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October 5, 1967

MEMORANDUM FOR THE RECORD

FROM: Douglass Cater

SUBJECT: Meeting of Rene Maheu, Director General, UNESCO and
William Benton with the President

Benton called attention to the fact that both the President and Maheu began life as teachers in small schools. President said that education was the most important work a man could be engaged in. Asked Maheu to convey his greetings to the education conference in Williamsburg.

Suggested they might consider setting 1969 as International Education Year. Maheu responded that he would raise this at the Conference. However, he thought possibly 1970 would be better since 1969 is the ILO anniversary.

President said he was trying to put as much of our aid programs as possible into education and health. If you are healthy and educated you can build your own steel mills.

The President urged a go-ahead on the UNESCO project to help equip a National Technical Center in Phu-tho, Vietnam.

Maheu mentioned literacy projects. The President replied that this was important. He indicated that we had preferred to channel most of our support to developing countries through Paul Hoffman's agency. Maheu replied that Hoffman's agency supports a good bit of the UNESCO budget.

Benton pointed out that Maheu's term was coming to an end. The President indicated that Rusk had spoken to him and urged him to support Maheu for reelection. He said he was glad to do so.

The President mentioned importance of communications satellites in bringing education to developing countries. Maheu mentioned specific plans for India, Brazil and Indonesia. The President commented that anything we can do for Indonesia is important. Benton called for UNESCO conferences in the United States. President said we will cooperate in any way we can. Suggested that Benton and Maheu brief the press on their meeting.

President pointed out the importance of maintaining Congressional support for UNESCO'S budget. It is important to limit budget increases and be able to justify them with demonstrably effective programs.

Regarding Vietnam, the President commented on his responsibilities as Commander-in-Chief -- not to expose American boys needlessly to increased danger. He also mentioned the views of those who would have him prosecute the war with much less inhibition and restraint than we now exercise.