

NINTH ANNUAL REPORT OF THE
ADVISORY COMMISSION ON
INTERNATIONAL EDUCATIONAL
AND CULTURAL AFFAIRS

COMMUNICATION

FROM

THE CHAIRMAN, U.S. ADVISORY
COMMISSION ON INTERNATIONAL
EDUCATIONAL AND CULTURAL AFFAIRS

TRANSMITTING

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LETTER OF SUBMITTAL

U.S. ADVISORY COMMISSION
ON INTERNATIONAL EDUCATIONAL AND CULTURAL AFFAIRS,
Washington, D.C., November 29, 1972.

HON. CARL ALBERT,
Speaker of the House of Representatives,
Washington, D.C.

DEAR MR. SPEAKER: In accordance with section 107 of Public Law 87-256, I submit herewith the Ninth Annual Report of the Advisory Commission.

Sincerely yours,

HOMER D. BABBDGE, Jr.,
Chairman.

THE U.S. ADVISORY COMMISSION ON INTERNATIONAL EDUCATIONAL AND CULTURAL AFFAIRS

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(III)

COMING OF AGE? EDUCATIONAL AND CULTURAL EXCHANGE IN 1972

International educational and cultural exchange is as old as recorded history. Our explicit encouragement of exchange-of-person activities as a means to improve the context of U.S. foreign relations has been a significant and continuous fact since the end of World War II.

Since then, Executive and Congressional branch support has been uneven, though continuous. Many of the activities which have attracted the fluctuating interest of the American Government are those sponsored, encouraged or assisted since 1961 by the Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs in the Department of State.

However, other federal departments also engage in important exchange-of-person activities: the Departments of Health, Education and Welfare, AID, Defense, Agriculture, Commerce, and the National Science Foundation are among the Executive agencies whose undertakings stimulate international exchanges between doctors, educators, scholars, military personnel, businessmen, scientists and a variety of other professionals and specialist.

Still other exchange activities result from the Governmental programs providing humanitarian and technical assistance to less developed countries. These activities engage the energies of gifted American volunteers and voluntary organizations and provide training opportunities and broadened perspectives to a significant portion of their leadership.

A host of private activities, many of them not involving governments at all, play a significant role in the interchange of talented and influential people, which in turn affects relations between societies. Private business, international professional associations, universities, trade unions, religious, fraternal and service organizations are among those institutions which are having an increasing, largely constructive, influence on the way countries and individuals understand each other—and themselves.

It has long been understood—or at least believed—that personal relationships have a potential for reducing misunderstanding, diminishing friction, enlarging common interests and facilitating cooperation among nations and cultures. But only in recent years has this understanding led to a deep-rooted and broad-based belief in the value of *purposeful* exchange-of-person programs—a conviction which assures support for those that are demonstrably well designed and managed.

Perhaps at no point in history has exchange-of-persons achieved attention equal to that which climaxed during the last twelve months. This may, therefore, be the most propitious moment in a long time to

examine critically the entire process of cultural and educational exchange, even as we seek to enlarge it.

In order to illustrate the complexity as well as the promise and problems inherent in these activities, it is useful to list some of the events and tendencies, many of them contradictory, which have pressed upon our national consciousness during recent months.

Clearly the most significant and dramatic of these developments was President Nixon's visit to the People's Republic of China. As he himself phrased it, "Across the distance of 16,000 miles and 22 years of hostility," a relationship was restored and the beginnings of comity established. This summit meeting burst upon public consciousness and in some significant ways, had been fused by an athletic event—the contest of two table-tennis teams. The impact of this event was considerable—even the subsequent discussions between the United States and China became popularly known as "Ping-Pong Diplomacy."

It is noteworthy that one of several concrete agreements reached concerned the exchange of scientific, technical, educational, cultural and athletic personnel. While the first meaningful steps following the Shanghai Communiqué were modest, they were significant: a number of American journalists were encouraged to remain in China after the Presidential party left, and there was a visit to the United States by a Chinese table-tennis team. Since then, a limited but nevertheless encouraging number of Americans have visited the PRC; and several Chinese groups, as yet not individuals, have toured this country.

If the President's trip and the exchange agreements reached were the most recent example of the value of cultural exchange in improving communications, they were by no means the only ones. The United States and the Soviet Union agreed to share knowledge and resources in the exploration of space, the war against disease, the advancement of science and technology, and the protection of the environment. Each of these agreements promises to engage new groups of influential national leaders in cooperative action which should enhance mutual respect and understanding.

During the last year the United States has taken other actions likely to have constructive long term cultural and political consequences. Even while the United States sought to limit through diplomatic channels the widening tragedy which began in what was East Pakistan, a number of voluntary American agencies went all out to provide personnel and funds to help cope with the refugee consequences of that tragedy. Some of these activities were partially financed by the Government of the United States. When diplomatic relationships between the governments of the United States and India were at their most strained, both official and private U.S. assistance to India remained high.

Similarly, both during and after the interval between the establishment of Bangladesh and U.S. recognition of that government, a number of American agencies and some of America's most dedicated medical and professional people were deeply involved in the resettlement of refugees, the provision of urgent medical assistance, the re-establishment of education, the housing of an uprooted people and a variety of the other services for a prostrate but hopeful new state.

Despite the absence of formal diplomatic recognition the State Department and the Agency for International Development provided urgently needed funds to supplement the voluntary contributions of hundreds of thousands of Americans; nor did a similar hiatus in official relationships halt the U.S. Government's support for cultural exchange and technical and humanitarian cooperation with some countries in the Middle East.

Also during the last year we have more clearly seen multi-national corporations stand astride national sovereignties, new technologies recognize not a single state border, and artistic expression transcend national boundaries. The tribal dances of the various African nations are no longer unknown in the American household; they are rapidly becoming as familiar as the magnificent dance groups of the Soviet Union or the folk ballet of Mexico. There is hardly a nation in the world in which our music, our books, our paintings, our theater and our film have not stirred artistic imagination.

Also, recently we have seen technology add massive new instruments in the service of international communication. For some, the latest view of their own planet from the moon began to seem almost commonplace—while for others, it deepened awareness of human interdependence. On a more somber note, the instantaneous viewing in American homes of the Olympics in Sapporo, Japan and Munich, Germany dramatized for tens of millions of Americans the dangerous tendency to inject political protests, attitudes, and judgments, all of which seriously threaten the international comity toward which the Olympics aim. The tragic events which occurred in Munich may, because of their brutal extremity, shock all those involved with the games into a renewed understanding that their non-political character must be protected and reinforced. Efforts to impede exchange, perhaps as much as efforts to encourage it, bear testimony to the significance and vitality of this process, however.

Because of our growing awareness that black Americans are uniquely qualified to interpret to foreigners some of America's problems and its progress in solving them, the Advisory Commission has appointed two of its members—Mrs. Martha Lucas Pate and Mrs. Jewel Lafontant—to assist the Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs in identifying and using resource agencies so as to encourage increased interest and participation by blacks in exchange activities. In fiscal year 1972 the Bureau expanded these efforts to include the following: a grant of \$100,000 was made to stimulate participation by blacks and other American scholars in exchange programs with Africa; the Bureau co-sponsored the hugely successful Morehouse College Glee Club concert tour of five African countries; increasingly black colleges have been entering into Bureau-sponsored international exchanges through formal and informal consortia combining neighboring colleges; and, lastly, the Bureau continues to seek ways to increase the number of students from minority groups who compete for Fulbright grants.

Precisely because the cultural and educational exchange process is now so massive, the Advisory Commission cannot make a definitive examination of the entire field. Even though charged by Congress to do so, it cannot more than modestly observe the multi-form activities

executed under the Fulbright-Hays Act of 1961. But, during the past year this Commission has examined in depth its mandate and made a new beginning toward fulfilling its responsibilities.

One result of this soul-searching has been that the Commission now meets monthly, instead of every three or four months. While continuing to learn about the educational and cultural exchange activities of other government and private agencies, the members have also been briefed regularly on the State Department's varied exchange programs. These briefings have not only provided some perspective to our deliberations, they have considerably accelerated the Commission's ability to recommend future directions. The following are some of the subjects on which we have focused attention in recent months:

1. The potential for educational and cultural interchange with the People's Republic of China.
2. Programs in "Teaching of English as a Second Language."
3. The increasingly urgent need for data banks, with quick retrieval facilities, containing information on government and private activities in educational and cultural exchange.
4. The purpose and effectiveness of the Commission's quarterly publication, *Exchange*.

Certainly this Commission enjoys a new cohesiveness, as reflected in the members' spirit of activism, dedication to purpose, and willingness to examine new approaches to fulfilling their mandate. The year ahead will inevitably be one in which the specific goals and programs now in the planning stages are realized.

If there is any service we can render to the Congress, to the President, and to the American people, it is perhaps in raising and pursuing important questions about the exchange process which other groups may not have the time or interest to undertake. Hopefully we can both illuminate the underrated potential of purposeful activities in this field and dissipate some of the excessive expectations.

To attempt the latter is not to discourage the substantial enlargement of support for international exchange-of-persons programs. Quite the contrary, these programs are now so established a fact of international political life, so important an attribute of scientific, educational and cultural development, so distinguished a feature of athletic, artistic and creative activity that to reduce the naive and mistaken expectations which accompany the process can only strengthen the activities themselves. We believe the following questions deserve sober, friendly and constructive examination:

- (1) Can exchange programs contribute to peace between antagonistic nations?
- (2) Can exchange programs significantly enlarge understanding among peoples and, if so, where and how?
- (3) Is it desirable and, if so, important that exchanges between the United States and other countries, both large and small, be symmetrical?
- (4) What special problems exist for purposeful exchanges between societies which are relatively closed and those, like ours, which are essentially open?
- (5) To what degree, if at all, should exchanges funded by the Fulbright-Hays Act be affected by the invariable changes in U.S. relations with other countries?

(6) Can exchange programs help to moderate conflicts in situations where U.S. relations with one country impinge on relations to another; or, conversely, do they tend to exacerbate such conflicts?

(7) Ought the U.S., at least in those exchange activities which are sponsored or financed by government, demand that such programs be based more on reciprocity than has sometimes been the case?

(8) Does political or ideological proselytizing by individuals or groups sent to the U.S. on exchange programs constitute a serious problem? Conversely, should selection of our own exchange participants be based in part on messages of this type which they might convey abroad? Or, is the absence of this element in the selection process sufficiently advantageous to offset any negative political consequences?

(9) Should controls be considered which would limit the involvement of exchange participants in the internal politics of other countries? To what degree should they be politically aware of the internal sensibilities of other nations, and/or should the U.S. require that those from other countries be aware of ours?

(10) Do exchanges in fact serve to make more open a society which is relatively closed?

These are by no means the only questions which emerge as the process of organized and purposeful exchange is widening, becomes mature. There may in fact be no satisfactory answers to some of these questions and that fact may itself be the answer a mature people and their government must more clearly understand. These are, however, the kinds of questions with which the Commission is currently grappling and to which it is hoped helpful responses can be made in future reports.

The world has become very much smaller, though not noticeably more unified or homogeneous. The speed and declining cost of international travel is a significant factor in this. So is growing economic and scientific interdependence. Worldwide electronic communication seems to be an especially decisive fact and, most especially, the increasing global capability of television.

In an earlier and simpler day organized diplomacy was almost the only instrument (other than war) by which governments adjusted their competing interests, pursued their conflicting goals and shaped their own world views. Diplomacy is more complex and often more difficult today, and not least among the difficulties are those imposed by the instruments of communication which have infinitely widened and speeded the means by which nations perceive each other, share each other's joys and sharpen conflicts between one another.

Purposeful educational and cultural exchange engages the most gifted and the most educated, the most motivated and the most responsive of our various communities. It must be better understood even as it must be further encouraged.

