

External Aid

Globe and Mail commented on Mr. McNamara's speech and said:

The danger lies in the interpretation that is already being put on his words—and reports of Finance Minister E. J. Benson's supporting speech on Tuesday back this interpretation. This is that the bank will link its development loans (for all sorts of projects) to readiness by the recipient government to start a family planning program.

Washington has, with certain success, tied some of its alliance for progress aid to Latin American governments' acceptance of tax and agrarian reforms. But if Mr. McNamara attempts the same method for population control, it could badly tarnish the new image he is hoping to give the bank. Persuasive co-operation is one thing; economic coercion would set him in the role of anti-Pope, trying to answer encyclical with sanctions.

In his annual report last week to the General Assembly, U Thant offered a different perspective. The population problem remained a major source of anxiety, he said, but a turning point had been reached in December, 1966, when the assembly adopted a resolution that recognized the urgency for action. Some 20 developing countries had already launched measures to moderate population growth, and others were contemplating similar schemes; but the transformation of traditional attitudes toward the family, U Thant warned, would be slow.

The problem is of utmost importance—significantly it is the theme of this month's international teach-in at the University of Toronto—but Mr. McNamara may need to learn a lesson from U Thant, that a delicate rather than a dragging approach is most likely to bring results.

As I said, I think the motion of the hon. member for Yorkton-Melville (Mr. Nystrom) is obviously a progressive step. It represents an intelligent, enlightened approach by our country. Let us by all means give family planning assistance to developing countries that desire it, but let us not associate ourselves with those who would take what I believe would be a backward step, by trying to bring economic coercion to bear upon countries in order to influence their domestic policies in this regard. We have had too much evidence of late of some people who criticize our welfare scheme by trying to suggest, for instance, that the entitlement of unmarried mothers to grants should be cut off if they have another child. This type of thinking, I am sure, is reprehensible to members of this parliament.

[Translation]

Mr. Bernard Dumont (Frontenac): Mr. Speaker, the hon. member for Yorkton-Melville (Mr. Nystrom) has put on the order paper a notice of motion which he is presenting today and which reads as follows:

That, in the opinion of this House, the government should give consideration to including in its

external aid program family planning assistance to developing countries—

I did not know that in presenting his notice of motion, the hon. member would give such detailed explanations. I realized that he was very much impressed by his recent visit to Biafra. He saw for himself that thousands of children have died there since the beginning of the war. He has probably been given figures.

Personally, I do not appreciate the puns of the hon. member for Hull (Mr. Isabelle) who makes me think of a young girl standing at the corner of the street and saying:

I am for planning, I am against planning, therefore I shall like to be kidnapped, I should like not to be kidnapped.

It is rather funny to hear the hon. member, but since this notice of motion has been introduced and because it might have very serious effects, I will analyze the few figures which my learned colleague has quoted when introducing his motion.

I am quite disappointed that he should see in planning the solution to the problem. I am referring to a very large country whose population reaches the 650 million mark and which lives under the Communist regime. There was also on the democratic side a country which could have offset the Communist thrust if planning programs had not been implemented. I am referring to India which some day could have prevented the Communist Chinese from eventually dominating the world, thanks to the planning program advocated even by former prime ministers of Canada with the help of the World Bank. We can see programs being applied which will make the population of India decrease tremendously and the natural order of things will be upset.

When introducing his notice of motion, the hon. member told us that, at the present time, there are a lot of people without shelter. Do we lack materials or workers who would be willing to build houses? The Supreme Being—and I know that the hon. member is one of those who believe in Him—wanted every one to have a shelter and to eat three times a day. This is a question—and once more I put the motto forward—of making financially feasible which is physically possible. The hon. member will agree with me that science and intelligence have allowed men to achieve wonderful things which might make it possible perhaps tomorrow for human beings to reach the moon or other planets where they could live if, for instance, there