a number of organizations<sup>8</sup> linked to UNESCO funded variously by the ODA, the Department of National Heritage, the Office of Science and Technology, and the Department of Trade and Industry. The U.N. Association had said that because of such funding that already existed, the government would have to raise from new sources only a third of the estimated cost of re-joining UNESCO.

Meanwhile, Lord Henley, the parliamentary under-secretary of state for social security, declared in the House of Lords on 5 May 1993 that Prime Minister John Major's Conservative government was "keeping under review a possible resumption of our UNESCO membership" (4: cols. 697-699). He was answering a question by Lord Montagu of Beaulieu: whether the government considered that the time was right for the United Kingdom to rejoin UNESCO and to contribute actively to its work. Montagu asserted that it was now increasingly detrimental to the United Kingdom to be the only member of the European community not taking an active part in UNESCO's work.

"We will look at the issue very carefully," Henley assured. The United Kingdom could not ignore the cost of renewed membership of some £8 million to £10 million. "We have to be sure that we are going to get value for money from the increased cost ... and that it will be in our own national interests to join."

Minister Mark Lennox-Boyd gave a similar response in the House of Commons 29 March 1993. "We are keeping under close review a possible resumption of our UNESCO membership, but are not able to say when a decision might be taken," he told Sir David Steel, a Liberal Democrat MP (5: col. 83). Answering a question on costs of rejoining, Lennox-Boyd

explained to Peter Bottomley, a Conservative MP, that the United Kingdom's UNESCO assessed contribution for the remainder of 1993 would be £5.8 million in addition to the advance payment of £610,000 for UNESCO's working capital fund. The United Kingdom's assessed contribution in 1994 would be about £10.6 million and the advance to working capital fund almost £200,000. There would be additional cost of about £250,000 a year as a consequence of staff increases in London and Paris (5: col. 82). (Again answering a question by Conservative MP Cyril Townsend during Prime Minister's Question Time on 30 March, John Major said his government was "keeping under review" the question of rejoining UNESCO).

Baroness Chalker of Wallasey, Minister for Overseas Development, elucidated the matter further in the House of Lords a few days earlier, following "a debate of remarkable unanimity" in which participants from all benches said that the time was now right for the United Kingdom to re-enter UNESCO (6: cols. 401-424). The debate centred around the question by Lord Judd on the steps the government was taking to ensure the role and future development of UNESCO — the Lords' first debate on the UNESCO issue since 18 Jan. 1987.

Chalker repeated the cost figures Lennox-Boyd gave the Commons. "Considerable costs would be involved if we were to rejoin, both on the diplomatic wing and on the aid wing," she said. Any advance payments made in 1993 would not go toward projects; they would simply be redistributed to existing members under the UNESCO rules. The costs involved would have to come from existing programs, which were "giving us excellent value for money." The total financial benefits the United Kingdom accrued from UNESCO did not outweigh the cost of membership. While UNESCO had cited £9.5 million as expenditure in the United Kingdom in 1991, £5 million of that merely went to meet the salaries of U.K. staff, who were not necessarily located in the country. A resumption of membership might not bring the United Kingdom great extra financial benefits. The principal concern was whether the United Kingdom was getting real value for money and whether she could truly improve the situation if she decided to resume membership. "We shall take our own decision based on British interests and British priorities," she said.

Referring to the two 1992 UNESCO debates in the Commons (on 22 May and 4 Dec.), Chalker said the government's position was still the same as explained by Douglas Hogg, minister of state for Foreign and Commonwealth Office: it would approach the question with a genuinely open mind.

Chalker said she welcomed the UNESCO reforms since Federico Mayor became director-general in 1987. Mayor and his team of reformers had made impressive progress even though more had to be done. "I firmly believe that without our being outside the organization, and yet still strongly encouraging from our position as an interested observer, the progress achieved in such matters as administration, management, budgetary improvements and pro-

gram planning and evaluation would have been much less marked than it is," she said (echoing the identical sentiments that U.S. spokesman John Bolton had expressed in mid- 1992).

She was well aware of the parliamentary interest in re-joining UNESCO with more than 200 signatures to the Early Day Motion in the Commons. Ensuring the free flow of communication, a wider and better balance, and strengthening communications capacity was exactly what the United Kingdom always hoped UNESCO would achieve from the beginning. The new UNESCO was fully aware of the problems it had to tackle in promoting a free and pluralistic press in the many newly emerging democracies of Eastern Europe. The United Kingdom welcomed the action UNESCO took at the 1991 Windhoek Conference and the 1992 Alma Ata Conference when it issued declarations supporting the free flow of information in Africa and Central Asia respectively.

The March 1993 report of the U.S. General Accounting Office (20) had been broadly favourable to UNESCO though it had complained about lack of progress on decentralization. Improvements had most noticeably occurred in administration and management. Though the United Kingdom did not contribute to UNESCO's general budget, she had retained her membership in intergovernmental bodies like the IHP, the IOC and the WHC.

Chalker said she was uneasy with a recent UNESCO decision to increase its Participation Program, where member states made bids to get funds for projects, by two-thirds — US\$10 million — at a time when it had a cash flow crisis. This program lacked proper evaluation.

The other six participants in the Lords' debate — Lord Judd, Lord Renfrew of Kaimsthorn, Lord McGregor of Durriss, Lord Rea, Lord St. John of Bletso and Lord Ennals — all said the time was now right for the United Kingdom to re-enter the 172-member UNESCO. Among the points they made were the following.

**Judd:** The Clinton presidency would approach the re-entry positively and with an open mind. Britain's own failure to rejoin was increasingly bewildering. President Reagan's decision to withdraw owed more to blinkered right-wing ideology than to anything else. The U.K. withdrawal was more about the close Thatcher-Reagan relationship than result of any clear attempt to understand what was happening at UNESCO. While the government cited cost as a major hurdle for re-entry, UNESCO expenditure in the United Kingdom had averaged £8.5 million per year between 1984 and 1990. The resurgence of xenophobic nationalism, racial and religious persecution and the horrors of ethnic cleansing were directly relevant to the purposes of UNESCO and Britain's part within it. The U.S. General Accounting Office was now prepared to testify to the Congress that the management problems of the past were no longer a valid reason to justify U.S. nonmembership.

**Renfrew:** If, nearly 47 years ago, there was a new world order, that was once again the case today. The United Kingdom had three reasons for



rejoining. First, the United Kingdom could offer her facility in English, her own scientific tradition, her tradition of liberal thought, her outstanding educational tradition, and her expertise in publication. Secondly, the United Kingdom's place in the world as a permanent member of the U.N. Security Council would not be secure when she absented herself from one of the major U.N. agencies. Thirdly, the United Kingdom economically benefited from UNESCO — a consideration that significantly outweighed her contribution. World heritage sites in Britain, which received UNESCO benefits, included Stonehenge, Avebury, Fountains Abbey and Hadrian's Wall.

**McGregor:** UNESCO had now so transformed its policies and attitudes toward the international press that the World Press Committee in Washington had said that the United States should re-examine its position. One more positive reason for rejoining was the value of UNESCO in promoting a free press not only in developing countries but also in those societies now attempting to substitute democratic for authoritarian regimes.

**Rea:** The United Kingdom regularly used to earn more money from UNESCO than she put in any one year. This was the case during the nonmembership years as well. If the United Kingdom did not get back into UNESCO, she would lose influence in the world because of the principle of universal membership of U.N. organizations that all permanent members of the Security Council should hold. Germany and Japan were waiting in the wings.

**St. John:** UNESCO was experiencing a major cash crunch with a deficit of about US\$80 million largely as a result of the failure of Brazil and the Commonwealth of Independent States to pay their dues. Now was the time to rejoin considering UNESCO's contributions to U.K. projects since the withdrawal. The UNESCO director-general had recently commissioned Jacques Delors to head an international commission to seek ways in which education can be employed to fashion a more tolerable and less violent world. Mayor was clearly committed to not allowing UNESCO to be used as apolitical tool.

**Ennals:** It was a mistake for the United Kingdom to leave UNESCO. The principle of universality of the United Nations and its specialized agencies was of great importance. In 1985, the United Kingdom had put £6.4 million into UNESCO and received an estimated £50 million in consultancy fees, books, etc., in return. UNESCO provided a unique scientific global forum and the United Kingdom should be in on that.

#### ***B. Parliamentary Moves<sup>9</sup> in 1992:***

The Commons discussed UNESCO membership during a debate on 4 Dec. on a private member's motion by Conservative MP Cyril Townsend on the United Nations (7). The motion the Commons adopted included the sentence "That this House ... considers that a speedy return by the United Kingdom to UNESCO is in the national interest." The government, however, did

not oppose the motion because of its general acceptability apart from the reference to UNESCO; and the inclusion of this sentence did not alter the government's current policy (12).

A bipartisan group spoke in support of returning to UNESCO — Townsend, Emma Nicholson and Robert Spink of the Conservative Party; and Tam Dalyell, Jeremy Corbyn and Allan Rogers of the Labour Party.

Townsend, the chairman of the U.N. parliamentary group, said the United Kingdom had behaved disgracefully by following the highly misleading propaganda about UNESCO dispensed by President Reagan and the Heritage Foundation. If the United Kingdom were to remain on the Security Council, the universality rule would be fundamental. British publishing houses and British consultants had done well out of UNESCO; and the cultural establishment was overwhelmingly in favor of Britain's return (7: cols. 503-504). Nicholson said the United Kingdom did herself and UNESCO no favors by staying out (7: col. 545). Dalyell said the United Kingdom could renew her subscription to UNESCO for the cost of two tanks (7: col. 520). Corbyn said that to have left UNESCO was appalling and a kick in the face of a valuable part of the United Nations' operations (7: col. 541).

The Major Government's official position on returning to UNESCO went on record during the Commons adjournment debate on UNESCO on 22 May 1992, when Douglas Hogg, the minister of state for Foreign and Commonwealth Office, clarified the position (8: cols. 656-657). He said, "We ... approach the problem with a genuinely open mind, recognizing that many of the problems we identified in 1986 have been dealt with. But that fact alone is not conclusive." Because the money for rejoining would have to come out of the aid budget, the government had to ask itself how the payment of £9 million to UNESCO would rank against the other spending commitments, both multilateral and bilateral. "We have a genuine assessment of priorities to make ... We shall reach a conclusion in an open-minded way," he said.

Hogg said that substantial improvements and changes had occurred at UNESCO. The United Kingdom welcomed the decision that states, not individuals, should sit on the Executive Board. She welcomed the decision to appoint an expert group on financial and administrative matters. The full review of the Office of Public Information was also welcome news. That UNESCO had agreed to cooperate with the U.S. General Accounting Office was an encouraging development.

Townsend and three other MPs — Donald Anderson (Lab.), Jim Lester (Con.) and Simon Hughes (LD) — contributed to the adjournment debate. Townsend asserted that U.N. organizations were not for picking and choosing to suit the needs of any particular country at any particular time. "It is bizarre that, in the context of UNESCO, we argue that we can better influence events by shouting to our supporters who have remained on the pitch," he said (8: cols. 652-653). Anderson pointed out that UNESCO had largely

met every one of the criticisms that the government made in 1985 to justify the United Kingdom's withdrawal. The continued delay in rejoining was contrary to fundamental British foreign policy interests (8: col. 654). Lester said that money for rejoining should come from an increase in the Foreign Office budget rather than from the re-allocation of scarce resources (8: col. 655). Hughes said it was time to rejoin in the light of the changed perception and agenda of the United Nations and the United Kingdom's closer integration in Europe (8: col. 656).

### **A Theoretical Analysis of the Withdrawals**

Global space-biased media determined the nature of contemporary Western society. This is obviously the case in the information societies of the United States and the United Kingdom — the two countries whose withdrawal from UNESCO made the decisions of that organization lack universality. The United States is the largest producer, processor, storer and exporter of information in the world. Clearly, the United States (as well as her ally, the United Kingdom) wanted to maintain that "monopoly of knowledge" when it came under challenge from countries in the fringe — the non-aligned and the former-communist countries — who advanced the notion of a New World Information and Communication Order as an alternative monopoly.

The global space-biased media now includes the rapidly expanding information superhighway, of which the Internet, the network of computer networks, is an essential component. The Internet's information-accessing tools — such as Gopher, Wide Area Information Servers and World Wide Web — and its other services such as file transfer protocol, telnet, electronic-mail and Usenet — have had multiplier effects in enhancing the Western society's "monopoly of knowledge" over the other. Satellite links and optical-fibre technology, which are linked to the information superhighway, have widened the gap between the advanced and the developing countries since the UNESCO withdrawals took place in the mid- 1980s. Because of the enormous costs involved in the expansion of telecommunication facilities, the poorer countries, particularly the former colonies, have become more dependent on the advanced countries, particularly the United States and the former imperial powers, for information access and dissemination through advanced space-biased media, which have certainly facilitated the expansion of "imperialism" in its modern sense, as Innis theorized.

When the United States and the United Kingdom withdrew from UNESCO, their implicit intention was to exert social control over the non-Western society to maintain the West's "monopoly of knowledge." They saw UNESCO as the primary forum or the communication medium that the challenging countries used to promote the notion of NWICO. Their withdrawals, which meant slicing off 30 percent of the then UNESCO budget, enabled them to exert financial pressure on the organization to restore the

West's "monopoly of knowledge." They succeeded in achieving control over UNESCO when the latter abandoned its commitment to NWICO at its 1989 General Conference. (The MacBride Roundtable, a non-governmental interest group, has been meeting annually to keep some momentum relating to various aspects of NWICO.)

The United States and the United Kingdom, both at the state and the power-elite levels, implicitly understood the ineffectiveness of UNESCO without their presence as global information giants and money providers. As the statements of John Bolton and Baroness Chalker clearly indicated in the foregoing account, the two countries wanted to bring about near-total submission to their demands before they would re-join. By the early 1990s, they had succeeded in achieving social control over UNESCO to promote their definition of ideological objectives (e.g., free flow of information, human rights) and to enforce their demands of behavioral norms (e.g., de-emphasizing statist concepts, limiting excessive politicization, eliminating management and budgetary excesses). UNESCO's capitulation also meant indirect social control over the challenging states and power-elites as well.

The two countries, as well as their allies, obviously used disinformation and propaganda campaigns to achieve the desired social control. The powerful media in the West, a major target of the NWICO challenge, consistently misrepresented NWICO as a statist concept that advocated censorship and licensing of journalist. The truth was that neither the MacBride recommendations nor the UNESCO-approved version of NWICO contained provisions for the state control of media systems, licensing of journalists and imposing codes of conduct on the press (11: p. 71). Lord McGregor continued with such propaganda debunking the MacBride Report even while asking the U.K. government to rejoin UNESCO (6: col. 410). The U.S. media in particular also used the tactic of denying information to their audience by predominantly excluding the UNESCO version of NWICO.

By the early 1990s, having ascertained the demise of NWICO and feeling good about their "monopoly of knowledge," the powerful Western media and related interest groups were urging their partners in power, the U.S. and the U.K. governments, to re-join UNESCO. However, politicians in the domestic fringes — e.g., Esteban Torres in the United States and Cyril Townsend in the United Kingdom — had been advocating the same for much longer. The threat had subsided so much that the 1993 Interagency Working Group was able to advise the U.S. government that "the NGOs in education, science, culture and communications ... are highly supportive of re-entry into UNESCO ... The Washington Post editorialized in favor of re-entry in March" (20: p. 24).

The implications of the West's dispute with UNESCO become clearer through a systems perspective. The interests of the United States and the United Kingdom to bring about social control of UNESCO went far beyond their stated reasons for the withdrawal: politicization of UNESCO programs;

UNESCO's incorporation of statist concepts, and spiralling budget growth and unwieldy management (9: p. 41).

A systems analysis of an international communication issue — in this case, the UNESCO dispute — would reveal the interaction of other involved components that linked together the various participants: in this case, for example, the U.S. and the U.K. governments and their allies; various regulatory and representative agencies; the corporations involved, such as transnational media giants; and the audiences, such as those socially controlled in the West to support the "free flow of information." With credit to Fortner (1: pp 36-37) one should as well look at the other systemic components involved in the UNESCO issue to preserve their respective "monopolies of knowledge":

*Technical components:* the role played by those who benefitted from technologies used for international communication: cables, wires, satellites, computer networks, and so on.

*Economic components:* the role played by those who reaped economic benefits from trade, tariffs, taxation, capital investment, and so on.

*Political and regulatory components:* the role played by those who had interests in the issues of sovereignty, treaty making, alliances, geopolitical balance, and so on.

*Cultural components:* the role played by those who benefitted from the export of cultural products and those who depended on such products.

*Social control components:* the role played by those interested in shaping the international communication system to benefit their political ideologies and philosophies — free flow of information, right to communicate, and so on.

A systems analysis encompassing the relevant components and their respective actors even with regard to a single issue as the UNESCO dispute would be complex matter that future researcher might undertake with greater thoroughness. Suffice to point out that the U.S. and U.K. withdrawals and their current intentions to re-join go well beyond the overt reasons that they have propagandized.

#### Notes

- 1 Co-sponsors of House Concurrent Resolution 103 included Rep. Howard L. Berman, D-Calif., Rep. George E. Brown J., D-Calif., Rep. Tom Lantos, D-Calif., Rep. Jim Leach, R-Iowa, and Rep. George Miller, D-Calif.
- 2 Stein had interviewed C.L. Sharma, UNESCO's deputy director-general; Alain Modoux, UNESCO's director of communications; Thomas R. Forstenzer, executive director of the UNESCO director-general's cabinet; Dana Bullen, executive director of the World Press Freedom Com-

the Biosphere, and the International Hydrological Program; the Universal Copyright Convention; the World Heritage Fund; and the International Centre for the Study of the Preservation and Restoration of Cultural Property (ICCROM). The United States also continues to support these programs.

- 9 Bowen Wells (Con.) and Cyril Townsend (Con.) are among the MPs who have carried on a sustained campaigning to get the United Kingdom back into UNESCO. These two and 10 other MPs — Alex Carlile (LD), Ann Clwyd (Lab), George Foulkes (Lab), Russell Johnston (Lab), Jim Lester (Con), Joan Lester (Lab), Robert MacLennan (LD), Emma Nicholson (Con), David Steel (LD), Peter Temple-Morris (Con) and Dafydd Wigley (Plaid Cymru) — wrote a letter to the Times on 28 May 1993 saying it was time for Britain to rejoin UNESCO. Outstanding non-parliamentary supporters include David Church, Maurice Goldsmith, Malcolm Harper and Rashid Kareh (6: col. 416).

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# U.S. and U.K. Re-entry into UNESCO (October 1995?): A Reportorial Description and a Theoretical Analysis

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## Introduction

"The Department (of State) is taking a fresh look at UNESCO. It recognizes that UNESCO has successfully addressed many of the political and management problems that led to (the U.S.) withdrawal (in 1985). It will now review the Organization's Program and Budget for 1994-1995 to gain a better understanding of UNESCO's potential and to determine if the benefits of membership would justify the costs. The true value of membership depends on the effectiveness of UNESCO's programs and their relevance to the great issues of the 1990s such as democracy building and the environment" (24).

This was the early 1993 position of the new Democratic administration in the United States with regard to re-joining UNESCO. It stood in contrast to the mid-1992 position of the Republican administration, which said it was "not considering a return to UNESCO in the near future of a budgetary request for UNESCO dues for (fiscal year 1994). Rather it will pursue fully its current policy of working with other countries and with the UNESCO Secretariat to promote reform in the hope that it will lead ultimately to sound management and effective program activity becoming integral parts of UNESCO's culture" (19:p. 169).

Rep. Esteban E. Torres, D-Calif., a former ambassador and U.S. permanent representative to UNESCO under President Jimmy Carter, introduced a resolution in the U.S. House of Representatives calling on the Clinton administration to rejoin UNESCO before the end of 1993 in the context of the positive changes that had occurred within the organization as confirmed by the GAO report (2).<sup>1</sup>

By late 1993, it appeared almost a certainty that the United States would return to UNESCO by a target date set for October 1995. After presidential approval of the move, the Congress was expected to vote on the estimated \$65 million U.S. yearly contribution to the organization's operating expenses. Earlier, a task force headed by Assistant Secretary of State Douglas Bennet



had recommended that the United States revive its UNESCO membership (15).<sup>2</sup> UNESCO Director-General Federico Mayor told the press in October 1993 that the State Department had forwarded a recommendation to rejoin the agency in early September to the National Security Council (16).

Meanwhile, the Conservative government in the United Kingdom was under pressure from the Parliament to re-join UNESCO from which it withdrew in 1986. The Foreign Affairs Committee of the House of Commons recommended in mid-1993 that the United Kingdom should now seek to rejoin UNESCO (3: p. xiv). A House of Commons resolution, adopted on 4 Dec. 1992, considered "that a speedy return by the United Kingdom to UNESCO is in the national interest" (7: col. 564). But the government has not yet taken any decision on a resumption of U.K. membership because of the cost of membership — about £8 million for 1993 and almost £10 million a year thereafter in addition to the "indirect cost of additional staff in London and Paris (12)."

The history of the U.S. and U.K. withdrawals from UNESCO is documented elsewhere (e.g., 9, 10 and 11). This paper primarily reports, in the journalistic tradition, the political moves during the two-year period 1992-1993 that built up pressure on the U.S. and U.K. administrations to make a decision on re-joining UNESCO. It also attempts, in the academic tradition, to look at the unfolding moves through the social control theory of Harold Innis (13, 14) and through systems analysis.

It seems best to outline the pertinent theoretical perspective before moving on to describing the developments in the United States and the United Kingdom respectively. At the end, we shall analyze the withdrawals and the subsequent pressures to rejoin within this theoretical framework.

### **A Theoretical Perspective**

Fortner (1: pp. 26-31) has outlined a theoretical basis for international communication centered on the work of Innis, who believed that the space or time bias of the means of communication defined the nature of society. (Media that were difficult to transport but lasted long, such as carved stone, were time-biased; while easy-to-transport, disposable media, such as papyrus, were space-biased. The space-biased media favored imperialism because they helped expansion of political authority geographically; while the time-biased media favored tradition and continuity). Societies established and attempted to maintain "monopolies of knowledge" using these two types of media, which provided them with a measure of social control. This control was strongest near the political center of a society, and weakest on its fringe, where other means of communication might threaten central control. People in the fringes of society would create alternative monopolies of knowledge, and eventually challenge the dominant monopoly.

Social control could exist within a national (or domestic) framework as well as within an international (or global) framework. Nationally, the state

or the political and economic elites could attempt to achieve control over the people through definition of social objectives, establishing and enforcing behavioral norms, and so on. Internationally, powerful countries could attempt to exercise control over others by influencing their foreign policies, trade and cultural practices, technical standards relating to telecommunications, and so on. The control of colonial powers over their global colonies had now translated into the power of the Western industrial states over the developing countries.

Governments around the world have used information as a powerful ideological and political weapon both nationally and internationally. The idea of a "free flow of information" in the United States itself reflected a measure of social control. All countries, including the United States, controlled communication to exercise social control in varying degrees. The essential difference between the United States and many other countries was that she allowed private owners of communication channels to exercise primary social control; the state was the primary controller in other countries.

Strategies for social control included disinformation campaigns and propaganda, and the more straightforward practice of denying access to information. Examples of the latter category were attempts to control the import of technology or "software," attempts to establish conventions to prevent unwanted satellite spillover; attempts to control the activities and journalists and diplomats, and so on. Providing information to people otherwise denied access to it was also an effort to exercise social control. Efforts to exercise social control existed in both economic and political spheres. The social control exercised, either domestically or internationally, varied depending on the strength of the central elites or the state, and the completeness of the monopoly of knowledge.

The "monopoly of knowledge" perspective could extend itself to a systems analysis approach to the study of international communication that would provide the basis for understanding the interrelationships among the various parts of the system: technical components (e.g., wires, recorded materials, radio waves); economic components (e.g., trade issues, tariffs, taxation); political and regulatory components (e.g., portrayals of nations and peoples, dependence on other nations for cultural products); and social control components (propaganda, information flow, the right to communicate). These components linked together the various participants in international communication: governments, regulatory and representative agencies, corporations, and audiences (1: pp. 36-39).

#### **U.S. Position (1992-93)**

##### ***A. Moves Under Clinton (Democratic) Presidency 1993:***

During the second half of 1993, the Clinton Presidency was actively weighing the pros and cons of returning to UNESCO. Following a request by the

National Security Council, an Interagency Working Group, headed by the Department of State, submitted a report on 7 June reviewing the U.S. position on UNESCO (20). The IWG came to eight conclusions:

- \* UNESCO had made major progress in solving the problems of excessive politicization, poor management, and lack of budgetary restraint that led to the U.S. withdrawal in December 1984.
- \* UNESCO needed to define better its mission as a technical agency, a forum for intellectual cooperation or a workable combination of the two.
- \* UNESCO had too many programs for its current budget level. Many programs were inadequately funded and of marginal utility.
- \* UNESCO provided a constitutional mandate and existing worldwide infrastructures and networks in education, science, culture and communications that could be utilized effectively to promote a wide range of social and political values of central importance to the United States.
- \* The U.S. private and public sector constituencies in education, science, culture and communications were near unanimous in their recognition of positive change in UNESCO and in their conviction that enlightened and active U.S. participation in the organization would further their professional goals.
- \* Membership in UNESCO would benefit the U.S. national interest because it would provide to U.S. public sector and private sector specialist access to global networks and infrastructures — not available elsewhere — for intergovernmental and NGO cooperation in key areas of education, science, culture and communications.
- \* A consensus existed that re-entry into UNESCO would require the United States to make a commitment to provide effective leadership and funding support at appropriate levels through the UNESCO budget process to sustain high priority programs such as the Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission, the World Heritage Convention, the Convention on the Illicit Import, Export or Transfer of Cultural Property, the International Institute of Educational Planning and the International Program for the Development of Communications.
- \* The cost of re-entry would be substantial. Because no funds for UNESCO membership had been budgeted or were available, it would be difficult to fund re-entry before the 1996 financial year.

- \* Given the current budget environment, even a delayed re-entry into UNESCO would, in all likelihood, further crowd out overseas operational requirements in the 1996 financial year and beyond.

Among the *recommendations*, the IWG asked that the United States:

- *plan to rejoin UNESCO as of 1 Oct. 1995*
- *re-establish the U.S National Commission for UNESCO immediately*
- *undertake consultations with Congress to support re-joining UNESCO*
- *consult the United Kingdom before announcing new policy toward UNESCO*
- *provide voluntary funding to supplement implementation of programs such as the IPDC and the IOC*

The IWG said the stipulated re-entry deadline would enable the United States to seek election to the Executive Board and other intergovernmental bodies at the October 1995 General Conference. Between now and then, the United States should urge UNESCO to pursue vigorously further reform, in particular: effective follow-up to recommendations of the 1993 and 1992 reports of the General Accounting Office (21,22); satisfactory clarification of UNESCO's post Cold-War mission; substantial further concentration of its program; the institution of provisions to ensure full transparency and accountability in the Participation Program; and reform of the human rights procedures of the Committee on Conventions and Recommendations in light of the expanding role of the U.N. Center for Human Rights.

The IWG said that it was not possible to rejoin UNESCO as of 1 Oct. 1993 because the minimum funds of US\$83 million — US\$14 million for 1993 regular budget, US\$63 million for 1994 regular budget and US\$6 million for working capital fund — required to do so were not available. However, the United States would have to review the final decision to rejoin in the context of the budget process for the 1996 financial year. It might be possible to accomplish re-joining UNESCO within the deferred payment policy.

While the United States had benefited tangibly by saving about US\$400 million in assessed contributions since January 1985, she had suffered from her absence from UNESCO “by not being a full and active participant in U.N. intergovernmental cooperation in education, science, culture and communications.”

The GAO also played a significant role in spurring the Clinton Presidency to take another look at UNESCO. In late March, it produced a follow-up report (21) on the progress UNESCO had made in implementing the 12 recommendations cooperation in education, science, culture and communications.”

UNESCO has implemented or made good progress toward implementing 8 of the 12 recommendations made in our June 1992 report, particularly in the areas of evaluation, human resource management, and budget presentation. UNESCO has made moderate progress in addressing decentralization issues and developing programs plans that identify expected impact and has made little progress in developing operational plans to decentralize.

Beyond our recommendations, UNESCO has (1) made evaluation an element of each professional's performance rating, (2) separated staff because their positions were no longer needed, and (3) improved its budget presentation. We have some concern about UNESCO's oversight of the Participation Program, which funds projects and grants on a cost-sharing basis with individual member states.

Overall, UNESCO's member states, Director General, managers, and employee associations have demonstrated a commitment to management reform through their actions. This commitment will need to continue over the long term if UNESCO is to fully implement our recommendations and solidify its recent management improvements (21: pp.1-2).

#### *B. Moves Under Bush (Republican) Presidency 1992:*

##### *1. Position of the State Department*

John R. Bolton, U.S. assistant secretary of state for international organization affairs, clarified the Bush administration's policy on UNESCO at a joint hearing before three sub-committees of the U.S. House of Representatives on 25 June 1992 (19:pp. 17-34; 156-190).

Bolton said that since the time the United States withdrew from UNESCO because of the organization's excessive politicization, poor management, and long-term lack of budgetary restraint, the United States had maintained a presence at UNESCO through her Observer Mission of two professional staff, had attended every meeting of the organization's governing bodies, and had made voluntary contributions of about US\$2.5 million per year in support of high-value activities for the United States such as the work of the Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission, the World Heritage Convention, the Man and the Biosphere program, the Universal Copyright Convention, and the International Hydrological and Natural Hazards programs. UNESCO staff included 84 U.S. citizens including 49 in the professional ranks. The United States was an active participant in the Western Information Group and, therefore, had a very active presence in Paris. Moreover, she was in the Geneva Group, the 13 largest contributors to the U.N. system, that met twice a year to discuss overall U.N. system reform.

The 1992 GAO Report (22) had stated that it was too soon to judge the effectiveness of some of the UNESCO reforms. Knut Hammaraskjold, who chaired the six-person independent commission on UNESCO that the

director-general appointed in December 1988 (18), and Peter Wilenski, who subsequently chaired a panel of international advisers to review the Hammarskjold report, had said much the same thing in a follow-up report in January 1992 (17). The State Department endorsed the Hammarskjold/Wilenski recommendations calling for the introduction of a consistent and fair promotion system based on merit, a better career development system and equal opportunity for women. However, the proportion of female professionals at UNESCO had increased from 20 percent in 1984 to 26.8 percent in 1991.

The GAO Report had stated that UNESCO had not solved long-standing problems with consultants and program evaluation; the report had made 12 recommendations (relating to responsive and accountable management, program focus and planning, personnel system reform, budget policies and practices, and financial management) each of which was consistent with the goals sought by the Department of State. UNESCO should have given particular attention to the recommendation on better application of the rules on the use of supplementary staff and fee contracts to control the contract authorization procedure more effectively. There had to be a change of culture at UNESCO. When the United States had criticized what she believed to be excessive use of consultants, the director-general's response had been, "I have to go outside the organization to get new ideas." UNESCO used too many consultants with the supplementary staff costs totalling 9.6 percent of the regular budget staff and personnel costs (US\$21.8 million) during the 1990-91 biennium. Fee contracts had cost an additional US\$47.9 million during the same biennium. UNESCO did not have written instructions on the specific steps needed to determine the employment of a consultant.

To satisfy the concerns of the Department of State, UNESCO must fully implement the GAO Report's recommendations on program focus and planning, and on personnel system reform. The GAO Report had stressed the need for significantly better program evaluation. UNESCO had conducted only 16 impact evaluations since 1986, covering a mere 8 percent of its activities. UNESCO lacked a system that allowed activities to be tracked and monitored from biennium to biennium. The time had arrived for UNESCO to develop a systematic approach to decentralization considering that 73 percent of UNESCO's total staff of 2,697 people were located in Paris while a high proportion of funds were expended in the field. One of UNESCO's problems remained a continuing lack of focus in its programmatic structure. Concentration of programs had been driven more by budget constraints than by a conscious policy of identifying priorities. UNESCO needed to focus more clearly on what its mission was and what it should be and be less all over the lot.

The United States was not considering a return to UNESCO in the near future or a budgetary request for UNESCO dues for the 1994 financial year. The State Department believed that much remained to be done and

that what had been accomplished needed to settle in and be institutionalized. The United States did not believe the changes thus far adopted warranted opening the question of whether to rejoin UNESCO, at an expenditure of about US\$55 million per year. While the budgetary issue was a concern, it was certainly not the only concern. A dispute remained with the UNESCO Secretariat whether the United States owed an additional US\$42 million from the time of her withdrawal at the end of 1984— the middle of a budget biennium.

The United States had a tactical consideration as well: that if she went back in, the initial progress that UNESCO had made might come to a stop. Therefore, this was not the time to go back in. The Third World governments had not abandoned entirely the new world information and communication order and a whole range of other things. The West had to go through "a very difficult struggle" to get rid of the last reference to NWICO in the annual resolution of the Committee on Information in the U.N. General Assembly in 1990. The United States agreed with the November 1991 statement of the World Press Freedom Committee that UNESCO was starting to do good things in favour of press freedom.

Member governments such as Japan and others had undertaken steps which the United States supported. Japan had actively promoted management reforms. She had successfully proposed a constitutional amendment in November 1991 which designated member states - and not individuals — as Executive Board members. She had also called for working groups to meet between formal sessions of the board to facilitate its work. Japan had asked the United States to consider re-entry. Argentina, Ivory Coast, Italy, Portugal, Turkey and the former Soviet Union also had asked the United States formally to re-join UNESCO.

Other areas of UNESCO policy had also deeply concerned the United States, particularly a UNESCO/UNDP mission that spent two weeks in Iraq in February 1992.

UNESCO appeared to be courting Israel as a way of enticing the United States to re-enter the organization. Thus Israel was benefitting from the absence of the United States.

The United States met with the U.K. counterparts on a regular basis to discuss U.N. issues, including UNESCO but the two countries did not coordinate their policies. The United Kingdom had informed the United States by letter on 24 Sept. 1991, that she had not shifted her policy toward UNESCO even though during a House of Commons debate on 22 May 1992, some members of parliament had supported re-entry. The United Kingdom continued to fund some UNESCO programs in the same way the United States did including the WHC, the IOC and a management study of the UNESCO Office of Public Information.

## 2. The GAO Report's 12 Recommendations

The U.S. General Accounting Office, in its June 1992 report (22), made 12 recommendations covering five areas of UNESCO reform.

- a) Progress in developing more responsive and accountable management:
  - \* develop criteria laying out the factors and conditions under which activities and resources should be decentralized;
  - \* complete the country data bases that would be necessary to develop operational plans for decentralizing; and
  - \* develop operational plans that would lay out specifics for decentralization, including what activities and resources to decentralize, where to locate these resources, and what time frames to follow (22: p. 28).
  
- b) Progress in program focus and planning, and evaluation:
  - \* develop and implement a system of computer coding that allows activities to be tracked and monitored from biennium to biennium.
  - \* ensure that work plans and other planning documents include expected impact, quantitative indicators for measuring success, and specific target groups; and
  - \* develop an evaluation plan that ensures a representative selection of UNESCO's programs is evaluated and that specifies the scheduling of evaluations, funding sources for the evaluations, and who will do the evaluation (22: p. 36).
  
- c) Personnel system reform, and implementation:
  - \* continue to monitor progress through periodic external reviews;
  - \* develop a unified personnel data base that is accurate, complete, and includes regular and supplementary staff in all locations and from all sources of funding; and
  - \* develop procedural checklists for the application of the rules on consultants, supernumeraries, and fee contracts to better control the contract authorization procedure and make it more transparent and uniform (22: p. 47).
  
- d) Progress in improving budget policies and practices:
  - \* ensure that a table comparing budgeted and actual expenditures by object of expenditure be included in a draft of the budget presentation for the governing bodies, and
  - \* elaborate on the differences between the constant rate of exchange and the actual rate in effect when the budget is published and add a footnote in the summary budget table denoting the changes in exchange rate (22: pp. 53-54).



e) **Financial management:**

- \* ensure that payroll controls contain a positive verification of hours worked, such as employees recording and signing a schedule of work hours and having a supervisor verify it as correct (22: p. 58).

Frank C. Conahan, assistant controller general of the GAO, testified on the GAO Report before the joint hearing (19: pp. 34-45). He said that following on the 1984 GAO Report (23), UNESCO reforms were of very recent vintage. In some cases, it was too early to reach final conclusions whether these reforms were going to stay. In some areas, UNESCO got a long way to go, though, in summary, UNESCO had taken steps in the right direction. He highlighted reforms in four key areas.

***Oversight, accountability and responsiveness:***

UNESCO had taken significant steps toward improving its overall management in the areas of oversight, accountability and responsiveness. Its governing bodies, particularly the Executive Board, had taken a much more active role in overseeing operations. It had improved the recruitment of women for professional occupations. It had strengthened financial regulations and given increased authority to field offices.

The Executive Board now scrutinized proposed budgets more carefully. In 1991, UNESCO's governing bodies had formed a small group of financial and administrative experts to review all budgets in depth. The board now made sure of the implementation of the recommendations of UNESCO's external auditor. UNESCO had strengthened its accountability through enhancing the role of its inspector general and strengthening the authority of its administrative officers. The director-general had delegated authority to managers thereby making the managers more responsive. UNESCO was developing plans to decentralize by strengthening its field offices.

***Program management:***

UNESCO's habit of changing activity descriptions and identification codes from one budget period to the next had created a problem because it made it extremely difficult to determine what activities had actually been cut, merged or enhanced. A computer analysis had shown that UNESCO had reduced the number of activities from 2,041 in the 1988-89 biennium to 1,354 in the 1990-91 biennium — a 34 percent reduction. UNESCO needed a tracking system.

To improve its program planning, UNESCO now required planners to follow U.N. criteria: identifying objectives, priorities and steps needed to attain objectives. Now, UNESCO needed to develop an evaluation plan.

**Personnel management:**

UNESCO had proposed a new promotion system based on merit and competition. But its control of consultants and other temporary staff remained a problem. UNESCO needed to develop a unified personnel base that was accurate, complete and included all staff.

**Budgeting:**

The real growth in UNESCO's budget at the time of the U.S. withdrawal (1984-85) was 7.9 percent. Since then, the annual real growth rates of UNESCO had improved its budget presentation.

**3. Testimony from Others<sup>4</sup>**

Democratic Rep. Esteban Torres testified that the U.S. pullout from UNESCO was an executive branch decision made at the political level, overriding the recommendations of federal agencies and nongovernmental organizations active in UNESCO's substantive fields. The executive branch cited paralyzing management and budgetary growth as two of the three reasons for leaving UNESCO. The third — and at the time the foremost — reason for withdrawal was U.S. objection to the discussion of "political" issues in UNESCO, most notably on the flow of information. The reports of the U.N. Association had addressed these in convincing detail. It was not fair to throw up new, narrow, bureaucratic demands as new benchmarks for determining whether the United States should return. Of all the U.N. agencies, UNESCO was the best positioned for stimulating the partnerships for promoting collaborative action on intercultural respect and peace, and for directly addressing issues such as multi-ethnic tolerance. The U.S. government should utilize a strategic position within the agency to press unambiguously for democratic values, which found expression in the UNESCO constitution and programs. Quibbling over details of UNESCO's management was an inefficient basis for a national policy. (19: pp. 3-13)

Knut Hammarskjold, who had chaired the independent commission for UNESCO reforms, testified that the financial argument invoked as a kind of last resort obstacle to participation was simply not believable. A new culture was evolving at UNESCO — a culture that included flexibility, responsibility and accountability. "I believe UNESCO is now ready to be used as a constructive instrument for the solution of present and future global and local challenges," he said (19: pp. 80-81)

Hammarskjold said that the independent commission he headed (18) addressed three main areas: management style and effectiveness; organizational structure and system; and human resources, management and personnel policies. The 1992 Consolidated Report (17) had concluded that UNESCO's administrative reforms were well on track; that the major need now was a determined effort to bed down and institutionalize the reforms so

that they could become the natural working process of the organization (19: pp. 46-82)

UNESCO Deputy Director-General C.L. Sharma testified that the continued absence of the United States from UNESCO no longer evoked any sympathy or understanding, only consternation at what was seen as extreme ambivalence — an inexplicable unwillingness to recommit to a U.N. agency of which she was a principal founder and which was now fully committed to the principles of free inquiry, press freedom and democratic cultural values of pluralism in education as an essential element of freedom and economic progress. The State Department testimony was a “little disturbing” because it concurred with things that really did not exist. It was not correct to say that much remained to be done. The UNESCO General Conference of 1989 had decisively killed and buried the concept of the New World Information and Communication Order (19: pp. 83-85).

Sharma added that none of the reasons for the U.S. withdrawal in 1984 — politicization and ideological bias of certain programs such as in the field of mass media and human rights; lack of concentration and of clearly defined priorities; poor coordination with the other U.N. agencies — existed any longer. UNESCO had got into the forefront of the movement to support press freedom and democratic political change, not only in Eastern Europe but in many countries of the developing world, following the new communication strategy that the General Conference adopted in 1989 to “promote the free flow of ideas by word and image” (19: pp. 98-99). There would be no complete revitalization of UNESCO without an active involvement and support of the United States (19: p. 103). UNESCO had already started working on the GAO recommendations, most of which were of a procedural nature (19: p. 118).

Philip Smith of the National Academy of Sciences testified that the reforms that had taken place in UNESCO were impressive. From the perspective of science, engineering and technology, an organization like UNESCO was more needed in the world today as a multilateral organization in the 1990s than heretofore (19: p. 119).

Richard Getzinger of the American Association for the Advancement of Science testified that the AAAS continued to be impressed by the breadth and scope of UNESCO's science-related activities. Developing countries benefited considerably from these programs through technology transfer. This, in turn, brought benefits to the entire global scientific community (19: p. 129).

## **U.K. Position (1992-93) Under Prime Minister Major**

### ***A. Parliamentary Moves in 1993***

Money seemed to be the major consideration for holding up the United Kingdom from rejoining UNESCO in 1993. The Foreign Affairs Committee<sup>5</sup> of

the House of Commons, in its fifth report on UNESCO released on 21 July 1993, recommended "that the United Kingdom should now seek to rejoin UNESCO."

Based on two days of testimony<sup>6</sup> and written evidence it received<sup>7</sup> the committee came up with three conclusions (3: pp. xiii-xiv):

- \* The Government's contention that we cannot afford to rejoin UNESCO is unconvincing. The Government does not appear to have reviewed, with the same intensity, the contributions to other international organizations. We are not persuaded that the issue of whether to rejoin UNESCO should be pressed as a simple choice between spending money on UNESCO or the size of the United Kingdom's bilateral aid program.
- \* The Government's claim that we cannot afford to rejoin UNESCO is incompatible with the suggestion that an American decision in UNESCO's favour would require the United Kingdom to consider following suit. We believe that the United Kingdom should form its own judgment, decide its own priorities and not make its policy upon the coat-tails of the USA.
- \* The debate about UNESCO's policy, budgeting and management problems has been settled, broadly in the organization's favour. Although further decentralization is needed, we recommend that the United Kingdom should now seek to rejoin UNESCO.

The committee pointed out that the House of Commons itself had agreed on 4 Dec. 1992 that a speedy return of the United Kingdom to UNESCO was in the best national interest. Moreover, the Early Day Motion No. 1220 (supported by 263 members of parliament) carried substantially the same message. Douglas Hogg, the minister of state, Foreign and Commonwealth Office, had reiterated the principle of universality as it applied to membership of the United Nations and affiliated agencies. Hogg himself had told the committee that were the United Kingdom currently within UNESCO, she would not have withdrawn.

Although the Fourth FAC Report in 1990 had considered that some more time was necessary before it would be possible to be certain of the director-general's ability to deliver the reforms that UNESCO so badly needed, the predecessor committee had seen no reason why the United Kingdom should not have rejoined UNESCO within a year had the director-general demonstrated success within the ensuing 12 months.

The committee said that the British government's objections to UNESCO's policies had been overcome. The only serious criticism of UNESCO still outstanding was the complaint that the organization's

expenditure and personnel were still concentrated at UNESCO's headquarters in Paris rather than being evolved to the field in those countries where UNESCO was working. In effect, the government's case against rejoining now centred on the stated competition for resources between the assessed contribution to UNESCO (Around US\$10 million) and the alternative spending projects developed by the Overseas Development Administration since the United Kingdom's withdrawal in 1985. The committee said, "The crystallization of the Government's policy around the question of finance limits the scope for further debate about the problems of UNESCO but opens up a whole new debate about the attitude of the Government to its expenditure priorities" (3: pp. viii-ix).

The committee said the Foreign and Commonwealth Office/Overseas Development Administration appeared not to have prepared contingency plans for possible cuts in the bilateral aid program to fund the assessed contribution to UNESCO, and "we take this to mean that for as long as the argument is based upon public expenditure priorities, the Government will not move from its current position" (3: p. vi).

The committee pointed out that the United Kingdom was still a member of a number of organizations<sup>8</sup> linked to UNESCO funded variously by the ODA, the Department of National Heritage, the Office of Science and Technology, and the Department of Trade and Industry. The U.N. Association had said that because of such funding that already existed, the government would have to raise from new sources only a third of the estimated cost of re-joining UNESCO.

Meanwhile, Lord Henley, the parliamentary under-secretary of state for social security, declared in the House of Lords on 5 May 1993 that Prime Minister John Major's Conservative government was "keeping under review a possible resumption of our UNESCO membership" (4: cols. 697-699). He was answering a question by Lord Montagu of Beaulieu: whether the government considered that the time was right for the United Kingdom to rejoin UNESCO and to contribute actively to its work. Montagu asserted that it was now increasingly detrimental to the United Kingdom to be the only member of the European community not taking an active part in UNESCO's work.

"We will look at the issue very carefully," Henley assured. The United Kingdom could not ignore the cost of renewed membership of some £8 million to £10 million. "We have to be sure that we are going to get value for money from the increased cost ... and that it will be in our own national interests to join."

Minister Mark Lennox-Boyd gave a similar response in the House of Commons 29 March 1993. "We are keeping under close review a possible resumption of our UNESCO membership, but are not able to say when a decision might be taken," he told Sir David Steel, a Liberal Democrat MP (5: col. 83). Answering a question on costs of rejoining, Lennox-Boyd

explained to Peter Bottomley, a Conservative MP, that the United Kingdom's UNESCO assessed contribution for the remainder of 1993 would be £5.8 million in addition to the advance payment of £610,000 for UNESCO's working capital fund. The United Kingdom's assessed contribution in 1994 would be about £10.6 million and the advance to working capital fund almost £200,000. There would be additional cost of about £250,000 a year as a consequence of staff increases in London and Paris (5: col. 82). (Again answering a question by Conservative MP Cyril Townsend during Prime Minister's Question Time on 30 March, John Major said his government was "keeping under review" the question of rejoining UNESCO).

Baroness Chalker of Wallasey, Minister for Overseas Development, elucidated the matter further in the House of Lords a few days earlier, following "a debate of remarkable unanimity" in which participants from all benches said that the time was now right for the United Kingdom to re-enter UNESCO (6: cols. 401-424). The debate centred around the question by Lord Judd on the steps the government was taking to ensure the role and future development of UNESCO — the Lords' first debate on the UNESCO issue since 18 Jan. 1987.

Chalker repeated the cost figures Lennox-Boyd gave the Commons. "Considerable costs would be involved if we were to rejoin, both on the diplomatic wing and on the aid wing," she said. Any advance payments made in 1993 would not go toward projects; they would simply be redistributed to existing members under the UNESCO rules. The costs involved would have to come from existing programs, which were "giving us excellent value for money." The total financial benefits the United Kingdom accrued from UNESCO did not outweigh the cost of membership. While UNESCO had cited £9.5 million as expenditure in the United Kingdom in 1991, £5 million of that merely went to meet the salaries of U.K. staff, who were not necessarily located in the country. A resumption of membership might not bring the United Kingdom great extra financial benefits. The principal concern was whether the United Kingdom was getting real value for money and whether she could truly improve the situation if she decided to resume membership. "We shall take our own decision based on British interests and British priorities," she said.

Referring to the two 1992 UNESCO debates in the Commons (on 22 May and 4 Dec.), Chalker said the government's position was still the same as explained by Douglas Hogg, minister of state for Foreign and Commonwealth Office: it would approach the question with a genuinely open mind.

Chalker said she welcomed the UNESCO reforms since Federico Mayor became director-general in 1987. Mayor and his team of reformers had made impressive progress even though more had to be done. "I firmly believe that without our being outside the organization, and yet still strongly encouraging from our position as an interested observer, the progress achieved in such matters as administration, management, budgetary improvements and pro-

gram planning and evaluation would have been much less marked than it is, she said (echoing the identical sentiments that U.S. spokesman John Bolton had expressed in mid- 1992).

She was well aware of the parliamentary interest in re-joining UNESCO with more than 200 signatures to the Early Day Motion in the Commons. Ensuring the free flow of communication, a wider and better balance, and strengthening communications capacity was exactly what the United Kingdom always hoped UNESCO would achieve from the beginning. The new UNESCO was fully aware of the problems it had to tackle in promoting a free and pluralistic press in the many newly emerging democracies of Eastern Europe. The United Kingdom welcomed the action UNESCO took at the 1991 Windhoek Conference and the 1992 Alma Ata Conference when it issued declarations supporting the free flow of information in Africa and Central Asia respectively.

The March 1993 report of the U.S. General Accounting Office (20) had been broadly favourable to UNESCO though it had complained about lack of progress on decentralization. Improvements had most noticeably occurred in administration and management. Though the United Kingdom did not contribute to UNESCO's general budget, she had retained her membership in intergovernmental bodies like the IHP, the IOC and the WHC.

Chalker said she was uneasy with a recent UNESCO decision to increase its Participation Program, where member states made bids to get funds for projects, by two-thirds — US\$10 million — at a time when it had a cash flow crisis. This program lacked proper evaluation.

The other six participants in the Lords' debate — Lord Judd, Lord Renfrew of Kaimsthorn, Lord McGregor of Durris, Lord Rea, Lord St. John of Bletso and Lord Ennals — all said the time was now right for the United Kingdom to re-enter the 172-member UNESCO. Among the points they made were the following.

**Judd:** The Clinton presidency would approach the re-entry positively and with an open mind. Britain's own failure to rejoin was increasingly bewildering. President Reagan's decision to withdraw owed more to blinkered right-wing ideology than to anything else. The U.K. withdrawal was more about the close Thatcher-Reagan relationship than result of any clear attempt to understand what was happening at UNESCO. While the government cited cost as a major hurdle for re-entry, UNESCO expenditure in the United Kingdom had averaged £8.5 million per year between 1984 and 1990. The resurgence of xenophobic nationalism, racial and religious persecution and the horrors of ethnic cleansing were directly relevant to the purposes of UNESCO and Britain's part within it. The U.S. General Accounting Office was now prepared to testify to the Congress that the management problems of the past were no longer a valid reason to justify U.S. nonmembership.

**Renfrew:** If, nearly 47 years ago, there was a new world order, that was once again the case today. The United Kingdom had three reasons for

rejoining. First, the United Kingdom could offer her facility in English, her own scientific tradition, her tradition of liberal thought, her outstanding educational tradition, and her expertise in publication. Secondly, the United Kingdom's place in the world as a permanent member of the U.N. Security Council would not be secure when she absented herself from one of the major U.N. agencies. Thirdly, the United Kingdom economically benefited from UNESCO — a consideration that significantly outweighed her contribution. World heritage sites in Britain, which received UNESCO benefits, included Stonehenge, Avebury, Fountains Abbey and Hadrian's Wall.

**McGregor:** UNESCO had now so transformed its policies and attitudes toward the international press that the World Press Committee in Washington had said that the United States should re-examine its position. One more positive reason for rejoining was the value of UNESCO in promoting a free press not only in developing countries but also in those societies now attempting to substitute democratic for authoritarian regimes.

**Rea:** The United Kingdom regularly used to earn more money from UNESCO than she put in any one year. This was the case during the nonmembership years as well. If the United Kingdom did not get back into UNESCO, she would lose influence in the world because of the principle of universal membership of U.N. organizations that all permanent members of the Security Council should hold. Germany and Japan were waiting in the wings.

**St. John:** UNESCO was experiencing a major cash crunch with a deficit of about US\$80 million largely as a result of the failure of Brazil and the Commonwealth of Independent States to pay their dues. Now was the time to rejoin considering UNESCO's contributions to U.K. projects since the withdrawal. The UNESCO director-general had recently commissioned Jacques Delors to head an international commission to seek ways in which education can be employed to fashion a more tolerable and less violent world. Mayor was clearly committed to not allowing UNESCO to be used as apolitical tool.

**Ennals:** It was a mistake for the United Kingdom to leave UNESCO. The principle of universality of the United Nations and its specialized agencies was of great importance. In 1985, the United Kingdom had put £6.4 million into UNESCO and received an estimated £50 million in consultancy fees, books, etc., in return. UNESCO provided a unique scientific global forum and the United Kingdom should be in on that.

#### ***B. Parliamentary Moves<sup>9</sup> in 1992:***

The Commons discussed UNESCO membership during a debate on 4 Dec. on a private member's motion by Conservative MP Cyril Townsend on the United Nations (7). The motion the Commons adopted included the sentence "That this House ... considers that a speedy return by the United Kingdom to UNESCO is in the national interest." The government, however, did



not oppose the motion because of its general acceptability apart from the reference to UNESCO; and the inclusion of this sentence did not alter the government's current policy (12).

A bipartisan group spoke in support of returning to UNESCO — Townsend, Emma Nicholson and Robert Spink of the Conservative Party; and Tam Dalyell, Jeremy Corbyn and Allan Rogers of the Labour Party.

Townsend, the chairman of the U.N. parliamentary group, said the United Kingdom had behaved disgracefully by following the highly misleading propaganda about UNESCO dispensed by President Reagan and the Heritage Foundation. If the United Kingdom were to remain on the Security Council, the universality rule would be fundamental. British publishing houses and British consultants had done well out of UNESCO; and the cultural establishment was overwhelmingly in favor of Britain's return (7: cols.503-504). Nicholson said the United Kingdom did herself and UNESCO no favors by staying out (7: col. 545). Dalyell said the United Kingdom could renew her subscription to UNESCO for the cost of two tanks (7: col. 520). Corbyn said that to have left UNESCO was appalling and a kick in the face of a valuable part of the United Nations' operations (7: col. 541).

The Major Government's official position on returning to UNESCO went on record during the Commons adjournment debate on UNESCO on 22 May 1992, when Douglas Hogg, the minister of state for Foreign and Commonwealth Office, clarified the position (8: cols. 656-657). He said, "We ... approach the problem with a genuinely open mind, recognizing that many of the problems we identified in 1986 have been dealt with. But that fact alone is not conclusive." Because the money for rejoining would have to come out of the aid budget, the government had to ask itself how the payment of £9 million to UNESCO would rank against the other spending commitments, both multilateral and bilateral. "We have a genuine assessment of priorities to make ... We shall reach a conclusion in an open-minded way," he said.

Hogg said that substantial improvements and changes had occurred at UNESCO. The United Kingdom welcomed the decision that states, not individuals, should sit on the Executive Board. She welcomed the decision to appoint an expert group on financial and administrative matters. The full review of the Office of Public Information was also welcome news. That UNESCO had agreed to cooperate with the U.S. General Accounting Office was an encouraging development.

Townsend and three other MPs — Donald Anderson (Lab.), Jim Lester (Con.) and Simon Hughes (LD) — contributed to the adjournment debate. Townsend asserted that U.N. organizations were not for picking and choosing to suit the needs of any particular country at any particular time. "It is bizarre that, in the context of UNESCO, we argue that we can better influence events by shouting to our supporters who have remained on the pitch," he said (8: cols. 652-653). Anderson pointed out that UNESCO had largely

met every one of the criticisms that the government made in 1985 to justify the United Kingdom's withdrawal. The continued delay in rejoining was contrary to fundamental British foreign policy interests (8: col. 654). Lester said that money for rejoining should come from an increase in the Foreign Office budget rather than from the re-allocation of scarce resources (8: col. 655). Hughes said it was time to rejoin in the light of the changed perception and agenda of the United Nations and the United Kingdom's closer integration in Europe (8: col. 656).

### **A Theoretical Analysis of the Withdrawals**

Global space-biased media determined the nature of contemporary Western society. This is obviously the case in the information societies of the United States and the United Kingdom — the two countries whose withdrawal from UNESCO made the decisions of that organization lack universality. The United States is the largest producer, processor, storer and exporter of information in the world. Clearly, the United States (as well as her ally, the United Kingdom) wanted to maintain that "monopoly of knowledge" when it came under challenge from countries in the fringe — the non-aligned and the former-communist countries — who advanced the notion of a New World Information and Communication Order as an alternative monopoly.

The global space-biased media now includes the rapidly expanding information superhighway, of which the Internet, the network of computer networks, is an essential component. The Internet's information-accessing tools — such as Gopher, Wide Area Information Servers and World Wide Web — and its other services such as file transfer protocol, telnet, electronic-mail and Usenet — have had multiplier effects in enhancing the Western society's "monopoly of knowledge" over the other. Satellite links and optical-fibre technology, which are linked to the information superhighway, have widened the gap between the advanced and the developing countries since the UNESCO withdrawals took place in the mid- 1980s. Because of the enormous costs involved in the expansion of telecommunication facilities, the poorer countries, particularly the former colonies, have become more dependent on the advanced countries, particularly the United States and the former imperial powers, for information access and dissemination through advanced space-biased media, which have certainly facilitated the expansion of "imperialism" in its modern sense, as Innis theorized.

When the United States and the United Kingdom withdrew from UNESCO, their implicit intention was to exert social control over the non-Western society to maintain the West's "monopoly of knowledge." They saw UNESCO as the primary forum or the communication medium that the challenging countries used to promote the notion of NWICO. Their withdrawals, which meant slicing off 30 percent of the then UNESCO budget, enabled them to exert financial pressure on the organization to restore the

West's "monopoly of knowledge." They succeeded in achieving control over UNESCO when the latter abandoned its commitment to NWICO at its 1989 General Conference. (The MacBride Roundtable, a non-governmental interest group, has been meeting annually to keep some momentum relating to various aspects of NWICO.)

The United States and the United Kingdom, both at the state and the power-elite levels, implicitly understood the ineffectiveness of UNESCO without their presence as global information giants and money providers. As the statements of John Bolton and Baroness Chalker clearly indicated in the foregoing account, the two countries wanted to bring about near-total submission to their demands before they would re-join. By the early 1990s, they had succeeded in achieving social control over UNESCO to promote their definition of ideological objectives (e.g., free flow of information, human rights) and to enforce their demands of behavioral norms (e.g., de-emphasizing statist concepts, limiting excessive politicization, eliminating management and budgetary excesses). UNESCO's capitulation also meant indirect social control over the challenging states and power-elites as well.

The two countries, as well as their allies, obviously used disinformation and propaganda campaigns to achieve the desired social control. The powerful media in the West, a major target of the NWICO challenge, consistently misrepresented NWICO as a statist concept that advocated censorship and licensing of journalist. The truth was that neither the MacBride recommendations nor the UNESCO-approved version of NWICO contained provisions for the state control of media systems, licensing of journalists and imposing codes of conduct on the press (11: p. 71). Lord McGregor continued with such propaganda debunking the MacBride Report even while asking the U.K. government to rejoin UNESCO (6: col. 410). The U.S. media in particular also used the tactic of denying information to their audience by predominantly excluding the UNESCO version of NWICO.

By the early 1990s, having ascertained the demise of NWICO and feeling good about their "monopoly of knowledge," the powerful Western media and related interest groups were urging their partners in power, the U.S. and the U.K. governments, to re-join UNESCO. However, politicians in the domestic fringes — e.g., Esteban Torres in the United States and Cyril Townsend in the United Kingdom — had been advocating the same for much longer. The threat had subsided so much that the 1993 Interagency Working Group was able to advise the U.S. government that "the NGOs in education, science, culture and communications ... are highly supportive of re-entry into UNESCO ... The Washington Post editorialized in favor of re-entry in March" (20: p. 24).

The implications of the West's dispute with UNESCO become clearer through a systems perspective. The interests of the United States and the United Kingdom to bring about social control of UNESCO went far beyond their stated reasons for the withdrawal: politicization of UNESCO programs;

UNESCO's incorporation of statist concepts, and spiralling budget growth and unwieldy management (9: p. 41).

A systems analysis of an international communication issue — in this case, the UNESCO dispute — would reveal the interaction of other involved components that linked together the various participants: in this case, for example, the U.S. and the U.K. governments and their allies; various regulatory and representative agencies; the corporations involved, such as transnational media giants; and the audiences, such as those socially controlled in the West to support the "free flow of information." With credit to Fortner (1: pp 36-37) one should as well look at the other systemic components involved in the UNESCO issue to preserve their respective "monopolies of knowledge":

*Technical components:* the role played by those who benefitted from technologies used for international communication: cables, wires, satellites, computer networks, and so on.

*Economic components:* the role played by those who reaped economic benefits from trade, tariffs, taxation, capital investment, and so on.

*Political and regulatory components:* the role played by those who had interests in the issues of sovereignty, treaty making, alliances, geopolitical balance, and so on.

*Cultural components:* the role played by those who benefitted from the export of cultural products and those who depended on such products.

*Social control components:* the role played by those interested in shaping the international communication system to benefit their political ideologies and philosophies — free flow of information, right to communicate, and so on.

A systems analysis encompassing the relevant components and their respective actors even with regard to a single issue as the UNESCO dispute would be complex matter that future researcher might undertake with greater thoroughness. Suffice to point out that the U.S. and U.K. withdrawals and their current intentions to re-join go well beyond the overt reasons that they have propagandized.

#### Notes

- 1 Co-sponsors of House Concurrent Resolution 103 included Rep. Howard L. Berman, D-Calif., Rep. George E. Brown J., D-Calif., Rep. Tom Lantos, D-Calif., Rep. Jim Leach, R-Iowa, and Rep. George Miller, D-Calif.
- 2 Stein had interviewed C.L. Sharma, UNESCO's deputy director-general; Alain Modoux, UNESCO's director of communications; Thomas R. Forstenzer, executive director of the UNESCO director-general's cabinet; Dana Bullen, executive director of the World Press Freedom Com-

the Biosphere, and the International Hydrological Program; the Universal Copyright Convention; the World Heritage Fund; and the International Centre for the Study of the Preservation and Restoration of Cultural Property (ICCROM). The United States also continues to support these programs.

- 9 Bowen Wells (Con.) and Cyril Townsend (Con.) are among the MPs who have carried on a sustained campaigning to get the United Kingdom back into UNESCO. These two and 10 other MPs — Alex Carlile (LD), Ann Clwyd (Lab), George Foulkes (Lab), Russell Johnston (Lab), Jim Lester (Con), Joan Lester (Lab), Robert MacLennan (LD), Emma Nicholson (Con), David Steel (LD), Peter Temple-Morris (Con) and Dafydd Wigley (Plaid Cymru) — wrote a letter to the Times on 28 May 1993 saying it was time for Britain to rejoin UNESCO. Outstanding non-parliamentary supporters include David Church, Maurice Goldsmith, Malcolm Harper and Rashid Kareh (6: col. 416).

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