

Adjournment Debate

not even achieve its primary goal—economic revitalization and growth.

Adjustment must be reconsidered. Debt world-wide must be rationally and humanely confronted. This Government introduces Bills to forgive debt, but takes no leadership in dealing with the root causes of poverty and debt. Debt forgiveness will not prevent new unmanageable debt from mounting. To quote UNICEF again:

Debt relief alone will not allow the poorest countries to move toward healthy economic growth and toward a permanent resolution of the development crisis.

As the world's poor become poorer, injustices become more evident, frustration inevitably mounts. Poverty causes tension and violence, and mounting poverty and inequality become a security issue. Desperation to have access to our world's natural resources will have irreversible environmental impacts. We all lose.

A world summit for children would have to look at all the serious problems in the context of trying to reverse the trend again to advantage the world's poorest, our children. The Minister of External Relations was of the opinion that to sponsor such a summit would cost \$20 million to \$40 million. UNICEF believes that an effective summit could be mounted for less than \$10 million.

• (1750)

Canada could redeem some of its lost credibility among official development assistance donor and recipient countries if it would decide today to sponsor a world summit for children. "The State of the World's Children 1989" says it best: "It is time to begin attending to the needs and rights of children not as a mere by-product of progress but as an end and a means of progress itself. The true test of a civilization is how well it protects its vulnerable and how well it safeguards its future; children are both its vulnerable and its future".

Mr. Howard Crosby (Parliamentary Secretary to President of the Treasury Board): Mr. Speaker, in response to the remarks of the Hon. Member for Northumberland (Mrs. Stewart), let me begin by underlining the statement of the Minister of State for External Relations (Mrs. Landry) in respect to the recent UNICEF report on "The State of the World's Children" which was issued in 1989. It proposed an international summit meeting of

world leaders to address the plight of children in the Third World, a world summit for children.

Canada has always responded positively to UNICEF initiatives and proposals. Canada was the fourth largest donor to UNICEF in 1988. Canada has been an active member of the UNICEF Executive Board, almost without interruption, since 1946. In 1987-88 Canada contributed approximately \$73 million, which represented a 43 per cent increase over the previous year. Canada actively supports the goal of universal child immunization by 1990, and it has committed \$43 million in additional funds for immunization in developing countries. These funds have been channelled through the Canadian Public Health Association to UNICEF. Over all Canada has committed more than \$120 million to universal child immunization efforts since 1984.

An international summit would be one way to concentrate international action in this regard. This is consistent with the focus on poverty alleviation and human resource development as outlined in Canada's new aid policy document "Sharing Our Future".

Canada would be interested in further elaboration of the proposed agenda for the meeting and would especially want to know how such a meeting could avoid duplication of discussions in other international fora before deciding on a location.

Let us consider some facts. The cost, which has been estimated at \$20 million to \$40 million, must be compared to direct expenditure for children in the Third World. UNICEF has put forward two alternative concepts for participation and format of a world summit for children.

As we understand it, the first option would involve a one and one-half day meeting in a relatively isolated and relaxed location. It would be limited to approximately 40 countries representing developing and industrialized countries.

The second option, as we understand it, proposes that the summit be an all-inclusive gathering in the form of a special session of the United Nations General Assembly, meeting on the margins of the General Assembly, and be characterized by wider representation among participating United Nations countries; inclusion as a part of the United Nations General Assembly meetings in the fall session; the simplified logistical arrangements associated with United Nations headquarter locations in places