

INTERNATIONAL ECONOMIC ASSISTANCE

Statement by Senator David Croll in the Second Committee of the United Nations General Assembly New York, on February 21, 1957.

It is a privilege, Mr. Chairman, to follow the distinguished representatives of Norway, the Philippines and Argentina in discussing Resolution L295, Rev. 1. My Delegation has already stated the purposes for which this resolution was introduced in a speech in this Committee on January 8. However, since that date my Delegation has had a number of conversations on the subject with other delegations and I believe it might be useful for me to discuss at this stage some of the points which have arisen during those conversations.

We believe that the time has come to reassess the position with regard to the assistance being provided in promoting the economic development of the less developed countries. We believe that the United Nations is the best qualified organization for carrying out this task. We hope that such an assessment will show what has been and is being accomplished and will indicate whatever future progress may be desirable and practical. We have therefore joined with the delegations of Norway, the Philippines and Argentina in sponsoring the resolution which is before you. We consider that this resolution represents a useful and practical extension of the function of the United Nations to assist member governments in their consideration and development of economic aid programmes.

What results can be expected to follow from the passing of this resolution? I think there are three main ones.

In the first place, the United Nations will have for the first time a relatively complete picture of the published facts relating to international economic assistance. It is our opinion that these facts will be of great value during all the United Nations discussions of economic development. We believe that it would be unreal to discuss economic development in the United Nations without taking account of the bilateral and multilateral programmes now being undertaken outside the United Nations framework.

You will note that the resolution provides for the use by the Secretariat of information readily available from governmental and inter-governmental sources. I repeat the survey proposed in this resolution would rely only on information freely and publicly available from member governments.

We have been asked whether a survey of this kind would have an adverse effect on present or future United Nations programmes of economic aid. Mr. Chairman, I do not see how this would be possible. Would it really be better for United Nations discussions of economic aid to take place in a frame of reference which ignored other bilateral or multilateral economic aid programmes? It is my belief that a knowledge of the facts and a co-ordinated statistical picture