



STATEMENTS AND SPEECHES

INFORMATION DIVISION
DEPARTMENT OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS
OTTAWA - CANADA

No. 52/47 The United Nations, its
Practical Work and Achievement

A speech delivered by the Secretary of State for External Affairs, and President, Seventh Session of the United Nations General Assembly, Mr. L.B. Pearson, delivered at the 21st Annual New York Herald Tribune Forum on October 19, 1952.

Your opening programme tonight has been concerned first with the special field of technical assistance and economic development, and second with a more general appreciation of current attitudes towards the United Nations - a panel discussion which has inevitably covered a wide field. The order strikes me as a sensible one, for valid general judgments on the United Nations can emerge only from a close look at its practical work and achievements.

The United Nations can take some pride in its progress in the field of technical, economic and social co-operation. This is a venture, not in charity, but in self-help and mutual aid, which can provide reciprocal benefits to the participants whether they be givers or receivers of aid. Mr. Acheson rightly said to the Assembly last week that, looking back over the record of the last seven years, this perhaps provides the most hopeful and promising aspect of the work of the United Nations. Efforts are steadily being made to bridge the technological gulf between those countries which received the greatest material from the advances of the industrial and scientific revolution and their less-developed neighbours in the world community. These efforts, spurred by impatience from one side, and checked by caution from the other, are an eloquent testimony to the good sense and imagination of both parties in this partnership to increase world levels of food and industrial production, to eradicate or reduce disease and illiteracy, and to increase man's powers over nature over an ever-widening area of the globe. They provide ground for faith in the ability of the United Nations to reach the goals which it sets for itself in this field through constructive practical action.

As you have heard tonight, the needs are great. But the resources at our disposal are limited. Therefore, the problem of priorities which faces all those governments which share in the United Nations programmes, and in related programmes, such as Point Four and the Colombo Plan, is an insistent and compelling one. If it is said that the present rate and scale of our efforts in the United Nations is modest, it must also be said that this rate and scale is limited not only by the resources and alternative obligations of the countries concerned, but