

services, so that its second comprehensive report may be as scientifically authoritative and informative as possible.

"We and our co-sponsors have also considered it important that the preparation of the comprehensive report should be expedited as far as possible, in view of the mounting international concern about the effects of radiation. With the same considerations in mind, the resolution, in Paragraph 9, invites the Committee to consider whether the information before it would call for the submission of an interim report before the comprehensive report can be made available. The possibility that the facts compiled by the Committee on levels or effects of radiation might warrant such interim reports was, of course, envisaged by the General Assembly when the Scientific Committee was established. Its original terms of reference specifically provide for such a possibility.

"The main work of the Scientific Committee is concerned with assessing the biological implications for mankind of exposure to radiation. With so much concern at the present time about radioactive fall-out, a major and increasing source of radiation, it is imperative that this aspect of our studies on the radiation problem should be particularly emphasized. Section II of the resolution which we are co-sponsoring, having to do with the role of the World Meteorological Organization, seeks to amplify the information available about the world-wide incidence and distribution of radioactive fall-out.

FUNCTION OF WMO

"The World Meteorological Organization is a Specialized Agency of the United Nations, which has 102 members. Its facilities enable it to collect, co-ordinate and distribute accurate information about atmospheric phenomena in all parts of the world. The Meteorological Organization thus is uniquely suited to assist in increasing the extent and accuracy of man's knowledge about concentrations of radioactive fall-out and the pattern of movements of such concentrations. It is also well equipped to summarize and disseminate such information throughout the world, without delay and on a regular basis.

"I have already mentioned the very high concentrations of radioactive fall-out which have been recorded recently in various parts of Canada; and other members of this Committee, I am sure, will be reporting similarly high levels elsewhere. But one of the disturbing aspects of the current trend toward ever-higher average levels of fall-out is the fact that our information is so incomplete. Over large areas of the world, no regular records of fall-out levels are maintained. It may be that the populations living there are being exposed to equal or greater dangers than are suggested by the levels recorded where statistics are kept. Moreover, until we have comprehensive readings of fall-out levels throughout the world for a considerable period of time, there will be much still to be learned about the movements of fall-out systems, and the duration of concentrations in particular areas. This information clearly is of great importance in assessing the nature and extent of radiation hazards.

"...The members of the World Meteorological Organization - and this includes most of the countries represented in this Committee - utilize the facilities

of the Organization to have at their disposal, on a day-to-day basis, information about a broad range of atmospheric factors throughout the world. What could be more logical than that the United Nations should turn to the competent Specialized Agency to ask that its international system of meteorological reporting should undertake measurement of one of the factors which is of such vital significance of human well-being - the level of atmospheric radioactivity? The collection and distribution of these data, besides contributing to various aspects of the study of radiation hazards, would also serve to keep world public opinion alert to one of the most critical problems of our time.

"In conclusion...I should like to sum up the fundamental objectives of the resolution which my delegation has joined with many others in placing before this Committee. We wish to register in unmistakable terms the concern of mankind at the growing hazards of radioactive fall-out, which we cannot afford to see further intensified. We seek to direct renewed and increased effort to the pursuit of scientific studies, to improve man's knowledge of radiation problems and thus make us better able to avert the dangers suggested by the evidence we now possess. Finally, with a view to bringing ever greater pressure to world opinion to bear so that the current disturbing trend may be reversed, it is our purpose to expose this problem to the most intensive public scrutiny - to inscribe on the conscience of the world community an acute awareness of the menace to which our own and succeeding generations are being exposed. We cannot face the future with equanimity if we approach this grave problem complacently, or if we fail to bring to bear the full authority of this organization with a view to dispelling the ominous shadow of radioactive fall-out that menaces all mankind."

"WHOOPEES" FLYING SOUTH

Adult whooping cranes and their young-of-the-year have started the 2600-mile autumn flight from Wood Buffalo National Park in Alberta to their wintering grounds in the Aransas National Wildlife Refuge on the coast of Texas.

National Resources Minister Walter Dinsdale said recently that this phase of the migration had been indicated by the sighting of adult whoopers only by the Canadian Wildlife Service on a September 29 aerial check of the nesting grounds of the big white birds in the Sass River area of the Park. The remaining adults are expected to leave the Park shortly.

Eleven adults and three young-of-the-year were sighted on the previous check on August 25.

Though whooping cranes are protected by law in Canada and the United States, they are in real danger on the long flight. There are natural hazards, such as bad weather, but of most concern is the possibility that the very low population might be further reduced by careless or inexperienced waterfowl hunters. Thirty-six whoopers completed the long flight to Aransas last year.

The United States Fish and Wildlife Service has reported that Hurricane "Carla" caused very little damage to the whooping-crane habitat at Aransas.