

COMMUNICATION TO
THE UNITED NATIONS
ORGANIZATION

(DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL AFFAIRS)

FROM

THE THEOSOPHICAL SOCIETY

ADYAR, MADRAS 20, INDIA

November 9, 1946

EXPLANATION

A communication dated July 1, 1946 was received from the United Nations Organization, Department of Social Affairs, inviting the Society to apply for "consultative status," enclosing a Questionnaire (E/Form 3, of April 16, 1946) for Data on Non-Governmental Organizations. A reply was requested in time for the Council meeting in September 1946. However, the communications were received at Adyar on October 5, 1946. A cable was sent, acknowledging the communications and stating that the information would be sent as early as possible, as the information asked for required the collection of many data. The Questionnaire, E/Form 3, was on two sides of a foolscap sheet of paper, with blanks for the information solicited. As it was impossible to give the information within the space allotted on the roneoed form, a statement was sent on November 9, 1946 giving all the details asked for. I have printed for the use of members of the Theosophical Society the information sent to U.N.O. The clauses of the Questionnaire are given in dark type. Some footnotes have been admitted to clarify or add to the statement sent to

U.N.O.

C. JINARÂJADÂSA,
President.

In reply to E/Form 3, 16 April, 1946.

DATA ON NON-GOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATIONS

November 9, 1946

1. Name of Organization:

(English) The Theosophical Society.

(French) Société Théosophique.

2. Address or Headquarters: Adyar, Madras 20,
India.

3. Address of Branch or Regional Headquarters: (for international organizations only): The Society has member-organizations, called "National Societies" in 40 Countries. The list attached gives the names and addresses of the member-organizations.

4. Address of Representative in U.S.A.: (if no Headquarters or Branch Office is located in U.S.A.) The Theosophical Society in America, "Olcott", Wheaton, Illinois.

5. Membership: (Total number of persons. Do these persons pay subscriptions directly or are the subscriptions paid by affiliated organizations? List the affiliated organizations [with their country, if an international organization] with the total number of persons belonging to each. Mention also any other types of members, such as associate members, with pertinent facts.)

29,887. The number has been very greatly affected by the closing down of member-organizations in the

invaded countries. These are reviving once again. The number above is from the last definite report of membership throughout the world, up to years marked against the countries in the following list :—

COUNTRY	YEAR	NUMBER OF MEMBERS
United States	... 1945	3,594
England	... 1945	3,496
India	... 1946	6,953
Australia	... 1945	1,019
Sweden	... 1945	386
New Zealand	... 1945	919
Netherlands	... 1945	1,600
France	... 1945	1,311
Italy	... 1945	430
Germany	... 1945	91
Cuba	... 1945	580
Hungary	... 1945	141
Finland	... 1945	523
Russia	... 1940	160
Czechoslovakia	... 1939	103
South Africa	... 1945	567
Scotland	... 1945	393
Switzerland	... 1942	276
Belgium	... 1945	306
Netherland Indies	... 1941	1,067
Burma	... 1945	150
Austria	... 1945	160
Norway	... 1945	100
Egypt	... 1942	20
Denmark	... 1945	325
Ireland	... 1945	115
Mexico	... 1945	341
Canada	... 1944	319
Argentina	... 1945	849
Chile	... 1942	132
Brazil	... 1942	338

COUNTRY	YEAR	NUMBER OF MEMBERS
Bulgaria	... 1939	105
Iceland	... 1945	184
Spain	... 1935	510
Portugal	... 1945	173
Wales	... 1945	180
Poland	... 1939	197
Uruguay	... 1945	63
Porto Rico	... 1942	93
Rumania	... 1939	190
Yugoslavija	... 1945	266
Ceylon	... 1945	133
Greece	... 1945	212
Central America ¹	... 1945	148
Paraguay	... 1940	8
Peru	... 1940	27
Philippine Islands	... 1940	189
Colombia	... 1940	125
Canadian Federation	... 1942	164
British East Africa	... 1942	136
Malaya	... 1942	60
Members attached direct to International Head- quarters	... 1946	60
Total		29,887

Each member of the Society pays subscriptions to the member-organization of the country of his residence, and not direct to the International Headquarters of the Society. Ten per cent of national dues are sent to the International Headquarters. An exception is made in the case of Lodges (groups of members) or individual members in a country which has not been

¹ Costa Rica, Nicaragua, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Panama.

organized into a member-organization or "National Society", who pay direct to the International Headquarters. Some National organizations, but not all, have Associate Members, who have however no power of voting and pay less as membership dues than fully inscribed members.

6. General Purposes of the Organization: The purpose of the Organization is stated in its First Object: "*To form a nucleus of the Universal Brotherhood of Humanity, without distinction of race, creed, sex, caste or colour.*" Since the beginning of the work of the Society in 1875, the attempt of its leading workers has been to bring all the nations together to a better understanding of each other by proclaiming the essential and fundamental nature of all men as equally rooted in one Divine Principle, and therefore all brothers upon earth, whatever may be their differences of race, creed, sex, caste or colour. The work has mainly been by showing a common substratum to all the world's religions and philosophies, and a continuous tradition among all people concerning the relation of man to God.

For this purpose the Society annually holds Conventions or Congresses in each National Organization, and also once a year in India at the Headquarters of the International Organization,² when men and women from many parts of the world take part in its deliberations.

The Society, neither in its international working nor in the National Organizations, takes any part as a collective body in politics, but leaves its members free

² Usually the International Convention alternates between the International Headquarters at Adyar and the Headquarters of the Theosophical Society in India (the Indian Section) at Benares.

to express their political affiliations according to their own judgment.

7. Can officially designated representatives speak authoritatively for the membership on matters concerned with the stated purposes of the organization? And if so, on what subjects? If not, clarify under item 8 below how the representative could carry on consultation.

The only person officially designated as the Society's representative to speak authoritatively for its membership is the President of the Society, and he can speak only on Brotherhood and other ideals of the Society. No member is however bound by any proclamation of the Society's President on any matter of a member's personal and private belief. The head of each member-organization has, within the Constitution, a representative capacity to speak on behalf of his National Society on all matters with which he is competent to deal under the Constitutions, both International and National.

There is perfect freedom of opinion on all matters, and the Society has no creed or statement of belief to which a member must subscribe. Membership is based on the acceptance of the ideal of Universal Brotherhood. The trend of the work of the Society is towards building bridges between the various nations, and from 1875 the Society has been working along the lines of the Charter of the United Nations.

8. Specific interests with reference to the work of the Economic and Social Council: (Reason for consulting with Council bodies.)

The National organizations have started groups under the name of The Theosophical Order of Service, which take part in many types of work for social

uplift. They have not, however, organized to propagate any one set of economic solutions, but many members of the Society cordially accept the idea of a World Directorate, with regional subdivisions.

9. Officers : (names and positions held, including the Chief Executive Officer or Secretary and other principal administrative officials. What is the number of paid officer personnel ?)

President : Mr. C. Jinarâjadâsa, M.A. (University of Cambridge, England).

Vice-President : Mr. Sidney A. Cook, late Financial Vice-President of the Diamond T Motor Truck Co., Chicago.

Treasurer : Mr. Panda Baijnath³.

Recording Secretary : Mrs. Jane Clumeck.

In addition six subordinate officials are elected each year to form, with the four abovementioned, the Executive Committee of the Society. The four principal officers of the Society receive no salary. At the International Headquarters, only clerical staff receive salaries.

The International Headquarters of the Theosophical Society is an estate of 266 acres, with some 60 buildings large and small.⁴ It is a wooded park with the buildings dotted about it, and there are several departments, the number on the staff of each being as follows :
Administration Office of the

President	.... Secretaries 2 ;
	messengers 4.

³ After this Statement was sent to U.N.O., Mr. C. D. Shores was appointed Treasurer.

⁴ The full number is 66, six of which are religious shrines exempt from municipal taxation.

Administration Office of the Treasurer	....	Staff 3 ; messengers 2.
Administration Office of Re- cording Secretary	....	Staff 2 ; messenger 1.
The Theosophical Publishing House	....	Staff 6 ; messengers, watchmen, etc., 10.
The Vasanta Press ⁵ (com- positors, pressmen, binders)	....	60 employees.
Gardens Department ⁶ (to main- tain the Park, as also a small fruit and agricultural farm)	...	58 employees. (Farm area 39 acres).
Engineering Department and Workshop (electricians, car- penters, fitters and masons)	....	64 Staff and em- ployees.
Watch and Ward Department (to maintain the protection of the estate and to guide visitors who come daily)	....	24 employees.
Department of Sanitation and Conservancy	....	Staff 3 ; employees 15.
Dispensary	....	Staff 3.
Laundry	....	17 employees.
Other employees	....	9.

⁵ Staff 2.

⁶ Staff 2.

Arrangements are made for the residents, Eastern and Western students who come, and there is one large building of 30 flats for Western students, and 3 smaller buildings for Eastern students who live on a more economical scale. Each section conducts a restaurant, that for Western students employing 16 staff and servants, and that for Eastern, 6 staff and servants. There are other smaller buildings serving the purpose of accommodation. Special temporary erections are made when necessary for International Conventions which range from 1,200 to 2,500 delegates. No one, however, unless a member of the Society and properly recommended, is permitted to stay in the estate, which is maintained solely for the use of the students and workers of the International Society, and of the Adyar Library which at present has a staff and employees numbering 24.

10. Structure : [Policy-making bodies (Conference, Governing Body, Executive Committee), frequency of meetings, with date of last meeting for each.]

There is only one "Policy-making" body for the International Society. This body is termed under the Constitution the "General Council of the Theosophical Society", and it is composed of the President, Vice-President, Treasurer, Recording Secretary and heads of all National Societies or member-organizations, at the moment 40, with also 10 Additional Members selected from the various countries to assist in the deliberations of the Council. This General Council is the supreme body, and the President of the Society is its Executive Officer. The General Council meets once a year at the International Headquarters of the Society, or at Benares at the Headquarters of the Theosophical Society in India, the

members being present either personally or by proxy. In between meetings of the Council, consultations take place by correspondence. The last meeting of the General Council was held on December 25, 1945. This body works under a Constitution, and its rules can only be changed after consultation and voting, as set forth in the Memorandum of Association enclosed herewith. Each branch or Lodge drafts its own rules, which however must not infringe the International Constitution. The voting within a Lodge is by majority, not by proportional voting. Similarly, each member-organization or National Society drafts its own local Constitution, which derives its validity from the International Constitution, and the voting is by majority.

11. Finance : (Annual budget and sources of income).

Each member-organization has its own financial budget, and once a year presents it to its own members. The International Headquarters of the Society presents its annual budget to the Policy-making body, the General Council. The past 12 months' accounts are presented and a provisional budget for the coming 12 months is sanctioned.

The average annual net income and expenditure of the Society's Headquarters amount to about Rs. 91,300/- (\$27,835). The income is derived chiefly from :

Fees and Dues	Rs. 15,000	\$ 4,573
Rents	28,300	\$ 8,628
Interest on Investments (net)	14,000	\$ 4,268
Donations	34,000	\$10,366

The expenditure is chiefly on the maintenance of the various buildings, gardens and lands, partly for the support

of the Adyar Library and in paying the clerical staff (its principal officers being mostly honorary), and for the Municipal Taxes which amount to Rs. 11,000/- (\$ 3,354).

The Society also maintains residential quarters with boarding arrangements for visitors from India and abroad and in addition has its own Printing Press and Publishing Department.

The total of the Society's Capital Fund, together with special funds and reserves, is approximately Rs. 11,98,536 (\$ 365,408). Of this approximately Rs. 5,84,424 (\$ 178,178) is invested in negotiable securities from which income is derived. The balance is represented by fixed assets, including land, buildings, machinery, furniture, fittings, stocks, stores and other miscellaneous property. Of the special funds mentioned above, those invested in interest-bearing securities include the Headquarters Fund of the Society which has an investment of Rs. 1,36,200/- (\$ 41,524). For the Adyar Library, which is a part of the Society, there are separate investments ; for its maintenance one of Rs. 1,28,000 (\$ 39,024) and another for Rs. 1,26,800/- (\$ 38,658) for a building which it is hoped will be erected for the Library at a convenient time.

12. History : (Date when founded ; principal historical developments.)

The Society was founded by Colonel Henry S. Olcott and Madame Helena Petrovna Blavatsky, both citizens of the United States, and about 30 others (among whom were some British) in the City of New York on November 17, 1875. In the year 1878 the Society's Headquarters were transferred to India, first to the City

of Bombay, and later in 1888, to its present location, Adyar, Madras 20.

Up to the beginning of the last war, the Society had groups of members (each group having not less than 7) called Lodges, to the number of 1,141. This number decreased in European countries during the war, but once more the Lodges which were suppressed by the Axis powers are beginning to work again.

In the year 1895 a division took place in the Society, the majority of the Lodges in the United States forming a new organization called "The Theosophical Society in America", under the leadership of the then Vice-President of the Society, Mr. W. Q. Judge⁷. Later the name of this Society was changed to "The Theosophical Society", a title however which by right belongs only to the original founding body located now in India. From this second organization in the United States (later transferred to Point Loma, California, under the leadership of Mrs. Katherine Tingley and later still, under Dr. G. de Purucker, to Covina, California) there were divisions, one being a small group in New York called "The Theosophical Society" (quite distinct from the original Society), and a second body now calling itself "The United Lodge of Theosophists". Since the division mentioned, our own organization in the United States has steadily grown and now has 129 Lodges, and a large building of its own for administrative purposes at Wheaton, Illinois.

⁷ The Lodges or Branches of the Parent Theosophical Society used to be called "The American Section of the Theosophical Society". When the National Society was incorporated in the State of Illinois, this name became "The American Theosophical Society" and was later changed to "The Theosophical Society in America".

13. Activities : (A Statement of the most important activities or accomplishments, and membership in or connections with other organizations, including international organizations.)

The activities in order to proclaim and disseminate the Objects of the Society are especially by means of lectures and literature, consisting of magazines and books. Up to the beginning of the war there were 39 magazines of National Societies. The chief magazine of the International Society, called "The Theosophist", was begun in 1878 and has been published monthly without a break, Volume 68 beginning with the issue of October 1946.

The Society being so widespread, the National Societies of Europe have been grouped into a Federation of European National Societies of the Theosophical Society. A second Federation exists of the National Societies of Uruguay, Argentina, Chile and Brazil.

Usually each Lodge meets once a week for study and discussion, and in the larger Lodges there are also public meetings about once a week.

One of the most important aspects of the Society's work is the Adyar Library, founded in 1886. The aim was to collect and translate Oriental manuscripts that were fast disappearing in India and, in the words of its founder, Colonel H. S. Olcott, also President-Founder of the Theosophical Society, "to carry out its policy of universal goodwill".

In the Library are now some 15,000 manuscripts: 10,000 palm-leaf, 4,000 paper, and 1,000 transcripts bound as books. It also houses the Dr. V. Swaminadha

Aiyar collection of a thousand rare Tamil manuscripts. The printed works comprise some 60,000 volumes in the following languages and scripts : Sanskrit in Devanâgari and other Indian scripts as well as many Sanskrit treatises translated into English, German, French, etc. ; Pâli and other languages in Burmese, Siamese, Sinhalese, Devanâgari, and Roman scripts, as well as many English translations of Buddhist works ; books in Chinese, Japanese, Annamese, Tibetan, Tamil, Kannada, Telugu, Malayalam, Oriya, Bengali, Marathi, Hindi, Gujarati, Sindhi, Nepalese, Urdu, Arabic, Persian and other Iranian languages. In Roman, Gothic, Greek and Slavic scripts are to be found books in English, Polish, German, Dutch, Danish, Norwegian, Icelandic, Swedish, Russian, Finnish, Yugoslavijan, Hungarian, Czechoslovakian, Rumanian, Greek, Latin, Italian, Spanish, Portuguese, and French. The linguistic aisle contains dictionaries and grammars of many little-known dialects and languages and is itself a history of philological growth from the earliest sign-manuals to the present day with its many experiments in artificial language-building, such as Esperanto, Volapuk, etc.

Among the rare treasures of the Library are : One of the three existing copies in India of the Tibetan religious encyclopaedia—a complete set, xylographed on the tough inner bark of a shrub, of the Tibetan translations of the Buddhist Canon 'Ka'gyur and 'Ta'gyur ; a number of old Chinese and Japanese scroll pictures, some on silk, two of which are reputed to be 800 years old, and a scroll Chinese manuscript 33 feet long, written in fine gold ink on a smooth black paper. The Buddhist Tripitakas are to be found in the Haroon edition (Shanghai) ; the

Taisho edition (Chinese) ; a Chinese edition by the Jodo Japanese sect in 418 volumes on silk paper ; a Sinhalese palm-leaf version of 47 volumes in 24,156 pages. The German, French, Spanish, Latin, and English collections contain priceless old works, some dating as long ago as 1488. The Library also owns one of the oldest Korans in India written in Persia some five or six hundred years ago. The descriptive catalogues prepared by the Library staff of pundits and published year after year are revealing the hidden treasures in the palm-leaf and other manuscripts. The Library has also translated and printed from about 150 Sanskrit and Tibetan manuscripts some 36 works, several with translations in English. Its publications—54 in all to date—cover all branches of culture as follows : Veda and Upanishads 15 ; other religious works on Hinduism 7 ; Buddhism 2 ; Music 6 ; Druidism 1 ; Philosophy 6 ; Law 2 ; Linguistics 1 ; Literary Criticism 2 ; Poetry 2 ; History 1 ; Science in four volumes 1 ; Catalogues 8, of which two are descriptive. Many works are in progress on the above subjects as well as on Indian Astrology and Medicine. The Library's quarterly bulletin, "Brahmavidyâ", gives notes on new manuscripts or the manuscripts themselves in sections.

The Adyar Library is one of the finest Oriental libraries to be found in India or elsewhere, and exchanges its publications with other Oriental libraries in India and abroad. Its museum-like rooms with its collection of various types of manuscripts—copper engraved and overlaid, silk and silk paper, palm-leaf, some illustrated—together with the ancient Scriptures, attract visitors from all parts of India and abroad, while research students come from great distances or arrange to take

advantage of its facilities for study in comparative religion, philosophy, mysticism, art, science, history and literature.

14. Publications : (Name the regular publications, how often they appear, and their general nature. State what kind of special reports, etc., are issued mentioning any of particular importance.

These are many. The monthly journals of the main National organizations appear regularly and in other cases according to circumstances. Regarding publication, the International Society has three publishing houses—at Adyar (Madras), London, and Wheaton (Illinois, U.S.A.) Each National Society publishes its own literature for purposes of propaganda, while the three publishing houses mentioned above publish mainly books, large and small, dealing with the topics covered by the Three Objects of the Society as follows :

FIRST : To form a nucleus of the Universal Brotherhood of Humanity, without distinction of race, creed, sex, caste or colour.

SECOND : To encourage the study of Comparative Religion, Philosophy and Science.

THIRD : To investigate the unexplained laws of Nature and the powers latent in man.

The principal works of the Society are :

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| “ The Secret Doctrine ” | } H. P. Blavatsky |
| “ A Key to Theosophy ” | |
| “ The Ancient Wisdom ” | } Annie Besant |
| “ Four Great Religions ” | |
| “ Civilization’s Deadlocks and
the Keys ” | |

- " A Study in Consciousness " }
 " Ideals in Education " } Annie Besant
 (Besant Spirit Series,
 Vol. 2) }
 " The Science of Social Orga- }
 nization " } Bhagavan Das
 " First Principles of Theo- }
 sophy " } C. Jinarâjadâsa
 " Theosophy and Modern }
 Thought " }
 " Esoteric Buddhism " } A. P. Sinnett
 " A Textbook of Theosophy " }
 " The Inner Life " }
 " The Other Side of Death " } C. W. Leadbeater
 " Our Relation to Children " }
 " The Science of the Sacra- }
 ments " }
 " Gods in the Becoming " }
 " Real Education " } George S. Arundale
 " Education for Happiness " }
 " The Ocean of Theosophy " } W. Q. Judge (Covina)
 " The Esoteric Tradition " } G. de Purucker (Covina)