

UNITED STATES DELEGATION
TO THE
SECOND MEETING OF THE INTER-AMERICAN CULTURAL COUNCIL
Lima, Peru, May 1956

POSITION PAPER

Subject: Periodic Meetings of University Presidents, Deans, and Professors.

U.S. POSITION:

1. The Delegation may support IACC action towards the holding of the proposed meetings of university officials and professors but should not take the lead in sponsoring the proposal.
2. The Delegation should oppose the adoption by the Second Meeting of a final program for such meetings unless assurances are given that the secretariat has been in touch with a sufficient number of university presidents, deans and professors to be sure of their interest in participating in discussions of the topics selected. In the absence of such evidence of interest and willingness to participate, the Delegation should propose that whatever suggested program may be adopted by IACC be referred for comment by those concerned before being considered final.
3. The degree of official sponsorship of the proposed meetings should carefully be considered and the possibilities of private sponsorship *encouraged*. ~~encouraged~~. In the event the Second Meeting does not come to a decision on sponsorship, the Committee for Cultural Action could be asked to study the problem and present specific suggestions to the Council of the OAS.
4. The Committee for Cultural Action might be asked to carry on the planning and consultation pursuant to Position No. 2, above.

DISCUSSION:

General Observations

Document 10 is a re-statement of certain portions of the secretariat (Pan American Union) suggestions presented to the Committee for Cultural Action in 1952 as background for the preparation of CCA Study No. 8 on Inter-American Congresses of Educational Authorities, Educators and Students (see Appendix to Study No. 8). Study No. 8 was considered by the Tenth Inter-American Conference which decided: (a) to support convocation of a meeting of Ministers of Education; (b) that the Inter-American

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Cultural Council study "the possibility and advisability... of holding periodic meetings of rectors, deans and professors, looking toward the consideration of the educational problems of special interest to American universities...", and (c) took no action with regard to the holding of inter-American student meetings (to which opposition was expressed during the discussions).

The Second Meeting of IACC will thus have before it two documents on Topic 1-5, Document 10 by the secretariat and CCA Study No. 8 based on information supplied by the secretariat in the past.

Commentary on U.S. Position:

Position No. 1.- While the Delegation can show an active interest in the prospect of a fruitful interchange of information and experiences at the proposed university seminars, it does not seem advisable for an official U.S. Delegation to take the lead in the matter at this stage.

Position No. 2.- It would seem short-sighted for IACC to go on record with any final program for meetings of university officers and professors without having obtained their views, and there is no indication in the documents that this has been done. From the standpoint of the U.S. alone, such consultations would no doubt prove most helpful in planning the meeting. Several university people consulted by the Department were found to have definite ideas on the usefulness of these meetings: that unless carefully planned and limited in scope, they would be useless, and that the topics discussed should include real problems such as academic freedom, salary scales, etc., rather than the kind of topics listed in the documents.

Position No. 3.- Document 10 seems to suggest that the proposed university meetings be held in the same manner as the past inter-American education seminars sponsored by the PAU and UNESCO. The American Governments sent official delegations to the seminars, however, which would not be desirable in the case of the university meetings. The governing resolution of the Tenth Conference states (paragraph 2, Resolution V) that IACC should "submit pertinent recommendations to the governments of the Member States, and that the latter make them known to interested organizations". The Tenth Conference noticeably omitted reference to the OAS or PAU; what role PAU might play in the development of the meetings remains to be seen.

Position No. 4.- The consultations with universities and the final development of a plan for the meetings, would offer the CCA a constructive field of operations. Though the Charter (Art. 77) provides that IACC "shall have the final decision" with respect to CCA studies, it is suggested that, if necessary, the CCA could be authorized by IACC to report directly to the COAS.