

¹⁷³
United Nations

Nations Unies

**ECONOMIC
AND
SOCIAL COUNCIL**

**CONSEIL
ECONOMIQUE
ET SOCIAL**

UNRESTRICTED

E/CN.12/28*
11 June 1948

ORIGINAL: ENGLISH

ECONOMIC COMMISSION FOR LATIN AMERICA

SPEECH MADE BY THE REPRESENTATIVE OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

MR. CLAUDE BOWERS

Mr. Chairman:

The United States avails itself of this opportunity to express its appreciation of the whole hearted and generous hospitality, and the many courtesies of the Chilean government to the delegates now assembled here in Santiago.

The Government and the people of the United States have taken an active interest in the well-being and the development of the Latin American peoples for more than a century and a half. Through all these years the social, cultural, economic and political ties between us have grown stronger, and to our mutual benefit. In the economic field, we of the Western Hemisphere have become accustomed to dealing with the many problems of common interest through friendly discussions and earnest co-operation. We believe that the habit of co-operation which developed with such success before the last war, and which continued with such benefit to the cause of freedom throughout that war, will continue and with ever more fruitful results in the coming years.

The nations of Latin America are playing an increasingly active role in the various organs of the United Nations, and in the specialized agencies. We are very fortunate in having with us here many distinguished delegates who have ably represented their countries at important international meetings of the Ad Hoc Committee of the Economic and Social Council and of the Council itself, which established this Commission. We are

* This document has been reproduced in New York from the original which was issued in Santiago.

/fortunate

fortunate in having the benefit of their experience and wise counsel in the work of this First Session of the Economic Commission for Latin America.

The United States believes that this Commission, under the auspices of the United Nations, and with the co-operation of the specialized agencies, will make a significant contribution to the solution of urgent economic problems in Latin America. We are confident, also, that this Commission will agree upon suitable arrangements to insure that this contribution will be made without duplicating the work of the Inter-American Economic and Social Council, other Inter-American agencies, and the Caribbean Commission.

The United States Government has given considerable attention to this problem. Both this Commission and the Inter-American Economic and Social Council have broad terms of reference in the economic field. Theoretically it might be possible to draw, in advance, lines of demarcation for the division of functions between these organizations. Under the circumstances, however, we believe that the allocation of work should be made on a practical basis, having in mind the special advantages of, and the facilities available to, each of these organizations.

Thus this Commission will, we believe, recognize that the Inter-American Economic and Social Council is already charged with the performance of certain specific tasks. One of the most important of

/these is

these is the preparation for the Buenos Aires Economic Conference. This responsibility was placed upon the Council at the recent Conference at Bogotá, and this Commission will no doubt, recognize this fact in planning its own activities.

In the light of these considerations, I shall now refer to the program of work which the Secretariat might undertake between now and the next session. I would like to suggest that the Secretariat might usefully undertake the following specific tasks:

1. As the Assistant Secretary-General of the United Nations, Mr. David Owen, has suggested, it is time that a general economic survey of Latin America be undertaken. We feel that the survey of the European economy recently completed by the Secretariat of the Economic Commission for Europe would serve as a useful guide. A survey of this kind should lead toward the solution of urgent economic problems and assist the Commission in determining its future program. We believe that such a survey might also facilitate the work of the Inter-American Economic and Social Council in connection with its preparation for the Buenos Aires Conference. In order that the survey may be as useful as possible, it is suggested that the topics to be covered should be worked out in consultation with the Secretariat of the Inter-American Economic and Social Council.

2. We feel that this Commission should adopt the suggestion of the Food and Agriculture Organization, made pursuant to the resolution of the Economic and Social Council, for the establishment of a joint working party, on the Secretariat level, which will study what are the principal requisites for increasing Latin American agricultural production. The United States feels that such a joint working party, which will correspond to similar joint working parties established by the Food and Agriculture Organization and the other regional commissions, would be of great value, not only to Latin America,
/but to the

but to the world as a whole.

In addition to the adoption of a program, there is the matter of establishing machinery for the maintenance of close and continuous liaison between this Commission and the Inter-American Economic and Social Council. Such machinery might include reciprocal representation of each organization at the meetings of the other; the regular exchange of documents; and continuous consultation on a Secretariat level.

These arrangements will be needed, for example, in the field of statistics. It seems to be generally agreed that the collection of statistics should not, except perhaps in a few special cases, be a regional function, and we are in agreement with the Secretariat's suggestion that a fully operative statistical unit should not be established by this Commission. We believe, however, that there is much to be done in Latin America in the field of statistics.

Among the tasks to be performed is the determination in collaboration with the Statistical Office of the United Nations of what economic data are available, what additional data are required, and what steps should be taken to collect these data.

Accordingly, we would favor the establishment by this Commission and by the Inter-American Economic and Social Council of a Joint Statistical Committee, at the secretariat level, which would work in close contact with the Statistical Office. Among the first jobs which such a joint committee might usefully undertake would be to assist the Inter-American Economic and Social Council in the preparation of the questionnaire which will be sent out shortly in connection with the Buenos Aires Economic Conference.

It may also be found desirable to take some action in regard to the relation between this Commission and the Caribbean Commission.

I would like to say a word about the matter of expert

/assistance

assistance. It is perhaps unnecessary for me to point out that expert assistance of almost all kinds is available from private sources. There are also inter-governmental and national agencies in this field. The General Assembly of the United Nations, the Economic and Social Council, and the Economic and Employment Commission have already given this subject a great deal of attention. The Secretary-General of the United Nations has announced that his staff is equipped to provide expert assistance, upon request, in a large number of fields including the economic, transport and communications, and statistical fields. The specialized agencies have already done a considerable amount of work of this nature. Inter-American agencies have accomplished much in the past, and Article 64 of the Charter of the Organization of American States specifically charges the Inter-American Economic and Social Council with this responsibility. Finally, many of the governments here represented have worked out with my government mutually satisfactory bilateral arrangements for the furnishing of expert assistance and technical training.

In view of the wide-spread availability of assistance from existing sources we believe that this Commission should confine its activities in this field to liaison with the organizations already active in this work and to the rendering of only such assistance, in direct connection with specific projects undertaken by this Commission, as may not be available from these other sources.

Before closing, Mr. Chairman, I should like to say that my Government is deeply conscious of the vastness, complexity and urgency of the economic problems now confronting almost every Nation, in this hemisphere and elsewhere. My country has not yet recovered from the effects of the war. The supply of many things falls far short of domestic requirements; prices of many things are high; and the burden of taxation is heavy. Nevertheless, my country is endeavoring to do its part, in

/co-operation

co-operation with others, to hasten world economic recovery, without which the social, cultural, and political structures in many countries will continue to be threatened.

This great task of economic recovery and advancement requires the maximum effort of every country, within its own borders, in co-operation with its neighbors, and through the various international agencies concerned. I am confident that every Nation in this hemisphere will do its part, to the full extent of its ability, to bring about a rapid and substantial improvement in economic conditions here and in the rest of the world.

It has sometimes been suggested that the large industrial countries are opposed to the industrialization of the Latin American nations. I avail myself of this opportunity to say with all possible emphasis that this is not remotely true of the United States, and the distinguished delegates of France and of the United Kingdom have already denied it on behalf of their own countries. The industrialization of the Latin American nations and the mechanization of their agriculture will, in our opinion, enhance the prosperity of these nations and by virtue of that fact contribute to the prosperity of all the other nations of the world. Nature has lavished on the Latin American Nations resources which, when further developed, will lift the economic status of their peoples, increase their buying power, and contribute to the happiness and contentment of the whole human race.