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BERNARD FRASER'S MEMOIRS

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Memoirs of Bernard H. Fraser: Greeting Card Operation; Un:
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The process of recalling events is necessarily continuous. For instance, in connection with the Greeting Card Operation (see page 4 of my dictation on 17 January), I should like to add that UNICEF was from the start faced with criticism that the cards are devoid of a spirit of Christmas. The D.A.R. was among those to do so. I set forth our philosophy* in a letter to a lady in Watertown, Massachusetts, in September 1952, attached is a copy of a memo to Pate of 24 April 1959 which quotes the text.

The U.N. Secretariat News of 16 March 1983 reported that UNICEF endorsed the World Poetry - Childhood Day. It reminds me of the idea of a United Nations Children's Fraternity which I had proposed in 1960 (see page 5 of my dictation of 21 April). It does seem that more can be done by involving children in the promotion of UNICEF's aims and purposes.

It was thought in the early 1950's that a Negotiating Committee for Extra-Budgetary Funds could be helpful in securing additional financial support from governments. Many meetings were held over a period of years until it was realized that organizations dependent on voluntary support would, indeed, have to rely on their own efforts. The only contribution which the Committee obtained directly for UNICEF through its own efforts was by Laos in the amount of \$500.

*Speaking of philosophy, the wonderful Bee-Bee Borcic, whose office neighbor I was for several years, referred to me benevolently as a philosopher. I was pleased never to be called that by Stanley Sroka who used the term for anyone low in his esteem.

UNICEF resisted for many years the idea that it should have an annual Pledging Conference. Our view was that it is purely a mechanical event where delegates rise to announce their next contributions (or that they are not yet ready to do so). While UNICEF is now participating in a Pledging Conference for all U.N. organizations depending on voluntary support, and while it is conceded that there are some advantages, it is still doubted that the event itself gives cause to increases. To be judged solely on its own merits and separately from others is better than to see an identity submerged in a whole group.

The underlying thought all along was that UNICEF should stand on its own feet, as indeed it did, and solicit support in its own right.

In the same vein, we resisted an idea that cropped up in later years that UNICEF should seek to keep its level of support more or less in a ratio to that of the UNDP; I believe it was 1:5. Our thought was that UNICEF's aims should not have to be limited in that fashion.

In its relations with WHO, FAO, UNESCO et al we regarded of UNICEF as being the trunk of the tree, and others being the branches. As far as children are concerned, we cling to that view.

Since so much depends on the image which an organization has, its logo and the slogans it uses, we suggested at one time -- when the International Development Strategy was being talked about a lot -- that UNICEF have its own Strategy of Survival (SOS) for children in developing countries.

From time to time UNICEF asked itself: Where do we go from here? One such occasion was the "quo vadis" appraisal of 1959-1960 when UNICEF staff members were asked for their views. A revised list of decisions, prepared by Sir Herbert Broadley on 25 March 1960,

is attached. I had submitted some thoughts to Pate for his personal letter to senior staff members in a memo of 12 November 1959, a copy of which is also attached. The subject came up again in 1971 when one could say that "Plus ça change, plus c'est la même chose" (see attached copy of memo to Tarlok Singh of 2 September 1971).

There is one aspect in UNICEF's existence about which there has never been any doubt: The tremendous value of voluntary support by governments and the public alike, through National Committees, NGO participation, greeting cards and other instruments. UNICEF's name is universally more recognizable than one could have ever hoped for. There can be nothing more rewarding than action performed by others for the benefit of UNICEF without regard to personal gains for sponsors. When people give of their time and resources, they are in fact making a sacrifice. It would be a grave error to underestimate the value of such co-operation.

Like in all personal relationships, problems do arise. There were signs of difficulties with National Committees in the 1950's, and on 1 March 1957 I submitted a Public Relations Policy, which is self-explanatory. After the Executive Board asked UNICEF in 1982 for an External Relations Policy, I submitted a copy to Mr. Vittacchi with a note of 15 February 1982 (copy attached), and while the material may not be useful in its presented form, the basic ideas are deemed to be as valid today as they were twenty-five years ago.

I should like to reflect further upon some of the recollections and may have something more to present upon returning to New York at the end of May, provided this is desired by the UNICEF historians.