

EXPLANATION OF VOTE TO BE MADE BY THE CANADIAN REPRESENTATIVE
IN THE FIFTH COMMITTEE, MR. LLOYD FRANCIS, ON THE FOUR-POWER
DRAFT RESOLUTION A/C.5/L.917/REV.1, 1968 BUDGET ESTIMATES
(ITEM 74) DECEMBER 19, 1967.

Mr. Chairman,

My delegation wishes to explain its vote on Resolution A/C.5/L.917/Rev. 1 adopted by this Committee last night. As we understand it, this resolution has as an objective the further development of sound management and orderly growth of United Nations programmes. The Canadian Delegation shares this objective and has, both in the Ad-Hoc Committee of 14 and more recently in my statement in the General Debate on the 1968 budget, outlined the principles we think should be adopted in the interest of furthering the effectiveness of United Nations programmes. We hold the view that the Executive Head of the Organization should draw up, on the basis of agreed priorities, a programme planned on a long-term basis, with appropriate cost figures attached. These long-term plans would be submitted to the appropriate inter-governmental organs where member states could, either accept or modify the programme, study the cost implications and the time phasing, and reach agreement on whether they were prepared to support financially what had been proposed.

We would like to emphasize that our approach of calling for the implementation of long-term planning on a programme basis rests on two essentials. The first is that the chief Executive Officer will propose and the membership will approve specific priority tasks. Without

this agreement on essential goals there can be no proper planning of any duration. The second essential is that the Secretariat will be able to estimate within the context of the long-term plans, at least two years in advance, not only the type of activities it plans to undertake, but at the same time the cost of these activities. It goes without saying that the advance estimates, to be useful, must be as accurate as possible, and be respected by inter-governmental bodies between the time of their final approval and the time of their incorporation into the budget document. In our view it is only in this manner, by looking at programmes and their costs, not consecutively, but concurrently, that the fundamental problem, mentioned by the Secretary-General in his foreword, of reconciling the total work programme with the resources which will be made available for its implementation can be approached with the required measure of intelligence.

Mr. Chairman, my delegation believes that in implementing this resolution it is essential for the consideration of the planning estimate to proceed on a rational and informed basis. We must avoid the danger of passing judgement on an estimate while lacking the programme information necessary in order to make an intelligent judgement on what we would be getting for our money at different levels of planning estimates. Otherwise, this committee might be faced with the prospect of discussing the planning estimate with views being largely based on preconceived notions of how quickly the budget can be expected to grow rather than being based on what member states expect to receive for their contributions. However, my delegation believes that if the Secretary-General, in cooperation with the programme and budgetary review bodies, implements in a broad

manner the provisions of operative paragraphs 1 and 2 of the resolution in the spirit of the recommendations of the Ad Hoc Committee of 14, he will take immediate steps so that the 24th session of the General Assembly, in considering the planning estimate for 1971 will be able to do so in the light of long-term programme plans with appropriate cost figures based on the specific priorities which are considered to be essential. These programmes would cover United Nations activities in the economic and social field and would be reviewed in succession by CPC, ECOSOC and ACABQ.

This approach I have just outlined would allow member states to consider programmes concurrently with costs and would go some distance in assisting the Secretary-General in his efforts to reconcile the work programme adopted by the legislative organs with the resources made available by member states.

Mr. Chairman, we feel that the resolution contains proposals which depending on how they are implemented, could further the attainment of the objectives to which we subscribe -- namely the development of effective long-term plans formulated in the light of essential priorities; the adoption of a planning estimate based on these long-term plans, for the second succeeding budgetary period; and the introduction of a system whereby both the programme review and budgetary review bodies would look at programmes in relation to costs.

My delegation notes with satisfaction the spirit of cooperation which has enabled various members of this committee to reach agreement on this resolution. In keeping with this spirit of cooperation, which Canada trusts will continue to be a particularly significant force in

the affairs of the Fifth Committee, my delegation voted in favour of this resolution.

