

"UNESCO - THE NETHERLANDS, THE NORDIC POWERS, THE U.K., SINGAPORE
AND AUSTRALIA

UNESCO - THE NETHERLANDS.

In our September issue, we published documents relevant to the notice of withdrawal from UNESCO given by the USA (1984) Australian I.L. News 424-438. In response to our enquiries, the Netherlands Charge d'Affaires, Mr L.L. Ramondt has confirmed that the Netherlands Government wrote a letter to Mr Amadou-Mahtar M'Bow, the Director General of UNESCO in which a certain number of proposals were put forward, that the Netherlands believe necessary to solve UNESCO's problems. This letter addresses itself to the following, desired reforms:

- better methods of evaluation;
- less politicisation;
- more transparent and lower budgets;
- increase in the quality of UNESCO's staff;
- more concentration of effort in the work programme;
- warning against efforts to justify government influence over the media by means of the 'New World Information and Communication Order';
- limitation of UNESCO's activities with regard to human rights to its own sphere of competence and less emphasis on collective human rights;
- more geographic decentralisation and more decision-making decentralisation in headquarters in Paris.

The Charge d'Affaires confirmed that if the reforms which are generally agreed to be necessary are not carried out, or not carried out sufficiently, and in particular if this should lead to the withdrawal of one or more of the member-states, the Netherlands Government will again have to review its position vis-a-vis the Organisation. It is therefore certainly not true that the Netherlands at this stage are considering quitting UNESCO. Speculations over such a step would be very much premature.

The letter in question has not been published.