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**NOTES FOR AN ADDRESS BY THE
SECRETARY OF STATE FOR
EXTERNAL AFFAIRS,
THE HONOURABLE MITCHELL SHARP,
TO THE ANNUAL MEETING OF THE
CANADIAN UNICEF COMMITTEE,
TORONTO, JUNE 15, 1974**

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I am happy and honoured to have been invited to the Annual Meeting of the Canadian UNICEF Committee. UNICEF has always had a special place in the United Nations family of organizations. There is no doubt that it has been one of the most successful international co-operative efforts that have come into being in the period after the Second World War. Its success is due very largely, I believe, to the interest that national organizations in many countries of private persons like the Canadian UNICEF Committee have taken in UNICEF's programmes and the hard work done to rally public support to its endeavours.

UNICEF is getting on to be 30 years old. This may seem pretty young to some of us, but in terms of international organizations, it is well nigh venerable. It began as an emergency fund but soon it became obvious that the need for UNICEF was a long term one and that the organization required an indefinite mandate to pursue its work.

What I have always found particularly attractive about UNICEF is its orientation toward the future through its concern for the children who will inherit this world from us. The second aspect of UNICEF that I find particularly appealing is that it is a voluntary organization. While relying on government contributions for an important part of its budget, nonetheless UNICEF receives generous support through the work and interest of private citizens in many countries.

From the beginning of UNICEF's existence Canadians, both private and official, have played a very important part in assuring the success of the organization. Sitting here tonight is a most distinguished lady who among her several careers and activities was Deputy Director of UNICEF for many years after having been Canada's representative on the UNICEF Executive Board. I am speaking of Mrs. Adelaide Sinclair.

As someone who has dealt for a number of years with foreign affairs, I have been conscious of the very great requirement in Canada for an increased awareness of the world outside our borders, its problems and its needs. I have noticed a marked increase in this awareness in the past few years which is very welcome. It is organizations like the UNICEF Committee that have stimulated throughout Canada an interest in developments outside our country and our continent.

Since its creation, UNICEF has known the terrible facts about malnutrition and disease that so many of the world's children know as a seemingly inescapable part of their lives. More recently, we have become aware that the problem of feeding the world's growing population has become even more acute, as world population rises and as we begin to see that the resources of the world are not, as we once tended to think, infinite -- that unless there is world-wide co-operation and intelligent global management of food and other resources even the next generation may be faced with massive starvation.

The symptoms have been evident for some time. There have been bright spots such as the "green revolution" whereby better seeds, better agricultural techniques, and the use of fertilizer has increased enormously the productivity of many countries. To balance this, however, we have seen populations rise even faster than the rise in productivity. And we have seen how vulnerable the "green revolution" itself is to shortages of water and fertilizer. We have seen certain fish stocks from the seemingly inexhaustible

oceans become depleted through over-fishing and inadequate or non-existent conservation methods. We have seen drought in the Sahelian region extend the already vast area of the Sahara Desert killing livestock and facing whole populations with death, malnutrition or a pitiful gnawing insufficiency of food sapping their vitality and creative forces. I shall have more to say about this catastrophic situation in a moment.

It seems to be a painful truth that the world does not respond to problems until mankind receives some cosmic jolt which finally unleashes constructive efforts on a large enough scale. The jolt that seems to have produced the beginning of the efforts needed to deal with our situation was the war last October in the Middle East which brought in its wake a curtailment of oil supplies and a sharp worsening of an already ailing trade and payments system.

1974 might be called the first year of global stock taking and of the beginning of global co-operation based on the rather tardy understanding of our common interest, as members of the human race, in facing up to the consequences of the increasing demand on finite industrial and food resources.

We in Canada are more fortunate than many others. We have a rather large proportion of the world's industrial resources compared with our relatively small population. At the same time we can grow an abundance of food, greater than our own requirements. Even with these tremendous assets, we cannot live comfortably immune from misery, starvation, overcrowding and an insufficiency of resources in other countries of the world, as the world-wide inflation so drastically demonstrates. We must play our part in the global stock taking and global management of the world's resources, and in the arrangements for the fair sharing of the world's resources at decent prices, on the basis of a decent return for labour and investment.

The year began with a little publicized meeting of Finance Ministers in Rome to look at the trade and payments system. This was the so-called Committee of Twenty. The process continued in Washington where the major industrialized countries met to discuss the common action required in the face of the existing oil crisis.

There was some criticism of the way this meeting was held and the narrow agenda initially proposed. Canada shared some of these misgivings, and I am happy to report that plans are being formulated for a dialogue with the major exporters of oil.

That next event took place in New York during the month of April. There the members of the United Nations met in a Special Session of the General Assembly to discuss the whole vast problem of raw materials and their relationship to the development process.

The Special Session of the General Assembly was essentially a political meeting. It could not be expected to draw up detailed and fully worked out plans of action. This will be the task of the many specialized organizations of the United Nations with their funds of knowledge and expertise gathered over the years.

The General Assembly did however offer a forum for expressing the thoughts and aspirations of the less developed countries. It also offered an opportunity for the industrialized countries to express their views and analyses of what was required to re-establish some sort of order and stability in the world trade and payments system. Some of the ideas put forward by the less developed countries seemed far-fetched and impractical at first sight. But experience shows that the unacceptable of today becomes the doctrine of tomorrow.

There is a need to balance on a global basis the requirements of industrialized and less developed countries, of exporters and importers, categories which are by no means clear cut. The classic lines of division have become blurred. Canada's situation is a case in point. We are an industrialized nation and also a raw materials producer. We sympathize through our own experience, with the concepts of national sovereignty over natural resources; of control of development on the basis of our own national priorities; of national guidelines for international enterprises operating in our country.

Most of the positions put forward at the Special Session will be looked at in detail elsewhere in the coming months. One point, however, emerged as a clear consensus at the meeting. There was unanimity on the need for emergency assistance for those countries hardest hit by the sharp rise in oil prices. These are mainly the countries with large populations, few exportable resources and insufficient capacity to feed themselves. At the Special Session, Canada, for its part, announced among other aid and relief measures, a special \$100 million allocation, mainly in the form of food and fertilizers for the countries whose balance of payments had been most severely affected.

The next element of this merging pattern of essential tasks that lie ahead, will be the meeting in Bucharest in August of the World Population Conference. This subject, full of emotion and sensitivities, is nonetheless a fundamental one. The question confronting us with increasing immediacy is: How many human beings can the earth support? The Bucharest Conference will not give the final answer but it will be another step in the process of thinking of our future in world-wide terms.

The month of November will see the convocation in Rome of a World Food Conference under the aegis of FAO (Food and Agricultural Organization). Here we will be talking of survival in the simplest and most direct forms. You who have worked with UNICEF over the years will know exactly what I mean.

Apart from the dislocation of the trade and payments system that stems in large measure from human decisions, or lack of them, the situation in a number of African countries on the fringes of the Sahara Desert has reached catastrophic proportions as a result of drought. In some parts of this region, the Sahel, there has been no rain, or virtually none for a number of years. This year, the expected annual rains did not come to other areas of the central African region, particularly toward the east, in Ethiopia and Tanzania.

Canada has already contributed generously to the international relief measures arising from the drought. Some \$14 million have been made available by Canada through various international programmes. But giving relief, while essential, is not enough. How is the encroaching desert to

be restrained and what is to be done for the hundreds of thousands of people in this region who have lost their formerly habitable lands?

No one is quite sure of the answers. What is clear is that it will take time, organized effort and money to halt and then roll back the blight of drought. For this reason, the Government of Canada has elaborated a five-year programme to help in the rehabilitation of the Sahelian region, involving total expenditure over a five-year period of \$230 million.

Earlier this year two other contributions were made. The sum of \$400,000 to FAO, which is co-ordinating emergency relief to the drought and famine stricken region in Africa and \$400,000 for UNICEF's special programme of relief in the same region.

UNICEF's emergency work consists of digging in the Sahelian region. There is some subterranean water in the area that can be readily tapped, given the sort of expertise UNICEF has acquired over the years in this very field. Not only will these wells give relief to the inhabitants and their herds, but they will have an important sociological impact in helping to anchor the nomadic populations and thus enable their governments to bring them to schooling, trading and the good habits of a more than surface and subsistence agriculture.

I congratulate UNICEF on this sort of thoughtful and understanding planning. UNICEF is very wise in not relying entirely on official contributions from governments for the financing of its activities. In the first place, you can be more independent if you raise a good share of your own funds.

In the second place, public support in the form of cold hard cash encourages government support. The UNICEF Committee Specific Purposes Fund brings matching contributions from government sources, sometimes at a substantial ratio. Furthermore, public support has led successive governments continually to increase the regular Canadian contribution to UNICEF. The figure for the regular governmental contribution only has risen from \$1,112,000 in 1969 to \$2,500,000 in 1974. I expect to be able to pledge a further increase for 1975 at the November pledging conference.

In conclusion, I would like to leave this thought with you: the food situation in the world has never been more serious. Governments are beginning to tackle the global co-operative tasks that are required. But governments cannot do the job without the whole-hearted support of concerned citizens.

You of the Canada UNICEF Committee with your understanding of the tremendous requirements, have a special responsibility to rally support for Canada's part in this vital world-wide process.

I am not talking to you about charity or neighbourliness: I am talking about survival.