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editorial

17 may 1970 second world telecommunication day

The success last year of the first World Telecommunication Day, impressively celebrated by 88 countries Members of the ITU, strengthens our conviction that in the era of telecommunications our world, which feels itself concerned by the spectacular development of technique, wishes to be widely informed of the activities of our Union.

As we have said on various occasions, the public is entitled to be informed and it is our duty to see that this is done. The enthusiasm with which a number of activities initiated by the ITU information service have been received, especially by young students, encourages us to persevere in those efforts. We have been equally encouraged by the sound directives given by the Administrative Council and we have tried to follow scrupulously the spirit and the letter of these directives.

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In a few days you will celebrate the second World Telecommunication Day. In accordance with a resolution adopted by the Administrative Council at its 1969 Session, the theme this year will be:

“Telecommunications and Education”

The choice of this theme is directly associated with the decision of the United Nations General Assembly to declare 1970 “Education Year”. The fact that the 25th anniversary of the United Nations also will be celebrated this year is no mere coincidence. Such is the importance which all the nations of the world attach to vocational training and mass education that they wished deliberately to associate this noble idea with the anniversary of the United Nations.

The legitimate desire to bring education to isolated peoples in the most remote corners of the earth is by no means over-ambitious, as we can now count on the active and effective support of revolutionary telecommunication media which were hardly conceivable a few decades ago. Teachers and educators now have at their disposal such remarkable facilities as closed-circuit television, long-distance circuits connected to computers and communication satellites.

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Paradoxically, however, it appears that some potential users do not really understand how these powerful media can be used to the best advantage. This is a matter of considerable anxiety to those concerned, as may be seen from the many symposia and conferences which are held on this topical question.

It is quite understandable that the university professor, the primary or secondary school teacher and the author of education programmes are not necessarily specialists in telecommunications. It is therefore reasonable to assume that the information they require in this field can only be furnished, as a rule, by the organizations responsible for telecommunications.

This being so, we hope that the second World Telecommunication Day will provide the opportunity desired by many countries to make the public alive to the importance of the new media that are available and at the same time to direct the attention of educators to these facilities.

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But this is not the only positive aspect of the second World Telecommunication Day. There is a second which is equally important.

The shortage of telecommunication experts is felt in every country, both in the new or developing countries and in those which are highly industrialized. This is unmistakably evident from the difficulties at present encountered in recruiting experts for technical co-operation projects. The second World Telecommunication Day will thus be a most appropriate occasion for publicizing the many and varied careers open in telecommunications, thanks to “open door” operations of technical training schools and centres and the dissemination of comprehensive information on the possibilities available in the various countries Members of the Union.

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As its contribution the *Telecommunication Journal* is preparing a special issue with the active assistance of the Members of the Union, which have responded most generously to the requests made to them for information. The numerous extremely interesting articles we have received deal with this problem from the dual aspect of the utilization of telecommunications for educational purposes and the training of telecommunication specialists.

It is to be hoped that a wide circulation of this issue will enable us to discharge the most important function of our «Journal», namely, to promote the collection and exchange of information and documentation on the development and progress of telecommunications.

M. MILI