

would be released which could then be devoted to international development. He regretted that this option has been rejected not only by various industrialized states, not willing either to disarm or to increase their contribution to development, but also by Third World governments unwilling to admit publicly that they spend more on their armies than on education or health. Nevertheless this matter was discussed in 1987 at a special conference of the United Nations, which was attended by all major countries, with the exception of the United States.

Illiteracy is a fourth problem confronting the world. The United Nations Development Programme estimated that by the year 2000 there will be more than a billion illiterate people. How will these people be able to find jobs in the age of computers? It is important to note that women will be the main losers in this situation.

Finally, human rights present a great challenge as we prepare to enter the 21st century. There are more than sixty international legal instruments concerning human rights, including the two main UN covenants and the optional protocol; yet these are rarely used. Canada must persist with its efforts in this area, in particular to bring about a covenant concerning the rights of native peoples, and it should ratify the convention on the rights of children and encourage more widespread application of the convention on the rights of women.

Mr. Lewis ended his speech by proposing that the United Nations would be the most suitable vehicle for promoting the new interpretation of international peace and security which is so urgently needed. This concept would emphasize development and the environment and would attach great importance to human rights. He also suggested certain traditional ways in which the United Nations could play a more active role: it could establish a permanent peacekeeping force which could be easily deployed when needed; it could reinforce the role of the International Court of Justice; it could create new methods of dealing with regional conflict. Finally, the former ambassador warned his audience against giving way to pessimism and he urged that international affairs be given a new dimension by being directed to the interests of humanity as a whole.