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THE NOBEL STORY

First-hand Report from Mrs. Adelaide Sinclair
to UNICEF Staff Around the World

"The Nobel ceremonies were truly impressive, and I'll try to bring you something of the spirit, the emotion and the encouragement which we found there."

With these words, Mrs. Adelaide Sinclair, Deputy Executive Director for Programmes, and the first of UNICEF's official delegation to return from Oslo, began sharing her impressions of the Nobel Prize ceremonies with the staff at headquarters. Entrusted by Mr. Labouisse with the gold medal and the cheque for the prize money, Mrs. Sinclair's first duty was to turn them over for safe-keeping to Comptroller Stanley Sroka. She saw in it a ritual which all UNICEF should share, and a good opportunity to tell the staff the story of what it was like to receive the Prize.

Her account began with the night before the prize ceremonies were to take place.

"We were guests at a special fund-raising rally in the Opera House given by the UN Association of Norway. They were trying to match the Nobel Prize by raising as much money for a 'little' Nobel prize. There were many Norwegian comedians on stage to entertain us. And they made us laugh, even though we couldn't understand their language at all. We were all hoping that Danny Kaye's plane would arrive on time so that he could appear, too, and miraculously, Danny arrived and gave one of his own inimitable performances. He also spoke movingly of Maurice Pate and UNICEF. At the end, a little boy came forward to present him with a small Viking ship. But the child just froze with stage-fright. So Danny took him on his knee, whispered in his ear and did succeed in making him giggle. But he couldn't get the child to say a word! Finally Danny went ahead and presented the Viking ship to himself, playing both parts, giving the words he imagined the little boy had been rehearsed to say. It was wonderful and we all came away laughing."

As for the ceremony itself, Mrs. Sinclair set the scene for us in these words: "The ceremonies were held in the Aula, or Great Hall, of the University of Oslo, decorated with beautiful chrysanthemums and carnations. The walls of

the hall were adorned with murals by Edvard Munch, the famous Norwegian artist. In the centre aisle, about six rows back, sat King Olav V and Crown Prince Harald of Norway. On one side sat the diplomatic corps, behind them representatives of UNICEF National Committees, Dr. Sicault, Willie Meyer and Danny Kaye, and on the other, the UNICEF delegation--Mr. and Mrs. Labouisse, Mrs. Zena Harman, Professor Debré, Madame Debré and myself, with the five members of the Nobel Committee, members of the Norwegian Parliament and other officials, including Trygve Lie, former Secretary-General of the UN.

"The presentation statement was made by Mrs. AaseLionaes, one of the five members of Parliament who constitute the Nobel Committee. Like so many others in these few days, she paid special tribute to Mr. Pate."

"It was a blessing to UNICEF and the millions of children it took to its heart" said Mrs. Lionaes, "that from the very first day of its existence it should have had a leader like Mr. Maurice Pate. He was UNICEF's never-slumbering conscience. He never allowed formalities to impede him in his work; in his opinion the essential object was that good deeds should be carried out as swiftly and as effectively as possible. He recruited his fellow workers from among those who were prepared uncompromisingly, to quote Bjørnson, to pursue 'the policy of compassion.' He was an unassuming person, but on the road that leads to peace, and where politicians are still groping their way in the dark, Maurice Pate has lit many a candle".

"The actual Nobel medal, along with the scroll signed by all the Nobel Committee members, was then given to Mr. Labouisse by Mr. Gunnar Jahn, chairman of the Nobel Committee. The medal was in a green leather box lined with white satin."

Mrs. Sinclair continued: "Then it was time for Mr. Labouisse to make his acceptance speech. Since I know you've all read it, I won't quote from it here, but let me tell you it would have made you proud. That night there was a dinner given by the Nobel Committee where we saw many old friends, including Trygve Lie, Aake Ordning, Mr. and Mrs. Molstad and Hans Jacob Ustvedt. There were informal speeches that night too.

"The next day, just before Mrs. Harman delivered the Nobel lecture at the Nobel Institute, we received the cheque for the prize money. The main event of the day was Mrs. Harman's delivering the Nobel lecture. Her speech, too, was excellent and most warmly received.

"There was a constant round of hospitality while we were in Oslo from the Norwegian National Committee and the embassies there. We hardly had time for sightseeing or shopping, we were so well-received."

In her conclusion Mrs. Sinclair gave her own estimate of the meaning of the prize:

"One effect of the ceremony was to place UNICEF in a new perspective. In our absorption with the daily round we tend to see ourselves as an agency serving children. We are now seen through other peoples' eyes as a force for peace. The prize was recognition of all the elements that have contributed to UNICEF's strength. The governments who created and support it, the other members of the United Nations family who join their assistance with ours, the national committees who rallied to Oslo in such numbers, the non-governmental organisations, and the uncounted numbers of individuals who in one way or another give of their heads and their hearts and their resources, and, last but not least, the staff all around the world on whom the day-to-day burden rests.

"For us this recognition has a special message of support and encouragement which has been so well expressed by Mr. Labouisse in his acceptance speech."

"To all of us in UNICEF the prize will be a wonderful incentive to greater efforts, in the name of peace. You have given us new strength. You have reinforced our profound belief that, each time UNICEF contributes, however modestly, to giving today's children a chance to grow into useful and happier citizens, it contributes to removing some of the seeds of world tension and future conflicts."

At the close of her talk, Mrs. Sinclair turned over the gold Nobel Peace medal bearing the Latin motto "Pro Pace Et Fraternitate Gentium" - roughly, "For Peace and the Brotherhood of the Human Race," and the peach-coloured cheque to Mr. Stanley Sroka, Comptroller. Warm applause followed. Mr. Sroka swiftly announced he would lock up the gold medal in our safe, but that staff members could see it before it was sent to the Chase Manhattan Bank for safekeeping.

As for cheque #584409, issued by the Svenska Handelsbanken of Stockholm in the amount of 282,000 Swedish kroners (\$54,000 US) made out to UNICEF, it was promptly sent Registered, Air Mail, and has already been deposited to UNICEF's account in Stockholm.