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Statement by Mr. James P. Grant
Executive Director of the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF)
at the
Opening of the 1986 Session of the UNICEF Executive Board

New York
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1986 session

FOR INFORMATION

Statement by Mr. James P. Grant
Executive Director of the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF)
at the Opening of the 1986 session of the UNICEF Executive Board

New York - 14 April 1986

I join our Chairman in extending greetings and a warm welcome from me and my colleagues to the members of the Executive Board and observers, the representatives of UNICEF National Committees and the private voluntary agencies, other friends and colleagues, and, of course, our very special honoured guests, President and Señora Betancur, His Royal Highness Prince Talal, and Secretary-General Hoegh. President Betancur has done us great honour by being the first Head of State to lead a delegation to the UNICEF Executive Board. My great regret and sorrow is that we could not similarly welcome another great leader, Prime Minister Olof Palme of Sweden, who had hoped to also join us at this 40th Anniversary session.

I also wish to express particularly warm regards for our Chairman. A distinguished representative of his Government, he has long been an active, diligent and extraordinarily constructive participant in UNICEF's affairs and in the proceedings of the Executive Board. He has proved that even more in the past year, combining his perceptive understanding of issues with his skillful diplomacy to guide both the secretariat and Board members in their preparations for this session which has been preceded by an unprecedented number of informal consultations between the secretariat and Board members on various issues. He has also been an excellent representative of UNICEF, returning just a week ago from his trip to Indonesia and the Philippines. I know that his service in these two weeks of the Board session will be a highlight, but by no means a climax, to his contribution of leadership and strength to the Children's Fund of the United Nations.

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Mr. Chairman, the very moving ceremonies in which we have participated this morning were uniquely appropriate to the 40th Anniversary observance of this special institution which we call "UNICEF". Perhaps it was by coincidence - but perhaps not - that the ceremony featured every essential element that makes UNICEF the very special organization which we, with pride but without complaisance, regard it.

We began with children. That is, after all, where UNICEF begins. With children. And, in this case, these children also represent where we hope to end: with children - bright, happy, alert, vibrant, and joyful. We have no other goal.

To achieve this objective, UNICEF brings together an extraordinary partnership. Those of you assembled in this room as the Executive Board, of course, represent the international collective of nations - joined together in the larger world institution which the Secretary-General leads - which created and mandates UNICEF, and, through this Board, guides and directs us, the Secretariat. In your behalf, we work with individual governments in developing countries - today, so eloquently and ably represented by President Betancur, who has provided innovative leadership to mobilize a nation to protect and develop its children. We likewise work very closely - perhaps more so than any other international institution - with non-governmental organizations. Many work alongside our own people in the field, like the League of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies. Many others work with us on a global scale, or in industrialized countries to help raise the funds that make our work possible. Many work in both ways. Most are represented in the NGO Committee on UNICEF, led by Canon Moerman and today opening its simultaneous Forum on Action for Children.

UNICEF's unique openness to support from individuals as well as Governments enabled the unprecedented initiative for financial support and advocacy with which His Royal Highness, Prince Talal, embraced us - first as an individual, and then as the organizer and leader of a unique inter-governmental organization as well. And very often, he worked closely with our National Committees for UNICEF, those phenomenal leagues of individual citizens who work tirelessly in their home countries to inform, to educate, and to fundraise.

And for long periods through these four decades, so very many great people in the Executive Board, in the National Committees, and in the Secretariat at Headquarters and especially in the field - some of whom still sit among us in this room today - have, in their individual ways, carefully, imaginatively, and tenderly crafted this organization as the world's champion for children.

We are all here today, in body or in spirit, as representatives of the great UNICEF family. Assembled here today to celebrate 40 years of service. And to begin the next 40 years.

An extraordinary 40 years

I will not take the Board's time to review at length UNICEF's 40-year history. Our History Project, the National Committees, and most UNICEF field offices are undertaking various accountings and commemorations. And the Board made clear, in its resolution last year, that the most fitting way to celebrate our past is to use it as a solid foundation for the work ahead.

There is much to celebrate, not just for UNICEF as an organization, but for the world as a society which cares about its children. These past four decades, after all, have witnessed solid and in some respects historically extraordinary progress for children. Infant and child mortality rates have been halved since 1950. Literacy rates have soared.

During this period, UNICEF itself has evolved through three stages. During the first 5 years, the United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund was, of course, preoccupied with the immediate needs of children in the reconstruction of a devastated Europe and Asia in the aftermath of World War II.

During the next 30 years, while we continued our attention to the loud emergencies which catch children and mothers in the consequences of natural and human-made disasters, UNICEF's primary attention shifted to the developing world and the developmental response required for children caught in the silent emergency of malnutrition and disease created by the conjunction of gross poverty and underdevelopment. Happily, beyond UNICEF's own important contribution, children worldwide benefitted greatly from the rising tide of general progress emanating from the end of colonialism and the development advances of the 1950s, 1960s and 1970s.

Yet in the 1980s that progress has slowed - for the first time since World War II - and, in many cases, reversed. The first years of the 1980s have seen the world move from a strong and growing economy that could lift many from the deprivations of poverty and offer new opportunities for establishing the role and rights of all people in their societies, to a world in which the number of hungry and malnourished - mostly children and women - have increased. In some countries this is especially so because of drought, hostilities, or extreme exploitation. But in most cases it is a consequence principally of the protracted economic difficulties which have afflicted the majority of countries during this decade and the inadequate attention given to the poorest.

It is quite possible that the 1980s will be remembered as "the decade of rude awakening". More change is being forced upon more institutions - whether governments (rich or poor), corporations, international organizations, or families - than perhaps at any other time in recent history. Even the seemingly most secure and stable have been compelled to relinquish previously held expectations of invulnerability and adjust to new realities. Countries - from the United States and United Kingdom to Mexico and Brazil to Nigeria and Tanzania - have been forced to massively alter their assumptions. Even the

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most stable-appearing corporate institutions - the great banks, broadcasting conglomerates, heavy equipment manufacturers, and the world's most fabled airlines - have been challenged to restructure or disappear - and often both. And, as members of the Board are especially aware, even the assessed-budget agencies of the United Nations system - previously presumed to be immune from any disruption in their income - now find themselves confronted with possibly massive disruption.

Adjustment is not easy under the best of circumstances. To delay too long ultimately requires even greater adjustment - and even greater pain, whether bankruptcy for corporations, defeat for political parties, or "Gramm-Rudman"-type legislation for a country, etc.

Particularly unfortunate is the fact that, from country after country, reports indicate that women and children have been bearing a disproportionate burden of the recession and adjustment to it - from the loss of incomes and employment to often particularly severe cutbacks in government support services for mothers and children. [This critical situation is further detailed in The State of the World's Children, 1986, the Executive Director's Report to the Board, and, for Africa, in UNICEF's special report, Within Human Reach: A Future for Africa's Children.]

UNICEF's third era has thus been characterized since the early 1980s by a dramatically changed world scene, particularly in Africa and Latin America, in which continued progress for children has been threatened on many fronts - not the least of which has been the fact that developing countries and UNICEF and other social development agencies - indeed, all economic development institutions - can no longer - under present circumstances - count on the steady increases in official development assistance which had characterized the previous era. More immediately, we now discover that not only can we not count on increases, but that actual reductions are imminently possible from donors who have traditionally been our most dependable leading sources.

The challenge of this third era, therefore, has been not only how UNICEF itself can be a more efficient organization on austere funding, but how our resources can contribute to increasingly effective programmes for children, so that progress can be maintained - even accelerated - even in the face of generally negative trends.

Entering the next 40 years

This Executive Board wisely recognized this new era early in the decade. In your Spring and Fall 1981 sessions, you put us on notice, reaffirming your determination that we must achieve a maximum application of resources to programme delivery, and starting UNICEF on a process of adjustment earlier than most. At your direction, we then began to better organize ourselves to contribute to sustaining progress for children despite darkening times...and to sustain and restructure our own operations for greater effectiveness despite constricted resources.

We have acted on three fronts, seeking:

1. to make ourselves more efficient;
2. to make our programme impact more - far more - effective, both in its direct interventions and in national and global advocacy; and
3. to build and secure new means of raising new resources for assistance to children.

Operational efficiency.

On the first front, our commitment in 1981 was to increase the efficiency of our operations so as to permit maximum emphasis on programme delivery at field level - and maximum support to those who are on the "front lines" of that delivery. I hope the Board will note from the Executive Director's Report the hard facts of what has been achieved in this respect.

A few examples include:

- The consolidation of our widely scattered Headquarters Supply operation begun in 1983 has resulted in nearly one-quarter fewer staff now providing about double the output - with considerably shorter delivery times.
- In the past two bienniums, we have planned and carried through a reduction of core personnel at Headquarters locations in New York, Geneva and Copenhagen and a major reallocation within the field, to provide significant increases in Africa as agreed at the 1984 Board. 83 per cent of total UNICEF staff are now in field locations (compared with 80 per cent in 1981), and there has been a decrease in the total numbers of staff at Headquarters locations. As we begin development of our budget proposals for the 1988-1989 biennium, we plan for an actual reduction in total posts.
- Our recommendation, approved by the Board in 1984, that we lease new Headquarters accommodations in the UNDC Phase III building (now called "UNICEF House") in order to save some \$97 million over the minimum projected costs of remaining in our present commercial space, and at the same time make optimal use of new office technologies while using significantly less space for each staff member as compared with established U.N. standards.

Each of these adjustments was initiated even before the hard realities of the 1980s began to seriously impact on UNICEF. But not even "pre-crisis" adjustments are easy. The human cost for staff members who are separated or relocated, and also for those on whose shoulders extra burdens are placed, is heavy - a consideration which an institution like UNICEF whose cause is humane cannot easily disregard as the price of pragmatic logic. In terms of management time, those efforts have imposed heavy demands. The Supply

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consolidation at Copenhagen, for example, which in retrospect may look like the very essence of virtue and vision, was a long, difficult, and sensitive effort which had adverse repercussions on the majority of Headquarters staff and brought protests from four governments.

UNICEF responded to the prudent expectations of the Board and began the hard process of restructuring, retrenching and relocating staff well before the present financial stringency began to affect the United Nations family as a whole. Last year, I warned that UNICEF needed \$20-\$30 million more in General Resources if a slow-down of expenditure was to be avoided. We have taken a further series of preventive measures (in November 1985 and January 1986) aimed at saving approximately \$12 million of the already approved budget. These measures include reductions in allocations for consultancies by 40 percent, and for travel by 25 per cent. We will also initiate a system-wide savings campaign in which all staff are encouraged to offer suggestions for further savings in both budget and programme expenditure. And, of course, we are acting in consort with our sister agencies in implementing further cost-saving measures as requested by the Secretary-General.

Programme effectiveness

In spite of the constraints, we can report solid progress in programme effectiveness. My Report to this Board documents the specific advances in the Child Survival and Development fields as well as in many other areas of UNICEF concern. Rather than repeat these now, let me underscore what this progress shows in terms of programme effectiveness. This approach, as Board members will recall, originated in 1982 when an inter-agency meeting (including WHO, UNDP, WFP, UNU, the World Bank, and several bilateral agencies as well as academic experts) recognized the emerging opportunities provided by grossly underutilized technologies combined with new capacities for communication and social mobilization arising from the development progress of the previous era - the ubiquitous radio, increasingly common television, schools in virtually every hamlet, the vast expansion in farmers and womens organizations and in retail outlets, the expanded capacities of religious structures, and the millions of health auxiliaries flowing from the Alma Ata goals of Health for All by the Year 2000 through Primary Health Care. The discussions at this meeting led us to articulate the possibility for a virtual revolution in Child Survival and Development at a low financial and political cost in a relatively brief time frame.

This Executive Board instructed us to give greater priority to infant mortality reduction and in 1983 embraced this potential for a child health and nutrition breakthrough, thus providing for greater focus of programme activities to achieve the most urgent benefit for the greatest number of children.

The initial emphasis of the CSDR perhaps tends to highlight the technological advances - such as Oral Rehydration Therapy, which The Lancet heralded as "the most important medical advance of this century", and the increasingly stable vaccines which can immunize children against six of the

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most devastating diseases for just 60 cents. But the real breakthrough has been the new capacity for social mobilization based on recent developmental progress, so convincingly demonstrated on a national scale by Colombia in 1984, for which President Betancur has so justifiably been honoured today.

The impact of these combined efforts in many countries throughout the world is dramatic:

- At present, 61 countries are actively moving toward the goal of Universal Child Immunization. Vaccine use is up three-fold in 1985 over 1983, with the lives of nearly 800,000 children being saved as a consequence of these programmes, and the very real prospect - with continued attention to accelerated immunizations - that this could increase to nearly 4 million by 1990.
- The use of ORS packets is up 250 per cent over 1983 to 250 million packets distributed worldwide, as well as the unquantifiable use of home brews for ORT. The potential of this effort is well exemplified by Egypt, which estimates that it is now saving the lives of more than 50,000 Egyptian children each year from an initiative launched in early 1983. More than 500,000 lives are now being saved worldwide, and WHO estimates that this could rise to well over 1.5 million by 1990 if the great majority of families become aware of ORT and have access to ORS.

Programme advocacy

Much of these successes can be attributed to the effectiveness which we have achieved through more sustained and aggressive attention to our capacity to advocate for children on the global and national levels. UNICEF has capitalized on the public trust and interest in our words and our deeds built so carefully in the past 40 years which has given us a foundation for tremendous impact in the education and motivation of publics and decision-makers alike.

- Possibly no other publication of an international organization rivals the coverage and attention accorded to The State of the World's Children, which is now published in more than 40 languages totalling over 250,000 copies each year, with excerpts being carried by the millions in a wide range of private publications. We have also published other reports to strengthen the factual, analytical, and persuasive basis for advancing our concerns, such as Within Human Reach, our several publications on data affecting children in developing countries, and our rapid assessments of CSDR initiatives - with the first two just published on Burkina Faso and Nigeria - and publications by virtually every UNICEF office tailored to the specific situations of children and mothers in each country.
- In addition to further strengthening our working partnership with WHO and our other sister agencies of the U.N. system, we have devoted considerable energy to working closely with other allies on the global

scale as well as at the field level. As a consequence, today we see the League of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies with their Child Alive! programme; we see Rotary International with its \$120 million support for polio eradication; we see the U.S. Agency for International Development with its Child Survival Action Programme and the major new Funds for immunization established by the Canadian International Development Agency and similar efforts among other leading bilateral development agencies; and we see the Holy See, El Azar, the International Paediatrics Association, and many others mobilizing serious attention to child survival issues.

- Even a seemingly minor event like a ceremony at the United Nations on the day after its 40th Anniversary can become the vehicle for reviving conscious international commitment to a monumental U.N. goal, as has our 25 October rededication to Universal Child Immunization by 1990.

The continuing momentum of these efforts has been vividly exemplified in just the past two weeks:

- Exactly two weeks ago today, the seven countries of Central America - despite their many political differences - joined together in signing a commitment to a common programme to reduce by half their current child death and morbidity rates, supported by \$30.5 million from the Government of Italy and the European Economic Community, with supplementary financing from France and Sweden to complement on-going funding from UNICEF and USAID.
- Three days later, in her first executive decree dealing with other than governmental transition matters, President Corazón Aquino - at a public ceremony with the active participation of our Chairman - pledged that the Philippines will achieve UCI by 1990.
- On Sunday, 6 April, war-torn El Salvador repeated last year's "Days of Tranquility" in launching a second round of its campaign to immunize its children against the diseases which in 1984 claimed more children's lives than all the deaths from all the fighting.
- And the past week has seen other notable actions, such as the Government of Egypt committing itself to complement its successful ORT programme with the achievement of Universal Immunization by the 35th Anniversary of the Egyptian Revolution in July of next year; the Government of Mozambique launching its effort to achieve universal immunization in its capital city during 1986; and King Moshoeshoe personally leading Lesotho's accelerated child survival programme.

Moving beyond the opened door

Progress in the other principal elements of the "GOBI" opportunities which we identified in late 1982 - growth monitoring and the promotion of breastfeeding and weaning foods - has been slower. These are more difficult

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to project in ways that capture the understanding and enthusiasm of leaderships and institutions, but I remain confident that - as in Colombia - once "the door is opened" through one or both of the "twin engines" of the CSDR (Universal Child Immunization and Oral Rehydration Therapy), the level of awareness achieved offers the opportunity to institutionalize the full spectrum of Child Survival and Development interventions as well as to extend and establish primary health care infrastructures which could sustain preventive interventions generally.

Moreover, in many countries, other low-cost, high-impact measures are being promoted within the social mobilization context of the CSDR, such as assaults on iodine deficiency and expanded use of Vitamin A in many countries of Asia and Latin America. More effective measures are also being actively pursued for widespread promotion of the more difficult and/or more expensive "FFF" components of the GOBI-FFF package - female literacy, family spacing and family food security (particularly in Africa).

There are many other areas in which we are convinced that a significant impact on the situation of children, mothers and poor families can be achieved at minimum financial expenditure - a criteria which will remain a reflection of serious possibilities for many years to come.

Adjustment with a Human Face

So much of the progress of the past decades in recognizing the urgency of addressing human needs was the first to fall victim to the early years of the economic recession which hit virtually every country in the 1980s. "Adjustment" to the new economic realities has largely meant an ever larger burden of the recession on the poor and those least able to "adjust" - particularly children. In the past decade, governmental expenditures on health and education have fallen considerably in many developing countries.

UNICEF has moved in the past two years to stake out an alternative course for responsible adjustment policies: "adjustment with a human face". This concept carries with it not only the need to protect nutrition and other basic needs of children and other vulnerable groups but also to restructure social sectors - education, health, etc. - in order to make better use within those sectors of available resources, which is, of course, where the principles of the Child Survival and Development Revolution most apply. The need for a re-ordering of priorities is perhaps best illustrated by a statement made by Dr. Mahbub-ul-Haq as Pakistani Minister for Finance, Planning and Economic Affairs at the Annual Meetings of the World Bank and IMF in Seoul (October 1985):

"Must we spend a good part of our development budgets to provide facilities for the rich and privileged? I discovered from my own experience that it took only the postponement of one expensive urban hospital to finance the entire cost of an accelerated immunization and health care programme for all our children."

Adjustment with a human face also means more cost-effective encouragement for household food production, for income-generating activities by women, and for low-cost community action in support of the total range of basic services.

We have formulated our assault on this issue, and can report many signs of interest and support over the last year - though the battle is still far from won. You can be assured that we shall sustain this effort.

Children in especially difficult circumstances

The deliberations at this Board session on Thursday, of course, will advance our understanding of the special needs - and opportunities - of children caught in especially difficult circumstances. Meanwhile, we have been and will continue to exploit the potential for UNICEF to make further contributions in several particularly difficult situations: the unprecedented Days of Tranquility in El Salvador, the corridors of peace achieved in Uganda last October and the Sudan in January and February, the scores of projects still being implemented by embattled UNICEF staff in Lebanon, and elsewhere. These experiences, of course, lead us to consider what more might be done for children in such countries as Afghanistan, Angola, Ethiopia, and the Philippines, to mention some of the most traumatic instances of especially difficult situations for children. At the same time, our growing attention to the needs and problems of urban children must encompass greater attention to street children.

Meanwhile, we are actively participating in the drafting process of the convention on the Rights of the Child.

Strengthening our financial resource base

The foundation of UNICEF's financial capacity has been and will continue to be the voluntary contributions by governments for general resources and private contributions based on the hard and dedicated work of our National Committees.

Although sometimes receiving less acknowledgement than other financing initiatives, this continuing - often silent - support from the citizens of many countries via their enlightened and committed governments or through the National Committees represents one of the most heartwarming, inspiring, realistic and persistent votes for equity, progress and peace in our world today. Virtually all of UNICEF's major traditional donors have sustained and often increased the levels of their contributions. Some, such as Finland and Italy, have increased their contributions multi-fold to join leadership levels earlier established by others including, most notably, the Nordic states, Switzerland, Canada and the Netherlands. The total of governmental and private contributions from the United States continued to rise throughout the 1980s, topping \$80 million for the first time in 1985.

We sincerely thank all of these supporters, especially the many small nations in the donor world and their citizen committees for UNICEF who, in

their likeminded determination to do more than their fair share for the most vulnerable, are demonstrating what makes countries and peoples truly great.

Beyond our commitment to make more effective use of those resources, UNICEF is constantly searching for new sources of finance. One result of this search was the Arab Gulf Fund for United Nations Development Activities (AGFUND), appreciation for the creation of which we have expressed today to His Royal Highness Prince Talal. UNICEF has received some \$80 million from AGFUND, which has also contributed substantially to several other United Nations agencies.

Another inspiring example has been shown by the people and government of Italy, which has put impressive resources behind their commitment to UNICEF's accelerated programme for child survival and development with the objective of rapidly assisting 26 countries in Africa and Asia in their efforts to fight both the loud and silent emergencies in which their children live.

We have achieved increasingly close collaboration with bilateral aid agencies, as exemplified by the Essential Drugs programme with DANIDA, our water programmes with SIDA, and ORT and UCI collaboration with USAID. Through closer collaboration with these other other bilateral and multilateral assistance agencies, we have encouraged both the additional allocation of funds to UNICEF and the application of more funds to their own efforts on our priorities.

New dimensions in fundraising

Our search for larger private contributions has led us in many directions. Again, of course, we are deeply appreciative of Prince Talal's efforts in this respect. We are also working closely with our National Committees for UNICEF to further strengthen their capacities. And we are seeking to establish ourselves within the new dimension of fundraising opportunities characterized last year by the BandAid, USA for Africa, and LiveAid phenomena, which raised more than \$200 million for Africa.

We are especially busy just now, with UNICEF's 40th Anniversary Year experiencing:

- A very successful multinationally broadcast telethon organized by the FRG Committee for UNICEF in March.
- SportAid and The Race Against Time, which has the potential to involve millions of athletes, sporting enthusiasts, and even the less-active among us, during the week of 17-25 May - and culminating with worldwide attention on the Special Session on Africa of the United Nations General Assembly.
- The second quadrennial World All-Star Soccer Game for the benefit of UNICEF, which will be held at the Rose Bowl in California in July,

organized by the international soccer federation (FIFA) following the World Cup soccer matches.

- The First Earth Run will begin here at the United Nations in September, taking a torch-bearing course that will circle the world, raising funds en route for UNICEF, and returning here on the last day of the year to kindle an eternal flame in commemoration of the International Year of Peace.
- Preparations are well underway for the "UNICEF World Sailing Cup" to take place in 1988.
- And, finally, we are very much looking forward to Liv Ullmann's joining us in September - as a full-time volunteer for half a year - to play a leading role in 40th Anniversary events and to help reach and solidify relationships with public figures in countries around the world who can provide invaluable help to us in our advocacy and fundraising endeavours.

All of these are initiatives generated by our determination to reach the public of the world at-large, to raise the level of personal and corporate commitment to the well-being of children, and to increase financial resources to compensate for possible decreases in official assistance, and, if possible, to enhance UNICEF's programme funds so that the new ventures we have undertaken can be sustained and accelerated.

Survival and Development

I am aware of concerns and perceptions that our commitment to the Child Survival and Development Revolution - and particularly to the two most immediate opportunities, Universal Child Immunization and Oral Rehydration Therapy with their 1990 achievement goals - may represent - or lead to - a "mono-focus" of UNICEF's programme.

I am sure that some Board members may wish to comment on this. But let me emphasize specifically at the start of this session what we have tried to express clearly in both the Executive Director's Report and the Medium Term Plan: UNICEF has maintained - and intends to maintain - a balance in its country programmes based on its broad mandate for development for children and women while sharply increasing its beneficial impact on child survival and development. The CSDR - and UCI and ORT in particular - is the "cutting edge" for accelerating support for primary health care at a time when most countries have been reducing their expenditures on health, education and social welfare. It bears repeating that these efforts have been an exceptionally successful means for putting health and nutrition back on the agendas of many of the world's political leaders...too many of whom had too easily allowed themselves to assume that, particularly in difficult economic times, essential services for children and mothers are too costly to maintain and readily deferrable. As UCI and ORT have emerged as the leading "twin engines" of the Child Survival and Development Revolution - with advances on one usually always leading to a rapid successive effort on the other, and then opportunities on other techniques, the CSDR can, in turn, break ground for acceleration of Primary Health Care to a degree not before achieved.

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Again, it must be noted that even fore-sighted organizational adjustment is neither easy nor costless. The increased management attention to the CSDR and Adjustment with a Human Face has led many who are directly associated with other programmes to feel that they are being undercut or neglected - even though major resources continue to flow into these programmes.

Thus, even as we have focussed attention on the GOBI initiatives, we have maintained and extended the thrust of UNICEF's broad on-going programmes, though with increasing concern to ensure stronger linkages between them and with the development as well as the survival goals of the CSDR. For example, in 1985 we still spent 21 per cent of our increased resources on water - exactly the same proportion as we did in 1981 - while we have substantially increased the number of beneficiaries of this programme, and in 1985 alone recorded an impressive 11 per cent increase in productivity. This is well illustrated in the bar and pie charts contrasting 1981 and 1985 on page 50 of the 1986 UNICEF Annual Report.

UNICEF hence remains faithful to its broad agenda for child development while at the same time striving to achieve greater coverage and impact in key areas through a timely multi-sectoral mobilization of all capacities and resources available at country levels.

Africa: surviving and developing

The past year and one-half has also seen a marked increase in UNICEF's response to the serious situation in Africa. Despite even our own uncertainty at the time of the 1984 Board session at which substantial increases in UNICEF programming in Africa were recommended and later approved at the 1985 session, we have accomplished a remarkable strengthening of our delivery capacity in the two Africa regions. This has made possible an increase of 35 per cent in our resource delivery to Africa in 1985, following an 11 per cent increase in 1984.

We have also played a leading part in proposing and supporting new patterns of coordination and collaboration with our sister agencies of the United Nations, with NGOs, and with other international assistance agencies, as particularly represented by the Office of Emergency Operations for Africa.

Further specifics on our programme cooperation in Africa are contained in the two Regional Directors' Reports, which they will discuss during the Programme Committee session.

A different world for children

I think that the members of the Board will agree these are, to borrow from Charles Dickens, "the worst of times and the best of times". If we were to be denied the opportunities which the Child Survival and Development Revolution offers, these would indeed be bleak, virtually hopeless times for many millions of young children, yet-to-be-born children, and their parents and

families and communities. But with this revolutionary opportunity, we are surely on the threshold of the single most important organized breakthrough for children in recorded history. The more than one million additional deaths avoided last year through the oral rehydration and immunization initiatives of the past three years may well represent the largest number of children ever to benefit from a deliberate positive effort aimed exclusively at children.

If - and "if" must be stressed - we continue the present pace, especially on UCI and ORT, we can now reasonably anticipate that the world may well each year be saving 5 million children's lives by the end of 1990 specifically as a result of this effort.

In Africa, for the first time, we can anticipate fewer - not more - children dying each year by the end of the 1980s.

Through these CSDR efforts, we may well be introducing the single most important new element for accelerating population stabilization. To quote the late Prime Minister Indira Gandhi of India:

"Parents are more likely to restrict their families if they have reasonable assurance of the healthy survival of their two children."

And as Tanzania's President Julius Nyerere said:

"The most powerful contraceptive is the knowledge that your children will survive."

Members of the Board will note that we have included specific reference to birth-spacing in our Medium Term Plan.

Beyond mere survival and minimum essentials for child development, the Child Survival and Development Revolution rests upon the central foundation embodied in the concept of Primary Health Care: that people can and ought to be enabled to take far greater care of themselves. This principle reflects a new respect for the capacity of the individual and the importance of governments enhancing and encouraging use of that capacity. Consistent with this, these new technologies are much more relevant to the family - enabling people to take action - than to big institutions with experts in "white coats" intervening. The same is true on new agricultural technologies of relevance to subsistence farmers which are becoming available...the potential for a comparable food security revolution for poor farmers in Africa - mostly women - is just now becoming visible.

In effect, what I am saying is that the major frontier for progress even in difficult economic times lies with educating and empowering individuals to do more to help themselves - and for governments to actively support and facilitate that process. The implications of this empowerment go far beyond the immediate objective of saving children's lives, important as that may be. The areas of women's development, population stabilization, and family food production, for example, offer the next great opportunities for applying this

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approach to accelerating progress - using the social mobilization techniques and approaches which we are today pioneering on child survival.

It is thus very plausible to see accelerated progress for the benefit of people - rather than retrogression - in the remaining years of this century...if only the world will want it.

Our purpose, therefore, remains two-fold: to demonstrate what can be done, and to spur the world on to do it. It is in this context that the words of Francis Bacon come to mind:

"A man must make his opportunity as often as find it."

The same surely applies to an institution.

Mr. Chairman, my good friends: today we have saluted three great leaders who have made their opportunities rather than waited for opportunity - or disaster - to find them. Today, also, we salute a very special institution - this magical organization we call UNICEF - which has spent 40 years making its own opportunities for the service of children.

Our venture has only just begun.