

CONSORTIUM ON PEACE RESEARCH, EDUCATION, AND DEVELOPMENT

COOPERATION

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WORLD DISARMAMENT EDUCATION CONGRESS

Following are materials from three of the COPRED members at the UNESCO sponsored World Congress on Disarmament Education in Paris in June. The first two are reports by Betty Reardon. The latter two are presentations made by Carolyn Stephenson and William Nesbitt.

REPORT BY BETTY REARDON

When President Carazo of Costa Rica concluded his 9 June keynote address to UNESCO's World Congress on Disarmament Education in Paris, by calling for a decade of education for disarmament and peace, he struck a note that was echoed in the final document, and more importantly inspired some concrete actions to implement the major purpose of the Congress, "the development of disarmament education as a distinct field of study." He also urged the implementation of Secretary General Waldheim's suggestion that the equivalent of only one-tenth of one percent of the amount presently spent on the development of arms to be spent on the development of peace.

Like the other opening speakers, Jan Martenson, U.N. Assistant Secretary-General for Disarmament; and Rodolfo Stavenhagen, UNESCO Assistant Director-General for Social Sciences and Their Application, President Carazo noted the essential role of education in the achievement of disarmament. "Peace or war shall depend," he said, "mainly on our decision to transform the education and social communication media into instruments of peace."

While it is apparent that the purpose of recognizing disarmament education as a distinct field of study was accomplished, it remains to be seen how much significant progress was made toward transforming education and communication media. As Jaime Diaz, the Colombian peace educator who was elected President of the Congress, said in his closing remarks, "It is only now the real work of this Congress begins." However, many practical and concrete suggestions were put forward and several specific steps were taken to initiate programs which, in the words of the General Rapporteur, Franco

Report (Cont'd)

Cassadio of Italy, would help, "to make disarmament education one of the vital means of achieving the objectives of the Second Disarmament Decade."

Two such steps which will involved continued collaboration among some of the Congress participants are an international symposium on education for nuclear disarmament and a cooperative curriculum development project involving educators from "East" and "West".

Not surprisingly, the Congress experienced problems in the pursuit of its objectives. These problems arose for the most part over the varying perceptions and "special agendas" of many participants, and was in fact, an almost inevitable result of the ideological and professional mix which comprized the Congress. Perhaps only educators who have long had to deal with the general lack of appreciation of the distinct difference between education and advocacy could truly comprehend the problems posed by the professional mix. Very few of the presentations and interventions acknowledged the significance of the distinction made by the background documents between "education for disarmament" and education about disarmament."

Even fewer echoed the careful focus UNESCO had placed on the subject of "disarmament education" rather than on disarmament itself. Many statements analyzing obstacles to disarmament and advocating particular actions were presented. Indeed, one of the most tense moments of the Congress came during the last plenary when the advocates of a moratorium on the production and deployment of nuclear weapons advocated ^{the final document} ~~that~~ a call for such a moratorium did not adequately reflect the dire urgency of the nuclear danger.

In contrast, other participants called for a modification of language which pronounced education for disarmament to be the duty of all educators, suggesting that such a concept ran counter to notions of academic freedom.

Some of the standard political tensions were felt in the meeting as well. The fact that the participants were with few exceptions specialist attending in "their

personal capacity," and consequently most had been responsible for obtaining their own funding, accounted for the small number of participants from developing countries. A number of presenters also put forth what were "unofficially official" statements, various claiming their countries were doing commendable work in disarmament education, a circumstance not reflected in the curriculum survey UNESCO had commissioned. One or two statements clearly asserted that little was presently being done and the obstacles to initiating disarmament education were severe. Especially encouraging, however, in spite of the tensions and varying approaches to disarmament education was the strong consensus that education was a sine qua non for the achievement of disarmament and that efforts to develop its potential contribution were urgently needed.

On the whole, the Congress was a significant event in the history of peace education, and it could be the beginning of a new avenue of approach to disarmament problems. While some participants believed the final document did not go far enough and saw the rules of procedure of the Congress as evidence of the traditional barriers to full and open dialogue, others viewed the event as a constructive step taken ^{in time} of great stress.

UNESCO provided a much needed opportunity for educators and researchers to become more involved in the disarmament process. The substantive guidelines and background documents provided by the Division of Human Rights and Peace were in themselves a significant contribution to the field. It may have been only a small step in the total disarmament process but as Stephen Marks, the main organizer of the Congress observed, "Be prudent in demanding the impossible."

GUIDELINES FOR DISARMENT EDUCATION Betty Reardon

During an informal consultation among the American participants in the UNESCO World Congress on Disarmament Education, the group derived a general consensus on the following characteristics and guidelines as essential to education to prepare citizens to contribute to the achievement of disarmament. The guidelines were agreed upon within the con-

Guidelines (Cont'd)

text of disarmament education as objective inquiry into the problems posed by war and the arms race. It was agreed and affirmed that the essential purpose of disarmament education is not to teach what to think about disarmament but rather to teach how to think about disarmament. In order to achieve that purpose disarmament education should fulfill these guidelines.

1. Disarmament education should be comprehensive including study of all aspects of war and the war system as well as weapons development, deployment and trade of all types of weapons. It should also include study of the arms race, its dynamics, costs and consequences, both actual and potential.
2. Disarmament education should be problem centered, giving careful consideration to the most fundamental issues and the whole range of obstacles which impede progress toward disarmament. Among these obstacles, political, economic, cultural and psychological factors should be considered.
3. Disarmament education should include consideration of perceptions not only as an obstacle but as a vehicle for deepening understanding of problems of disarmament and of exploring means to overcome them. It should consider perceptions of political adversaries, war, weapons, conflict, peace and most especially of security.
4. Disarmament education should be especially concerned with the study of alternative security systems, and non-violent processes of conflict resolution. The basic assumptions and proposed mechanisms for such systems and processes should be studied, including historical experiments, contemporary proposals and futuristic models.
5. Disarmament education should provide information on the relationship of peace-keeping, human rights, and other related topics to disarmament. Peace-keeping processes should be studied as essential components for the achievement and maintenance of disarmament.
6. Disarmament education should include study of transition measures and proposals for staged reduction and shift to

new systems for maintaining international security. It is important to study not only the possible natures of a disarmed world but also the probable and practical stages of that goal.

7. Disarmament education must be reality based reflecting both the actual, economic, political and ideological climate in which disarmament is pursued and the life circumstances and personal and community environment of the learners.

STATEMENT ON THE TEACHING OF ALTERNATIVE SECURITY SYSTEMS AS PART OF DISARMAMENT EDUCATION By Carolyn Stephenson

I would like to address the plea made earlier for avoidance of simplistic explanations for the world's failure to disarm, and to suggest a constructive alternative. I believe that the failure to disarm is the result of feelings on the part of leaders and the public that disarmament would mean giving up their means of maintaining security. I am a professor in the Peace Studies Program at Colgate University in the United States, and have found this feeling to be a major obstacle for students in acceptance of disarmament. The knowledge of what other systems are available to maintain the security of individuals and nations is not adequate. Even where there is knowledge of such systems, there is little understanding of their viability.

Disarmament education should give attention to questions of security which underlie much of the disarmament debate. Rising arms levels increase the level of insecurity, yet fear of reducing security is an underlying factor in the world's inability to disarm. Alternative international security systems thus are a prerequisite to disarmament. Education on the subject of alternative international security systems, including both knowledge of such systems and understanding of their viability is important if the public is to support disarmament. National leaders must know, and understand the viability of, such systems if they are to be willing to reduce arms. The study of international security systems which can serve as alternatives to security through arms is thus an essential part of disarmament education.

Teaching Alternative Security (Cont'd)

Examples of alternative international security systems include the mechanisms of international law and organization, of civilian non-violent defense, of third-party intervention in the resolution of conflict, including mediation, conciliation and arbitration, of nation-state peace initiatives, including graduated reciprocal initiatives in tension-reduction. These and others are discussed in Document 33, Teaching Alternative International Security Systems, which I prepared for this Congress on behalf of the Consortium on Peace Research, Education, and Development. The paper also stresses the importance of such education at all ages. It suggests the teaching of non-violent conflict resolution techniques through participatory workshops beginning with the pre-school level, and carrying through the university and adult levels.

I would urge that UNESCO be encouraged to support both research on alternative international security systems, both on what exists and what can be created, and also dissemination of the results of such research through seminars and the development of curricula, of texts, manuals, films, and methods of teacher training. This should include examination of the concept of security, and of the various systems which allow one to conflict creatively and non-violently, and to maintain one's security creatively and non-violently. Conflict will not and probably should not disappear from the world; security is important to nations and individuals; justice must be pursued as part of a peaceful world, but there are ways of accomplishing these without arms and violence. There are viable, realistic, concrete, non-violent, powerful alternatives, and these should be part of disarmament education. Thank you.

EDUCATION FOR DISARMAMENT William Nesbitt

Mr. President:

What I am about to propose follows logically from Judith Torney's remarks and relates to them.

Very specifically, I am asking that UNESCO set in motion research and development of classroom materials on disarmament education that are particularly directed to the affective domain. Perhaps more accurately

I should say "materials directed more to the 'right brain'", as distinct from the 'left'.

I am convinced that traditional printed, linear materials will not do, given the deeply entrenched military defense paradigm. The meaning of nuclear war, for example, cannot be taught in a linear way; it must be considered "holistically" and affectively.

We have heard and seen during this meeting some persuasive examples of such materials -- especially films (and the extraordinary mural being created outside before our very eyes.) Surely no one who has seen films on the effects of atomic weapons on Hiroshima and Nagasaki can doubt that they are indispensable for disarmament education.

But other kinds of "right brain" materials and methods are needed. (Even with films the viewer is a spectator and can look at them passively.) I am suggesting materials that directly engage students in considering possible courses of action and their consequences.

Simulation games (and there is no time to go into the difference between simulation games, role-playing, and psychodrama) are particularly useful examples of where research might be directed. Through such serious games students can examine historical, contemporary, or hypothetical future situations between groups and countries. Of particular importance may be their use in exploring alternative security systems.

Simulation games are already widely used -- by international relations specialists (Mr. Weiler talked about their enormous value at Stanford), economists; corporations, and to a lesser extent, by schools and universities.

I would urge research into their use by educators for disarmament and non-violent conflict resolution alternatives.

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