

External Affairs
Supplementary Paper
No. 53/15

NEIGHBOURS -- HALF A WORLD AWAY

An address by the Minister of National Health and Welfare, Mr. Paul Martin, to the CARE Canada Dinner, Ottawa, April 15, 1953.

CARE Canada

On behalf of the Canadian Government, it gives me great pleasure to welcome to Ottawa and to Canada, Mr. Paul Comly French, Executive Director of CARE and his Deputy, Mr. Reuter. Mr. French has come here to give to the Director of CARE Canada, Mr. Neil MacNeil, and to its great fellowship of Canadian supporters, a first-hand report on the humanitarian work of this great international voluntary agency.

Established seven years ago to provide an effective means for delivering essential relief supplies to the peoples of war-torn Europe, CARE organizations in several countries of this hemisphere now bring food, clothing, tools, plows, medical supplies and technical knowledge to Asia, Africa, South America -- indeed, wherever human need is evident.

Canadians can well be proud of the significant contribution they have made to the \$150,000,000 programme administered by CARE since the end of the war. It is really a remarkable achievement that with little public awareness of the magnitude of this effort, Canadians alone have given \$4,250,000 through CARE Canada.

Through voluntary agencies like CARE, opportunities are provided for direct citizen participation in the task of helping others to help themselves. Governments can do much for less privileged peoples -- indeed there is much that only governments can do. But there is a value in voluntary effort, there is a warm friendly feeling about gifts freely given by people to people that government grants -- no matter how generous -- can never match. By sharing in this vital work, thousands of Canadians have established personal bonds with their neighbours half a world away.

How much better it is to deliver to Asia and other parts of the world packages of food marked "CARE" than boxes of ammunition marked "HANDLE WITH CARE"!

Nothing that governments or voluntary agencies can do for the people of the under-developed countries could help these people as much as the chance to find out, in peace, their own ways to the future. The great question of today is whether the climate of the years ahead will be "set fair" for peaceful progress or whether human hopes will continue to be beaten down by the storms of war.

It was in an effort to help mankind find the right answer to this question that the United Nations organization was established. In its short history there have been disappointments and failures, but the total effect has been forward.

It was perhaps too much to expect that in the short space of little over seven years the war-making habits of centuries could be changed. However, a new concept, the principle of collective security -- that peace-loving nations should stand together against an aggressor -- has been established and put to the test in Korea. It may well be that the courageous decision to repel the North Korean aggressor will be remembered as one of those turning points in history when a bold defensive action by free men blocked the advance of barbarism and broke the bonds of oppression.

To make collective security work, the free nations have had to build up their military defences. But there is a strong second line behind our forward defences -- the work that is being done to bring assistance to under-privileged nations through all the humanitarian projects supported by the United Nations, by individual governments and by voluntary agencies such as CARE. In the final analysis, the co-operative efforts between nations to study problems of food, health, relief and rehabilitation of refugees, the extension of science and education and the rebuilding of damaged economies may make a more fundamental contribution to peace than any attempts at united political action.

The paradox of progress is the success of our efforts to learn the secrets of material things alongside our failure to understand the workings of the human mind and heart. If we are ever to find some way for the nations to get along without war, we must bring to the problem of people the same intelligence and dedicated effort that have made science serve us so effectively in other fields.

The purpose of all our efforts is to build and maintain a world at peace in which all men may enjoy a decent standard of living. This involves two distinct but closely-related aims:

- (1) to keep the peace;
- (2) to alleviate the want, misery and despair that so oppress millions of the world's peoples.

It is a tragic fact that more than one half of the world's peoples are simply not getting enough to eat to maintain normal health. Just as the germs of disease multiply when people are hungry and over-crowded and hunger and starvation can provide a fertile breeding-ground for the germs of misunderstanding and war.

How are we to find a solution to the world's food problem? Five hundred years ago we might have sent a Columbus or a Cartier in search of new lands. But today the discovery of New Worlds -- geographically at least -- is complete. We now know that, around this globe, there are not more than four billion acres of arable land from which to feed the world's two billion people.

It has been estimated that to support the standard of living enjoyed in this country requires somewhere between 2 and $3\frac{1}{2}$ crop acres for every man, woman and child. But in the world scene, there just aren't that many acres. It becomes clear then that, for the solution of the world's food problem, we must look beyond the land; for the answer to want we must look to science which can teach us how to make two blades of grass grow where one grew before and to make one acre produce as much as two.

In countries like Canada we have long recognized the value of modern scientific methods in agricultural and industrial production. Our farmers accept soil conservation, crop rotation, the intensive use of commercial fertilizers, reforestation, and the use of modern machinery as effective means of increasing the land's yield. In industry, we have learned how, with the use of power and modern tools and equipment, to increase the productivity of the individual worker.

But throughout the world, there are great masses of people who know little or nothing about these new methods which we take for granted but who know a good deal about hunger and privation and want. These millions are hungry for the food we could produce for them; they need the products of our forests, mines and factories with which we could supply them. But what they are seeking, above all, is not charity, but a chance. They appreciate our gifts of food and clothing, but they are more anxious for the opportunity to share the secrets of our industrial and agricultural productivity.

The urgent problem of today is to bridge the great gulf of time between the development of the civilizations of East and West. There is a disparity in material progress which we must help make up before it is too late. In the process, the Western world may find, to its advantage, that some of the ancient wisdom of the East will be brushed off in the exchange.

By putting our capital to work in the development of these countries, by providing technical assistance to help them help themselves, we can make an incalculable investment in humanity. We must realize that in coming to the aid of backward countries and in leading their peoples to a better level of life, we are not simply doling out charity. By helping our neighbour, we are helping ourselves, for in this inter-dependent world, no nation can live unto itself.

The days of the self-sufficient man and the self-sufficient nation are gone forever. It is no longer possible for peoples to fence in their good fortune, for nations can only live abundantly, comfortably and peacefully in a community of nations in which every member is self-respecting and self-supporting.

Under the United Nations Technical Assistance Programme, the Colombo Plan and similar projects, our country is doing its part in providing technical aid and assistance for the economic development of backward nations. Since the war we have invested more than \$250 millions in UNRA, IRO, UNICEF, UNKRA, and similar projects. During this period, some 120 experts have been sent out from Canada, while over 250 key people have been brought here from other lands to learn our methods.

As I have said, it is important that governments should give their support to humane programmes such as these. There are areas of human need that only governments can serve. There are problems of human welfare that only the collective strength of the community can resolve. But regardless of what may be done by people, working through their governments, to bring aid to the world's peoples, we must never forget that there are and always will be human needs that only voluntary agencies like CARE can meet, heart-hungers that they alone can satisfy.

There is no finer concept of citizenship than to take an active part in voluntary work on behalf of one's neighbour -- whether over the back-fence or across a continent. Government action can care for many needs but there can be no formal or official substitute for the concern that springs not from duty but from devotion. There will always be an essential place for the personal, humane contribution from people to people that can only be made through the voluntary agency.

In the partnership that exists between government and voluntary agencies, we must keep the voluntary element active and strong. In the free action of the individual citizen there is a strength that compulsion can never know. I hope the day will never come when the Canadian people will permit their governments to displace those agencies which give the individual citizen an opportunity to take a real and personal part in welfare activity, whether it be for the welfare of the community, the nation, or the world at large.

With the increasing complexity and magnitude of the problem of caring for human need, some compulsory sharing of the burden through government action is necessary. If everything were left to voluntary effort there just wouldn't be enough effort to go around. In the final analysis, however, whether action is taken through the formal processes of government or through the less-restrictive channel of voluntary effort, the key-note of success is the same -- the participation and interest of the individual citizen.

As I have said, Canadian can take pride in the part they have played in encouraging and supporting these great campaigns to improve the conditions of mankind. If military preparations, if defensive alliances like NATO, if diplomatic negotiations are to mean anything in the years ahead, we must at all costs maintain positive programmes of technical assistance, relief and economic development for the nations that need our help. I would suggest that in determining the directions for our future efforts in this field, there are four questions that should engage our attention:

- (1) how much of our resources should be devoted to direct defence effort and how much devoted to programmes of assistance which represent our second line of defence;
- (2) how to integrate our assistance programmes to avoid duplication of effort and to get the greatest return for our investment;
- (3) how to keep a strong voluntary element in all assistance programmes; and, finally,
- (4) how to ensure that assistance goes beyond mere relief and even rehabilitation, so that we can help others to help themselves.

No one can predict whether the resolute stand taken by the United Nations in Korea will prove the effectiveness of collective security. But we do know that, in the years ahead, the ordinary men and women of this world will recall with gratitude all that we are doing today so that they can live and work in freedom and in peace. By bringing help to the peoples of less fortunate nations, we are proving to men of goodwill everywhere that, in the tolerance and humanity of democratic action, there lies the best answer to Communism and all its empty dreams.

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Government elements are gradually being transformed into individuals. We know never again that the individual will be a mere number, a statistic which is to be used for the sake of a real and personal welfare of the people at large.

With the institution of the... of the... sharing... If... 'n'dn't... the... is the... individual... the... in the... these... If... NATO, if... in the years... programmes... development for... that in... this... our... and how... assistance... defence;... programmes... to get... investment;... in... element in... and, finally,... beyond... rehabilitation... to... help themselves.