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Chairman: Mr. G. J. VAN HEUVEN GOEDHART (Netherlands).

Long-range activities for children. United Nations International Children's Endowment Fund (A/ 1411) (*continued*)

[Item 64]*

1. Mr. WALKER (Australia) associated himself with those who had spoken in appreciation of the achievements of UNICEF in meeting an emergency situation and in greatly mitigating the suffering of millions of children; and he recalled Australia's large contribution to the Fund.

2. From the preceding discussion it was, however, apparently the only point on which there was general agreement. Differences of opinion had become manifest as to what further action should be taken in the field of child welfare; on the types of assistance to be given; on the machinery best suited for future action; on the question whether emphasis should be placed on emergency needs and the furnishing of supplies or on long-term needs and the provision of technical assistance; on the composition of the children's board; on the need for an advisory committee and the role of those bodies. In fact, there appeared to be so much confusion that he doubted whether the Committee could reach a satisfactory solution if it continued along the lines it was following.

3. It was in order to cut across the confusion created by the lengthy and complex draft resolution before the Committee (A/1411), and the many amendments to it—the very existence of which showed that a number of other delegations had found the proposed draft resolution unsatisfactory—that the Australian delegation had submitted a draft resolution of its own (A/C.3/L.54). In so doing, it had been prompted by concern over attempts to do away with the concept of emergency aid and to gloss over the urgency of the tragic circumstances of million of children all over the world.

* Indicates the item number on the General Assembly agenda.

4. The draft resolution prepared by the Secretary-General (A/1411) concentrated on setting up machinery to deal with long-term needs rather than with meeting emergency problems. The main emphasis in the United States draft amendment (A/C.3/L.48) and in the statement of that delegation (279th meeting) was also on that aspect. There was a real danger that by distracting the attention of representatives from the immediate emergencies so movingly described by the representative of Pakistan and others, time and money might be wasted on an elaborate organization which would add little to the existing machinery for technical assistance and co-operation. The United States representative had suggested that emergencies should not be confused with existing situations. It was unsound to argue that because bad conditions were of long standing, no emergency existed. Such a definition was too narrow. The emergence of new independent nations, struggling to stand on their own feet and cope with their own problems, might well provide an opportunity for useful international action in helping those countries to do something to meet long-standing situations immediately. The Australian delegation felt strongly that a real emergency still existed in many parts of the world. The United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund had been created to meet emergency situations and since that was its great and undisputed contribution, it should be continued in existence for that purpose.

5. Longer-range problems could generally be best met by technical assistance; but that could and should be provided by the United Nations and the specialized agencies within the framework of the existing programmes of technical assistance and advisory social welfare services. Such technical assistance should in any case be given on a larger scale than the resources of UNICEF would permit, and there was a danger of dissipating the limited funds of UNICEF on technical assistance.

6. Since the emergency situation in the field of child welfare would surely continue for at least two more

years, the Australian draft resolution provided that the work of UNICEF should be prolonged for that period, after which its efficacy and the remaining need for it could be once more reviewed.

7. The Australian draft resolution was based in the main on the original General Assembly resolution (57 (I)) establishing UNICEF, with the difference that the composition of the Executive Board had been altered in recognition of the principle that the activity of UNICEF should be extended to Asia and Latin America. Since most delegations really wanted UNICEF to continue its work in a wider field, they should not be diverted from their purpose by complicated arguments and by the conditions on which some countries would be willing to make financial contributions.

8. The United States representative had emphasized that the staff of the proposed Endowment Fund should be an integral part of the United Nations Secretariat. The Australian delegation's view was that the existing organization of the Fund was suited to emergency functions and UNICEF had shown itself eminently capable of emergency action, and should be permitted to operate along the same lines if tangible results were desired.

9. Having come to the conclusion that the draft resolution prepared by the Secretary-General was an unhappy compromise, and that modifying it here and there would add to the confusion, the Australian delegation had chosen to submit a new draft resolution (A/C.3/L.54) rather than a series of amendments. The Committee would thus have a short and simple text before it, on the basis of which it would not set up a complicated organization without being sure that it would not increase the load of co-ordination and paper work. He reserved the right, however, after the sub-committee set up at the 281st meeting had done its work, to ask the Committee whether it would consider the Australian draft resolution first. He thought that under rule 130 of the rules of procedure the Committee was competent to do so.

10. Mr. TSAO (China) said that types of assistance should be determined by the needs of children in different parts of the world. Important as long-range activities were, the immediate provision of supplies was often equally important, particularly to children in under-developed countries. The organization should be flexible enough to meet different needs in different situations. The shift of emphasis from immediate to long-term objectives was no doubt justified in Europe, where several countries had declared that they were no longer in need of supplies. But it should not be forgotten that the principle that UNICEF activities should be extended to Asia and Latin America had been adopted by the General Assembly only a year previously, in its resolution 318 (IV), and that UNICEF was therefore two years behind in aiding the children in those areas.

11. Consequently, while the Chinese delegation had no objection to the shift of emphasis from immediate to long-range objectives for financial reasons, it could not agree that, at least in the near future, material supplies should be totally excluded from the types of assistance rendered by UNICEF.

12. The recommendation of the Economic and Social Council (resolution 310 (XI) of the Council) with regard to the composition of the executive board constituted a practicable basis for the organization of the Fund, since it provided for maximum co-ordination with the Social Commission and respected the principle of geographical distribution.

13. He thought it advisable that the United Nations budget should cover only the central administrative expenses of the Fund, and that the operational activities, including the administrative costs of the field missions, should be financed from the Fund's own resources.

14. He noted that out of the Fund's total resources of \$US 148 million, Asian countries had received only \$US 22 million and Latin America only \$US 4 million; those allocations had not been in proportion to children's needs in those areas. The draft resolution before the Committee (A/1411), however, made no reference to a priority of allocations to under-developed countries, a principle adopted at the fourth session of the General Assembly (resolution 318 (IV)).

15. In conclusion, he expressed the hope that organizational questions would not outweigh the claims of human solidarity, that the needs of children would continue to enlist general sympathy and co-operation, and that the sources that had supported the Fund so generously in the past would continue their efforts in the future.

16. Mrs. MENON (India) said that her delegation's intention in co-sponsoring the amendment submitted jointly by Burma, India, Indonesia, Iraq and Pakistan (A/C.3/L.49) had been to permit UNICEF to continue its work on much the same basis as in the past. During the debate, there had been nothing but praise of that work. No one had said that UNICEF had been incompetent or unnecessary, and it should be permitted to go on alleviating the suffering of children as a relief, supply, and emergency organ, expressing the desire of large masses of people to work together for a humane purpose.

17. The search for a new organization had been superfluous, since it seemed plain that the existing organization would meet existing needs. She would consequently vote for the Australian draft resolution if it was put to the vote first; her only concern then would be that there should be wider representation on the board, in view of the fact that the number both of contributing and of recipient countries was steadily increasing.

18. The Fund had worked most efficiently in the past; millions of children had been vaccinated against tuberculosis, millions of others had received supplementary nutrition, without regard to race, creed or political opinion; wise planning and constant spot-checking had kept administrative costs down to a minimum; the matching principle had served to arouse governments and people everywhere to the needs of their children. The emergency aid given on a purely humanitarian basis, with utter disregard of racial and other barriers, had been of inestimable moral value.

19. The United States Government had contributed most generously to UNICEF; it was a pity that it should now wish to transform UNICEF into an ad-

visory organ. No government would want the strain to fall too heavily on any one country. In that connexion, she quoted from the 1950 Congressional Record several statements by United States representatives and senators praising UNICEF's achievements.

20. Another important characteristic of UNICEF's mode of operation had been that it had accepted contributions in all currencies and also contributions in kind. That flexibility should be preserved. Furthermore, UNICEF had always worked in closest collaboration with such specialized agencies as the World Health Organization and the Food and Agriculture Organization, making use of their technical staff. It had thus achieved more effective co-ordination than could be expected from the cumbersome co-ordinating machinery instituted at United Nations headquarters. The Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary questions, in its second report of 1950 to the General Assembly¹ had taken a similar view.

21. She therefore appealed to the Committee to continue UNICEF in existence on its former basis or, failing that, to keep the emphasis on direct material assistance, not only for administrative but for moral and psychological reasons. UNICEF did not call for more co-ordination. Nor did it produce conventions and covenants. It gave food to the hungry and medical aid to the sick, it saved the lives of children and gave fresh hope to mankind that by a joint disinterested effort the world could be made a better place to live in.

22. Miss SOEDIRDJO (Indonesia) said that her delegation attached great importance to UNICEF. Her country had shown its very real interest by contributing to UNICEF in 1948, at a time when it was engaged in its struggle for freedom and independence. Indonesia was receiving assistance from UNICEF, both for the programme for the control of yaws and for the restoration and extension of maternal and child health services. The Fund had also given aid in child-feeding in the distressed areas of Jogjakarta and Lombok, and had granted fellowships to two Indonesian students to study malaria control. The provision of supplies and equipment by UNICEF had enabled the Indonesian Government to accelerate its action and further to develop and put into effect national programmes of child welfare.

23. Indonesia had therefore every reason to be grateful to UNICEF and to wish it to be preserved on a permanent basis, as the draft resolution (A/1411) called for by the Economic and Social Council, provided. However, that resolution said that the emphasis should be shifted from immediate to long-term objectives, presumably to technical assistance. Useful as that type of action was, it would not be adequate to meet continuing needs, which were particularly felt in the under-developed areas and were consequences both of centuries of economic backwardness and of recent wars. Those requirements were best met by supplying such basic necessities as medical supplies and other materials, and the appropriate related assistance. Those considerations had prompted the Indonesian delegation to co-sponsor the joint five-Power amendment (A/C.3/L.49).

¹ See *Official Records of the General Assembly, Fifth Session, Supplement No. 7*, para. 75.

24. She wished to express the deep appreciation of the government and the people of her country for the assistance rendered by UNICEF and by its mission in Indonesia.

25. Mr. VAZQUEZ (Uruguay) stated that his delegation attached the greatest importance to the draft resolution under discussion since it believed that the protection of the child was one of the greatest problems of the era, both in the sphere of national policy and in the sphere of international co-operation. No economic capital was more valuable than the human capital represented by children, upon whom depended the future of mankind. Thanks to his technical ability, man could transform the forces of nature and use them for his own welfare. He could, however, do so only after the childhood stage. If that stage were spent in suffering and disease, he could not play his full share in bringing about human progress and in helping to achieve justice and happiness.

26. The high purposes of the Charter could be accomplished only with the voluntary and conscientious co-operation of all peoples. They required, furthermore, the gradual establishment of conditions favourable to the general development of the human being, a purpose which required the greatest possible joint effort to provide for the complete protection of children everywhere.

27. The tremendous proportions of the problem were recognized by everyone, and the debate had shown the grave concern of all governments. The United States representative had expressed her government's concern with regard to the magnitude of the needs which had to be considered. She had indicated that there were some 800 or 900 million children of less than fifteen years of age living in under-developed areas. Unless their living conditions improved, they could not grow up to form a healthy future generation.

28. In attempting to contribute to the solution of the problem, his government was applying on the international level the principles which governed its domestic practice. He outlined briefly the constitutional and legal provisions in force in Uruguay for the protection of children, adding that, great though his country's efforts in that direction undoubtedly were, his government realized that much still remained to be done. He also stressed in that connexion the role played by private or semi-official agencies such as the International American Institute for the Protection of Childhood and the national foundation for child health and welfare. Uruguay had proved its humanitarian solidarity in that and other fields, by contributing 1 million dollars towards meeting the needs of children in the world, a contribution which, on a *per caput* basis, was comparable with that made by the United States of America. It had done so without itself requesting any assistance from UNICEF. That record showed that Uruguay favoured the greatest possible effort on the part of the United Nations to help the largest number of needy children in all the countries of the world.

29. He reviewed briefly the origin, development and achievements of UNICEF. The figures of expenditure clearly reflected the great economies effected in its administration.

30. The shift in emphasis from emergency assistance to long-range services designed to meet permanent

needs justified a modification of its structure, with a view to amplifying and improving services, expanding them to meet permanent as well as emergency needs, and to planning future activities on a satisfactory financial basis.

31. The draft resolution under discussion (A/1411) did not offer the scope for which his delegation had hoped. He agreed that a distinction should be made between emergency and long-term activities but his delegation felt that the draft resolution should be developed consistently.

32. The operative part provided in a satisfactory manner for the establishment of an independent Fund, with corporate personality and its own management and administration. It then divided the services to be rendered into two categories, namely, those for the purpose of (a) providing supplies, training services and advisory assistance in support of the recipient country's permanent programmes for children; and (b) meeting relief needs in cases of serious emergencies.

33. Paragraph 16, which had been taken from resolution 57 (I), laid down criteria designed to ensure equitable distribution of the assistance to be rendered to governments requesting it.

34. He did not agree with the proposed structure of the board and programme committee. It would be better to establish a board composed of 25 or 27 members appointed by the Economic and Social Council on the basis not only of efficiency of management but also of the principle of equitable geographical distribution and the desirability of granting representation to countries in recognition of their co-operation with the Fund. He therefore supported the proposal of Venezuela (A/C.3/L.50) as well as similar proposals submitted by other delegations.

35. The principle of ensuring the closest co-operation between the Fund and the specialized agencies or non-governmental organizations concerned was undoubtedly necessary to avoid duplication and overlapping. He did not, however, believe that the principle would be effectively safeguarded under the terms of the draft resolution, which would, in effect, mean the subordination of the Fund to the specialized agencies, thus tending to limit the scope of the Fund at the very moment when everyone recognized the necessity of enlarging it.

36. He also had certain misgivings about the methods of financing the Fund provided for in the draft resolution. In view of the humanitarian nature and scope of its work, the voluntary contributions should be organized and increased. For that reason his delegation repeated the proposal, which it had made during the fourth session,² namely, that in making budgetary provisions for social services for its own children, each State should also set aside a special item, expressed wholly or partly in its own currency, for the benefit of the Fund, without prejudice to private contributions.

37. Furthermore, in order to meet emergency needs such as those of children in Korea, special contributions should be made in each case. The Uruguayan delegation had submitted an amendment in that sense (A/C.3/L.57).

38. Mrs. ROOSEVELT (United States of America) said that the quotations given by the representative of India had been chosen with extraordinary care; but unfortunately she had not quoted from a number of other statements which were rather hard to ignore because they led to action, and action was sometimes difficult to evade.

39. She could not agree with the suggestion that those who desired a shift of emphasis from emergency relief to long-range activities were motivated by fear. It took greater courage to face the problem globally than to attempt to meet individual emergency relief needs haphazardly.

40. It would be short-sighted to meet immediate needs without attempting to eradicate permanently the conditions responsible for the periodic recurrence of those needs. The general purpose could not of course be accomplished by the proposed Fund alone, but was closely linked to the entire programme of aid under the technical assistance programme.

41. She feared that misunderstandings might have arisen as a result of different interpretations of some of the terms which she had used in her previous statement (279th meeting). Thus some had apparently interpreted the words "technical assistance" to mean nothing more than the rendering of advice. An example of what she herself understood by those words was the help given by UNICEF, with the technical assistance of FAO, to a number of European countries to increase milk supplies to children by installing milk-drying plants. It had never been the intention of the United States delegation that all supplies should be completely abolished under the reorganization of the Fund; rather had it been considered that, while furnishing supplies in response to requests from a given government, the Fund should survey the position with the government and try to see what steps could be taken to remove the need for future supplies. The need for supplies would continue indefinitely unless nations were helped to help themselves.

42. The words "demonstration project", "appropriate supplies" and "long-range activities" had been similarly misunderstood by some members of the Committee. In each case the intention had been that the Fund should do whatever its resources permitted to meet immediate needs and consider what could be done to effect permanent improvement. There could therefore be no question of letting children die during the period of time required to establish lasting remedies. The work of UNICEF would have no lasting value if the Fund merely poured in supplies without also going to the root of the matter.

43. It had also been alleged that the United States delegation had a very narrow concept of an emergency and that, for example, it thought that while child victims of a sudden flood should be helped by the Fund, such help should not be granted to victims of periodically recurring floods. The allegation was foolish, and while her delegation believed that such recurring floods should be prevented permanently by measures analogous to the Tennessee Valley Authority there was no intention whatever of permitting child victims of such recurring floods to go without relief pending the establishment of permanent flood control measures.

² *Ibid.*, Fourth Session, Third Committee, 266th meeting.

44. While the divergencies of views might thus have been due in part to a misunderstanding of the terms used, they might also have been due perhaps to the fact that those in immediate need of material assistance tended to think in terms of the immediate situation and to feel that others, who looked beyond the immediate situation, were indifferent to the needs of the moment. That was not so. She also considered that immediate needs should be met, but that in addition work must also be carried on on long-range projects.

45. Regarding the composition of the new children's board, the United States delegation desired to see the members of the Social Commission represented on it, and had no objection to any additional members on the basis of geographical or other criteria.

46. With regard to the advisory committee, she believed that it was most important that the specialized agencies should have an opportunity to pass judgment on projects before their initiation, rather than that they should be called upon to help in the implementation of programmes initiated without their expert advice. The existing executive board was moving in that direction. In the past, however, there had been cases in which specialized agencies had pointed out that a programme initiated without prior consultation with them had not been as useful as it might have been otherwise. The need for prior consultation with the specialized agencies had thus been clearly proved by experience, and it would be a matter of profound regret if it were abandoned.

47. It was also important that the administrative expenses of the proposed Fund should be included in the regular United Nations Budget. As a permanent organization, the Fund should form an integral part of the structure of the United Nations. It was immaterial to her delegation whether or not the expenditures of missions of the Fund were also included in the regular United Nations budget.

48. The United States delegation was looking forward, not to being relieved of responsibility in the field under discussion, but to seeing the institution of a really effective way of meeting the needs of children within the resources of the Fund. Allocations must be made to areas where they were most needed. Allocation of supplies must be accompanied by an effort to enable a nation to stand on its own feet and dispense with such supplies in the future. What was required was the courage to face a bigger problem than had been faced before, in the most practical manner.

49. Mrs. MENON (India) hoped that others had not misunderstood her previous intervention. The position of her delegation was clearly reflected in the amendment which it had submitted jointly with other delegations (A/C.3/L.49). She had deliberately refrained from mentioning long-range UNICEF activities, such as the UNICEF centre in Calcutta, because she had supposed that that aspect of the matter was so familiar that there was no need to mention it again.

50. Mr. HAHN (Union of South Africa) associated his delegation with the expression of admiration for the work carried out by UNICEF. It was perhaps the most effective of all the United Nations bodies. His delegation, like others, felt that the post-war emergency, which the Fund had originally been designed to meet,

had been largely met, and that a shift in emphasis from emergency to long-term needs of children should enjoy special attention within the framework of the United Nations. It had been made abundantly clear, however, that both the scope and the immediate objective of any new organization would have to be more limited than in the past, when \$US 148 million had been spent by UNICEF. It could not be expected that spending on such a scale could continue. The situation was illustrated by the fact that at its next meeting the Executive Board of the Fund would have before it requests for aid, eligible in terms of its past policies, totalling some \$US 37 million. To meet its requests the Fund had approximately \$US 8 million on hand. That example showed that, unlike the needs to be met, the means available to the Fund were not and would not be unlimited. The problem was how best to use the available resources of knowledge, goodwill and material to achieve maximum results, both immediately and in the future.

51. As had been stressed by others, there would be a danger of encroaching upon fields properly falling within the province of a specialized agency, unless the specialized agencies were enabled to play a direct part in the formulation of policy and were satisfied of the necessity and permanent usefulness of all future projects of the Fund.

52. To underline the danger to which he had alluded, he quoted from paragraph 18 of the seventh report of the Administrative Committee on Co-ordination (E/1682), stating that the Directors-General of ILO, FAO, UNESCO and WHO had made it clear that, apart from relief, every aspect of the long-range activities for children outlined in the Secretary-General's report already formed part of the programme either of their respective specialized agencies or of the United Nations. They had further stated that the effectiveness of those programmes was dependent on far-reaching national measures of a long-term character, which were usually closely related to similar measures for the general population. While fully supporting the retention of a United Nations fund-raising and supply organization, the Directors-General had indicated that it was clearly necessary to avoid any long-term arrangement which would involve overlapping responsibilities for the formulation and execution of programmes on behalf of children. Adequate arrangements for co-ordinating the activities of all organizations involved were absolutely necessary.

53. That might seem a chilling dictum but it represented the agreed opinion of the heads of the specialized agencies most closely concerned with various global aspects of child health and welfare.

54. His delegation believed that long-range activities for children must be continued within the framework of the United Nations and must necessarily consist predominantly of assistance in the establishment and expansion of essential projects within the permanent child welfare programmes of the countries concerned.

55. Mr. AZKOUL (Lebanon) stated that he was almost in complete agreement with what the United States representative had just said. The only difference of opinion hinged on the interpretation of the concept of responsibility.

56. On any question but that involving the welfare of children, he would agree without reservation with the principle that countries should take full responsibility for remedying chronic defects, and that long-range international programmes would be appropriate to that responsibility. That principle should not however be stretched to the point where children would be punished for the shortcomings of their governments.

57. Furthermore, it should be kept in mind that under-developed countries could not always assume full responsibility. In the older and more developed countries, the public was aware of what should be done and thus in a position to exert pressure on the governments to obtain the necessary action. In the under-developed countries the public was still apathetic and believed that many things which could be remedied by appropriate government action were the results of fate, against which nothing could be done. It therefore did not occur to them to exert pressure on their governments to combat disease and infant mortality. They could be awakened and educated by observing United Nations assistance in action and by learning from it that their children need not die prematurely. The growth of public awareness and the resulting pressure on governments could play a useful part in improving the conditions of children. Continuation of material assistance, at any rate during an initial stage, would have the advantage of stirring the people of the under-developed countries out of their lethargy with respect to the welfare of children, and, by creating feelings of gratitude for the contributing countries, would contribute to better international relations in the future.

58. Dr. KAUL (World Health Organization) said that, while the statement he had to make would be largely on behalf of WHO, it would apply, to a great extent, to all specialized agencies.

59. The World Health Organization was anxious that any resolution adopted by the General Assembly on that matter should operate effectively. While emergency programmes called for speed, ultimate technical effectiveness was much more important in the case of long-

term programmes. Emergency measures should be so directed as to strengthen the permanent national child welfare programmes of the assisted countries and to promote co-ordination of official and voluntary services.

60. The General Assembly and the Economic and Social Council had always insisted on the highest technical standards in the programmes, advice and resources offered to governments. The World Health Organization was ready to go on supplying technical knowledge to the Fund as it had done in the past. But it wished to draw attention to the fact that no specialized agency should be asked to take responsibility for the working out of a programme without being given a voice in its formulation. The proposed advisory committee had been criticized by some delegations, but it was the only way for the technical knowledge gathered by governments in every field to be collected through the specialized agencies and used for the benefit of the Fund. The members of the committee would be responsible to their boards, and would in fact be their spokesmen.

61. The technical authority of WHO was derived from its Executive Board, which was composed of senior technical experts of governments, and the policies of the Board were developed in the light of its resources. The World Health Organization was also able to utilize the services of eminent specialists and appointed expert committees. It was only logical that the specialized agencies, which must bear the responsibility for the clinical aspects of programmes, should have a say in the preparation of the various programmes, and not merely in their execution. The World Health Organization had collaborated with UNICEF from the first; fruitful collaboration in the future could best be realized along the lines he had indicated. The General Assembly and the Economic and Social Council had both recognized that WHO had the duty to direct and co-ordinate international health work, which included long-range activities in the field of child health. He therefore felt certain that the Committee would endorse that principle in the resolution it adopted.

The meeting rose at 1.15 p.m.