

5 Lyndewode Road,
Cambridge.
11th June 1959

Sir,

On several occasions I have approached you on behalf of a number of Catalan professors and intellectuals abroad representative of Catalans residing at home who cannot express their opinions publicly without exposing themselves to serious reprisals from the Spanish Government.

In our communications and accompanying reports and documents we have repeatedly brought to the attention of UNESCO the persecution of the Catalan language and culture by the Spanish Government.

It is with regret that we now have to report a new and very serious attack by the Spanish authorities upon the "Institut d'Estudis Catalans", the highest academic institution in Catalonia, and upon academic life and freedom. The occasion was the annual academic session on May 15 last, and the facts are given in the enclosed note.

The "Institut d'Estudis Catalans" has been for over 30 years a member of the International Academic Union, one of the organisations affiliated with the International Council for Philosophy and Humanistic Studies, a non-governmental organisation recognised by UNESCO as a consultative body.

The Spanish Government's policy of discrimination against the Catalans on the grounds of their nationality, language and culture, continuously pursued for 20 years, violates the principles of the Charter of the United Nations, the Declaration of Human Rights, the Constitution of UNESCO and many resolutions voted by its General Conferences.

We are fully aware that UNESCO has no power of coercion, but if its principles are to have any value they should command the respect of its members, and its decisions should have a binding moral force among them.

We feel entitled, therefore, to expect that the Spanish Government's policy of discrimination against the Catalan language and culture, and particularly the recent attack upon academic freedom, will receive your careful attention and that the Spanish Government will be made to realise that the continuation of this policy lowers its prestige among the members of UNESCO.

With the highest consideration

I am, Sir,
Yours truly,

J. M. BATISTA i ROCA.

Dr. Vitorino Veronese,
Director General of UNESCO,
Paris.