

International Relations

billion people in the sixteenth century to 1 billion by 1820. That number grew to 2 billion by 1930, to 3 billion by 1960 and to 4 billion by 1976. It is a virtual certainty that a further 2 billion will be added by the end of this century. The United Nations Fund for Population Activities has stated that world population rose by 80 million last year alone and will go up by an estimated 90 million each year for the rest of this century. That is the type and size of the problem confronting us when we talk about world population.

It has been said by many people that family planning programs will be one of the main keys to the survival of the world in the future. I happen to believe that is true, yet less than 50 cents per capita per year is currently spent on family planning and population programs in developing countries, and the demand far outstrips available funds.

One of the big problems the world will face in the next few years will be in the cities. Cities will be a major problem, first, because they will contain tremendous concentrations of people in relatively small areas and, second, they will occupy valuable land which could be used for agricultural production. It is estimated that large cities will grow more rapidly than smaller cities, and some of the former are likely to reach proportions which are totally unfamiliar to city planners. In 1950 only four of the largest cities were in the less developed countries. In 1975 this number rose to seven, and it is projected that 12 of the 15 largest cities will be in the less developed countries by the year 2000.

In 1950 there were six cities with populations of over 5 million, and their combined population was 47 million. In 1980 there are 26 cities with populations over 5 million, with a combined population of over 252 million. Projections indicate that will increase to over 60 cities with an estimated population of nearly 650 million by the year 2000. Figures reflecting the size and growth of cities are truly alarming. There is absolutely no question in the mind of anyone who has looked at the whole question of population and population growth that there will be six billion people by the end of this decade and eight billion or ten billion in the years after the year 2000.

The question which must be asked is whether, given that population, we will be able to feed all those people. The hard fact is that the developed countries—and Canada is obviously one—cannot or will not be expected to be able to feed the world. It is just not possible, even though we would like to think it might be. There will not be enough production because on a world basis population is growing faster than the agricultural production to feed that population. If we did have the production, we do not have the transportation capabilities. If we had that, in most cases the countries that really needed the food cannot buy it. Oil price increases have made this problem much worse because there now has to be a trade-off in the developing countries as to whether to spend money on food or on energy.

● (2010)

An example of the situation I think is most graphically illustrated right here in Canada. We set a target of exporting

30 million tons of grain by 1985. I frankly do not know whether we will reach that target. It is quite a modest figure, yet farmers in Canada are hesitant because of rising fuel prices and the substantial and increasing costs of production. Another problem is that most of our land is already in production, as is the case in a good many other developed countries in the world. In addition, because of transportation sector difficulties it is doubtful whether we will be able to meet that export commitment. These are just Canadian problems. When you multiply those on a global basis in terms of the developed countries, it makes the whole situation seem very dark and fraught with all kinds of dangers.

What can governments do? That has to be the question we ask in terms of increasing agriculture production. Obviously it means that countries like Canada, the United States, Australia and countries of Europe keep up food aid to the very maximum possible. That has to be done, but we have to realize that will not solve the problem. Obviously another step in that direction which I think has to be taken is the setting up of grain storage capability for emergencies. That also has to be done. However, the real emphasis in my opinion has to be on money, time and effort in terms of plant and animal breeding, producing plants that in effect supply their own fertilizer. I think countries like Canada can make a big contribution in money, time and effort on those kinds of projects.

Credit for countries to buy fertilizer, machinery and insecticides has to be increased, and we also have to provide technical help. We have to realize, Mr. Speaker, that countries which need food the most somehow must be encouraged to produce it themselves. International relief and help can and must help poor countries, but the bulk of the work must come from the countries themselves.

In conclusion, Mr. Speaker, I would like to say that all the policies and strategies outlined by the people concerned with this problem here today and throughout this long debate which has taken place over a number of years, problems of people, of food and the environment, will not mean one iota if the will between the developed and developing countries is not taken into account. In some respects we are at the very beginning of the kind of information program which will have to take place in the developing countries to get the awareness level up to the point where the citizens of these countries allow their governments to move forward. The central question obviously must be whether the rich and fortunate are imaginative enough, and the resentful and underprivileged poor patient enough, to begin to establish a true foundation of sharing, co-operation and joint global effort. If over the next few years the answer is a resounding yes, then of course we have something to look forward to in terms of life on this planet. If it is no, then I think this planet is doomed to a destructive fate. In my opinion, Mr. Speaker, we will know the answer within the next decade.

Mr. Bob Ogle (Saskatoon East): Mr. Speaker, this morning when I woke up I found that I had been dreaming about something I had read about last night. I was dreaming about a little boy called Alfredo Rampi. No one except his family