



Phillip E. Walker as High John Griot from the one-man play depicting Black leaders, "Can I Speak for You Brother?", performed at Portland

State University. Walker's appearance was made possible by P.S.U. Black Cultural Affairs Board. (Photo: Richard J. Brown)

# Why U.S. quit UNESCO

by Catherine Siegner

No loud outcry greeted the Reagan Administration's decision last December to withdraw its one-quarter share of the budget for the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO). And, perhaps this *fait accompli* is already forgotten by most U.S. citizens, as daily news events vie for our attention and we turn to other issues.

Yet this relatively quiet move by our government—the U.S. gave notice as of December 31, 1983, that it would pull out of UNESCO as of December 31, 1984—deserves a

made of up representatives from the member states, including the U.S. It meets once every two years to approve programs and adopt a budget.

UNESCO operates on a \$750 million budget, 25 percent of which is contributed by the United States. In addition to the organization's administration, technical projects and operations, UNESCO also funds the publication of two monthly journals, bi-monthly and quarterly reviews on specific topics, and special projects such as an eight-volume history of Africa, the first two volumes of which came out in 1980.

What did the United States get for its \$184.5 million contribution? It's

and moves to pull American financial support out from under UNESCO began.

*Editor & Publisher*, a weekly trade publication, quoted Director-General M'Bow in an article just prior to the withdrawal of U.S. funds. M'Bow said the process of creating a new international information order is "irreversible," and that large Western news organizations do not provide in-depth coverage of developing nations.

Although it decried the information order idea, *Editor & Publisher* did editorialize against the financial pull-out. A U.S. Commission for UNESCO advisory board charged with researching such a withdrawal said "continued U.S. membership is in the national interest," reported the publication. "The U.S. should not abandon the area of debate and give the Soviet bloc clear sailing to influence Third World nations," it said in an editorial.

Alleged UNESCO domination by the Soviet Union was another reason given for the pull-out. An Administration official said recently on the *MacNeil-Lehrer Newshour* program that until UNESCO agreed to a "reassertion of American leadership" (in the organization); an "increase in private sector" involvement, and an "increase in hiring Americans," there could be no more U.S. financial contributions.

He further cited "politicization of UNESCO's projects such as disarmament and peace issues," and the "significant influence of the Soviet Union" in UNESCO's affairs.

Also appearing on the show was Doudou Diene of Senegal, UNESCO's liaison officer in New York. He said his main reaction to the U.S. financial pullout was "one of surprise," although he said "we knew the U.S. desire to withdraw dated from 1981."

Regarding the Soviet Union-influence charge, Diene commented, "This means more than 100 countries don't have a specific identity. And more deeply, it means a very serious lack of capacity to analyze UNESCO."

Donald McHenry, former United Nations Ambassador and now a professor of diplomacy and international affairs at Georgetown University, said the U.S. is trying to form UNESCO in its own image.

"The U.S. wants UNESCO to operate as the U.S. believes, with its values, its economics and its press," he said.

McHenry said the U.S. decision to withdraw financially was political. "There's no way to discuss UNESCO issues without discussing politics," he said.

"The decision [to withdraw] is shortsighted," McHenry added. "The long-term advantage of the United States, it seems to me, is to hang in there. It's better to light a candle than curse the darkness."

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## Analysis

closer look. Just what is UNESCO and what does it do? Why did its activities attract the Administration budget cutters? Was this pull-out based on economics or politics? But first, a little background.

UNESCO is no fledgling organization. It was founded in 1946 "for the purpose of advancing, through the educational, scientific and cultural relations of the peoples of the world, the objectives of international peace and the common welfare of mankind." It has more than 100 countries as members.

In order to accomplish its ambitious task, UNESCO has undertaken myriad projects around the world. Specific programs deal with the sectors explicit in its name—education, science and culture—and are developed using the tools of international intellectual cooperation (or the exchange of information); operation assistance (through international missions that provide training), and promotion of peace (through research on ending racial discrimination and promoting human rights and disarmament).

UNESCO's highest administrative official is Director-General Amadou Mahtar M'Bow of Senegal. M'bow has an international staff of nearly 4,000, many of whom are specialists who work in member states on technical projects. Regional offices are scattered around the world, and liaison offices are located in Washington, D.C., New York City, and Geneva, Switzerland.

The highest governing body of UNESCO is the General Conference

difficult to say without access to UNESCO's books, but a look at a few recent projects may shed some light on what we as a member nation are no longer going to be supporting.

UNESCO spends roughly one-third of its total budget in the education sector. During the 1981-83 period, this figure was about \$173 million.

In terms of the Third World, UNESCO has stressed development of a new international economic order. The societal position of women around the world is also examined, with their equality and contribution to economies and to peace as major objectives.

It is UNESCO's Third World focus, its new international economic order notion, and its stress on disarmament and peace issues that initially caused alarm within the Reagan Administration ranks. The final straw was UNESCO's New World Information and Communication Order established by the General Conference in 1980.

Despite objections from the United Kingdom and the U.S., this proposal gained the overwhelming code of journalistic ethics and that journalists be licensed.

Member nations supporting the proposal said news agencies (mainly those of the West) control too much of the information coming from Third World countries, and that this control stifles explanation of issues. Opponents argued that the proposal infringed on press freedom.

Major news organizations in the U.S. immediately began protesting

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**Notice From U.S. District Court of SETTLEMENT**

**TO: ALL BLACK APPLICANTS FOR EMPLOYMENT AND ALL PRESENT AND FORMER BLACK EMPLOYEES OF THE BURLINGTON NORTHERN RAILROAD**

This notice is to inform you that a settlement between the Burlington Northern Railroad Company (BN), and the United States Equal Employment Opportunity Commission, and counsel in a class action has been reached in a race discrimination employment practices case (1) on behalf of black applicants for employment who were not hired by BN, and (2) on behalf of black present and former employees of BN. Thirteen international unions representing BN employees are also involved in the case and the settlement. The Court has preliminarily approved the settlement consent decree, and will reach a final decision as to its fairness and adequacy after class members have had an opportunity, if they wish, to comment on or object to its terms.

**Black persons** who applied for employment to BN or were employed by BN at any time between March 1, 1970 and November 21, 1983, are members of the class and may be entitled to cash awards or other relief as part of the settlement.

**Cash awards** will be made to class members who file claims out of settlement funds provided by BN amounting to \$10 million which will be used solely to pay those claims. Any excess remaining after those claims are paid will be used to promote the interests of black people. In addition, you may be eligible to be considered for future vacancies at the Company on a priority basis, to transfer into certain vacancies or to otherwise benefit from agreed upon changes.

**To be eligible** to share in this \$10 million fund, you must obtain and file a claim form. Claim forms, with filing instructions, and a summary of the settlement, may be obtained by supplying in writing your name and current address by mail to:

**Lead Counsel for the Plaintiff Class**

<p><b>Paul C. Sprenger, Esquire</b> or <b>Charles H. Barnhill, Esquire</b> Sprenger, Olson &amp; Shutes, P.A. 325 Ridgewood Avenue Minneapolis, Minnesota 55403</p>	<p><b>Davis, Miner, Barnhill &amp; Galland, P.C.</b> 14 West Erie Street Chicago, Illinois 60610</p>
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You may also contact **Bruce B. Elfvin, Esquire**, Assistant General Counsel, U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission, #1 Playhouse Square, Suite 600, Cleveland, Ohio 44115.

Or, if you call toll free 1-800-223-9001 or in New York state only (1-212-245-3151), and supply your name and address, a claim form will be sent to you. All completed claim forms must be postmarked on or before **May 15, 1984**.

You may view a copy of the settlement consent decree itself and the full record in the case at any office of the EEOC or at the office of the Clerk of the United States District Court for the Northern District of Illinois, 219 South Dearborn Street, Chicago, Illinois 60604, file reference **In Re Burlington Northern Employment Practices Litigation, MDL 374, 78 C 269**.

The Court will hold a hearing at 9:30 a.m. on April 2, 1984, at the United States District Court for the Northern District of Illinois, 219 South Dearborn Street, Chicago, Illinois. At that time, the Court will hear comments and objections, if any, from class members regarding the consent decree. You need not be present in court to file a claim or receive money from the \$10 million fund or otherwise benefit from the settlement. You will be represented there, as you have been throughout this litigation, at no cost to you by class counsel. If, however, you want to comment on or object to the settlement, you must file your comments in writing with the Clerk of the Court by March 16, 1984, and you may then appear at the hearing with an attorney of your own choice, at your own cost. You will, however, be bound by the judgment of the Court, whether or not it is favorable.

George N. Leighton  
United States District Judge

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