



STATEMENTS AND SPEECHES

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Statement made at the tenth session of the United Nations General Assembly by Mrs. J. Houck, Canadian representative in the Third Committee.

During this discussion many favourable comments have been made on the useful and important work done by the Economic and Social Council and its Commissions during the past twelve months in the social and human rights fields. My delegation believes that these tributes are well deserved and we wish therefore to add our own word of approval to those which have already been expressed. As you know, Canada was among those countries which were recently elected to membership in the Council for a three year term starting next year. We look forward with pleasure to resuming our earlier responsibilities as a member of the Council, and we hope that in due course we shall be able to make a contribution to the solution of some, at least, of the problems with which the Council continues to be faced.

With reference to Chapters V and VI of the Council's most recent report, I should like first of all to say a few words about the section dealing with the world social situation. A review of the preliminary report of 1952 on this subject is still rewarding, particularly in conjunction with the more recent International Survey of Programmes of Social Development. These programmes, by showing what a community can do through its own efforts, encourage us to believe that the right course is being followed. This experience is a reminder to us all that it is never possible to bring about social development by governmental action alone. The structure, if it is to last, must be built on a firm basis in the community with direct and voluntary participation of the people themselves.

It is a further source of satisfaction to us to know that there has been a growing recognition of the principle that social development and economic development are related - that they are, as it were, two sides of the same coin. In our view it is essential that consideration should continue to be given to the social impact of programmes of economic development. If we are not to build slums and reap the consequent harvest of social and spiritual degradation, we must look at the problem as a whole - in its economic, social, educational and cultural aspects. Above all, when we are discussing social programmes in this Committee and in other United Nations bodies, we must constantly bear in mind that they are only one part of the general pattern of human development.

There is a tendency which we Canadians share perhaps with other people - to assume that our way of doing things is the way of others. It is not an unnatural assumption and one which is, perhaps, not restricted to North American

countries. It is with this thought in mind that I wish to emphasize the need to adapt social welfare programmes to the cultural background of the places where they are to be carried out. From this viewpoint, the paramount importance of the training of welfare personnel is evident. Theories on social problems, however good, cannot be applied without the help of trained persons among the indigenous population. Top level personnel alone are not enough. There is an even greater need for less highly trained people from the community, such as auxiliary workers with two to three months training. If this need is not met, the programmes will be ineffective and the funds spent on them will be largely wasted. The training of local personnel has been a very useful part of the work of the United Nations and it is for this reason that we would not favour any further substantial reduction in the budget of the social welfare advisory services.

Considering for a moment the achievements of other Commissions of ECOSOC in the Social field, the Population Commission and the Commission on Narcotic Drugs should be specially mentioned. Canada is currently represented on both these Commissions, and we have always taken a keen interest in their work. We agree with the emphasis which the Council placed on the importance of taking into account demographic factors in Programmes of action in the economic and social fields, and we fully support the various recommendations on population questions contained in sections B and C of Resolution 571 adopted by the Council at its twenty-first session.

The Commission on Narcotic Drugs has also done excellent work on origin identification of opium, and has made a valuable contribution to the international campaign to control the illicit traffic in drugs. It is the hope of my Government that in the near future there will be widespread ratification of the opium protocol - especially by producer countries - and that further progress will be made in the study of the draft single convention on narcotic drugs.

In connection with the work of the Commission on the Status of Women, I should perhaps mention that our federal Department of Labour established last year a "Women's Bureau" with a view to giving fuller attention to the employment problems of women. If any of my fellow delegates should be interested, I have here a few copies of a brochure concerning the functions of this Bureau. At the present time the Bureau is carrying out a survey of the problems of married women in employment.

Finally, a word about the work of UNICEF. In any review of the world social situation, the needs of children - particularly in the less prosperous parts of the world - cannot be ignored. No government, however limited its resources or however severe its policies in other directions, can afford to neglect the health and welfare of the oncoming generation of the peoples that it governs. This truth is borne out by the steadily widening scope of the activities of UNICEF and the growing support for the Fund among members and non-members of the United Nations.

The report of ECOSOC indicates clearly the expansion of the geographical area receiving aid and the number of children benefitting from it. But in our view one of the most encouraging aspects of UNICEF's work is the number of projects which are being turned over to the Governments of recipient countries. We had always hoped that, after providing the initial stimulus to a project, UNICEF would be able to step aside and leave the government concerned to carry on unassisted. This is one of the main purposes of the whole undertaking and we are gratified by the number of UNICEF projects which are becoming an integral part of the programmes of the governments of recipient countries.

Another encouraging development in our opinion is the increase both in the number of contributing countries and in the size of their contributions to the Fund. With regard to the number of contributing countries, my Delegation has noted with regret that while voluntary contributions have been received this year from a great many non-self governing territories there are still a number of self-governing territories - all members of the United Nations - which have not yet found it possible to contribute to the Fund.

As regards the increase in the size of contributions from the regular contributors, we are fully conscious of the fact that the reduction in the rate contribution of the United States Government requires even greater efforts on the part of other governments if there is to be any hope of reaching the target of \$20 million per annum for the Fund. In this connection, my Delegation was particularly gratified to hear the delegate of Colombia say that her Government had decided to make a very substantial increase in its contribution to UNICEF next year. We wish to express our appreciation to the Colombian Government for this practical and generous demonstration of their faith in the work of UNICEF.

As one of the main supporters of the Fund since its inception, the Canadian Government favours continuation of UNICEF's activities at the highest possible level. To date the Government has contributed over \$9 million to the Fund, and contributions from private sources amount to approximately one and a half million dollars. Having considered recently UNICEF's current financial position and its future requirements, the Government has decided to increase its contribution for next year. In this connection I have been authorized to announce at this time that, subject to Parliament approving the necessary appropriation, the Canadian Government will contribute to UNICEF for 1956 the sum of 650,000 Canadian dollars - which is an increase of \$150,000 over its contribution for this year.

In conclusion, it is our hope that other governments will find it possible to give increased support to UNICEF next year. If I might be allowed to express a personal wish in this forum, it would be that all United Nations undertakings in which the Economic and Social Council is interested might have the universal and practical effectiveness of the United Nations Children's Fund.