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SPEECH BY MR. JAIME TORRES BODET, DIRECTOR-GENERAL OF UNESCO,
ON THE OCCASION OF THE AWARD OF THE KALINGA PRIZE
Unesco House, 28 May 1952

Gentlemen,

I have great pleasure in welcoming you to Unesco House for the award of the Kalinga Prize, the first international prize for works designed to popularize science. You bring us fresh proof of the interest taken by a very wide public in the dissemination of science. Your response to Unesco's appeal is an encouragement to us in the work we have undertaken and are steadfastly pursuing to that end. It gives me real satisfaction, also, to be able to announce the first winner of the Kalinga Prize in the presence of the Executive Board of Unesco, which approved the original project and has given us wise counsel in its execution.

Mr. Patnaik, it will soon be a year since I first had the privilege of meeting you in the course of one of your visits to Paris. Your high reputation had preceded you. We know how hard and devotedly you labour for your great country's peaceful progress. We know, too, that the Kalinga Corporation, in which you are one of the moving spirits, is dedicated to the social and cultural advancement of the State of Orissa, of whose Parliament you are a member. We were therefore extremely glad to accept your invitation to us to undertake the administration of an annual international prize of £ 1,000 for the popularization of science. The Executive Board approached the International Council of Scientific Unions, and the Council, working closely with Unesco's Department of Natural Sciences, made the necessary material arrangements for the choice of the prize-winner. A panel of three judges was set up, consisting of: Mr. Goran Liljestrand, of the Caroline Institute at Stockholm, Mr. N. Saha, F.R.S., Professor of Physics in the University of Calcutta, and Mr. Paul Gaultier, of the Institut de France. These gentlemen represent respectively the biological sciences, the physical sciences and the literary public. The panel considered works by ten candidates from seven different countries, Austria, France, India, the Netherlands, New Zealand, the United Kingdom and the Union of South Africa.

The upshot of the judges' deliberations has been the award of the Kalinga Prize for 1952 to Mr. Louis de Broglie, Nobel prize-winner and life Secretary of the Académie des Sciences, whom it is my privilege to welcome in our midst.

For the present we are not concerned with Mr. Louis de Broglie's fame as a scientist or his work in pure science. Nor is it as the discoverer of wave mechanics that the Kalinga Prize goes to him. It is awarded to him mainly for several books

and a great many articles, for public lectures and broadcast talks, designed solely to bring science to the public, and in his capacity as Honorary President of the Association des Ecrivains scientifiques de France. We are, of course, not the first to discern in Mr. Louis de Broglie the qualities at once of a scientist and a writer. For some years past he has been, as well as life Secretary of the Académie des Sciences, a member of the Académie Française. You are in the great tradition, in which your country has ever been brilliantly represented, of profound and original scientists who are at the same time clear and attractive writers. To the mastery of the most abstract scientific methods you have joined command of a style comprehensible to the layman.

It is noteworthy that the judges for the Kalinga Prize should have agreed on a man who has been at pains to show by his own example that the loftiest speculations in the realm of pure science do not dispense the scientist from the obligation to devote a far from negligible proportion of his time, not on research, but on the dissemination of scientific thought. The creation of the Kalinga Prize affirms the high value of the science writer's calling, and today's election bears witness that that calling is compatible with the vocation of the scientist.

There is a final point on which I should like to enlarge, trusting that I have grasped the intention of the prize's founder in choosing the name of Kalinga for it.

Kalinga was the name of a mighty Empire under the sway of the great Asoka more than two thousand years ago. Asoka began the building of his Empire by force of arms, but later came to loathe recourse to violence and devoted the rest of his life to peaceful undertakings and the education of his peoples.

Thus in creating this prize, in giving it the great name of Kalinga and in entrusting to Unesco its administration, you have sought to remind us of two truths which we shall ever keep in view. The first is that the spread of the benefits of science is exactly proportionate to the closeness of the links between its leaders and those on whose work it reacts. The second truth is that science and the spread of scientific knowledge must be expressly and profoundly pacific, so that the story of mankind may remain an epic in the truest and loftiest sense. That is the lofty ideal which the name of the Kalinga Prize will henceforth recall, and it is that ideal, too, which inspires much of Unesco's work.

I thank the Prize's founder for his generous gift and for the inspired idea that lies behind it. It is my earnest hope that science, by the co-operation it demands and by the contribution it makes towards raising the standard of human life, will be always in the vanguard of peace, in a world characterized by brotherly co-operation and common prosperity.