

In her report, Schaefer noted participants' interest in the development of "some national organization representing all Catholic educational and cultural interests."⁸¹ This would include many of the Catholic professional societies, such as the American Catholic Historical Association and the Catholic Philosophical Association, as well as Catholic periodicals and college-related groups, presumably the Newman Clubs. The hope would be to include as broad a constituency as possible under the umbrella of a "National Commission." The proposal received unanimous support.

In fact, the suggestion had originated with Hayes: "I do feel it would be important, if it could be created in this country, [to form] an organization that would speak for our Catholic learned societies here."⁸² Drawing on his experience as America's ambassador to Spain, he told the assembly that many Spanish Catholics "were most anxious to know about the Catholic Church in America. They wanted to know about the universities. We should have a corresponding Catholic organization to cooperate with the Institute of International Education, Dr. Stephen Duggan's organization."⁸³ Others were ready to agree, though some, like Parsons, expressed doubt. But when they heard Hayes proclaim that "there is definite work to be done" and when they considered his hope together with Halecki's call for a national Catholic effort to influence UNESCO, these calls gelled into a collective call for the CCICA.

The afternoon session of the Fordham meeting turned toward practical action. During their luncheon, Halecki, Murray, and Hoffman worked to draft resolutions for discussion and amendment. They were cognizant of the morning's news: there would be an American national commission to the new UNESCO, the details of which would be worked out at the London conference. The question of how to address this national commission forced the Fordham group to confront the matter of its own identity. Were they forming as a "commission" that could draw together otherwise disparate Catholic groups in order to represent them all, or were they to be understood as one of many "private and public enterprises and institutions" seeking to have a voice in the U.S. national commission to UNESCO? They opted for both. All agreed that the expected commission would profit from "a national association broadly representative of Catholic educational and cultural groups," whose purpose would be to adequately represent Catholic