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Address by Mr. James P. Grant
Executive Director of the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF)
to the
Michigan State University
Conference on "Cooperation for International Development –
U.S. Policies and Programs for the 1990s"

"Putting Crises to Work for People:
Challenges of Global Development in the Years Ahead"

Lansing, Michigan
15 May 1988

[Talloires Declaration Attached]

Cover + 15 pp + 0b

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Детскому фонду Объединенных Наций 联合国儿童基金会 للأطفال المتحدة الأمم منظمة

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PUTTING CRISES TO WORK FOR PEOPLE:
Challenges of Global Development in the Years Ahead

I am pleased to speak at the opening of this conference, which is a main event of the year-long project examining the future role of the United States in International Development Cooperation activities. I've already profited greatly from several of the background papers.

In my remarks today, I would like to stress two areas of action which have emerged in this latter part of the 1980s as principal challenges before us.

Hard choices

As a preface, there have been three historic factors which have contributed to the very possibility of these challenges. First, the unprecedented progress of the past 45 years is now not only dangerously stalled - but, in the 1980s, we have seen major areas of actual retrogression, most notably in Latin America and Africa, and among the most vulnerable groups, including women and children.

A second historic factor is that a new morality has gradually evolved in the four decades since the end of World War II which compels many of us to seek remedial action to restore momentum and a more holistic, sustainable approach to development. It was over half a century ago that Arnold Toynbee said, "Our age is the first generation since the dawn of history in which

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mankind dared to believe it practical to make the benefits of civilization available to the whole human race". This has become increasingly true in the years that have passed, and as it has become a part of our reality, it has become increasingly apparent that morality must be made to march with the new capacity. If 40,000 children were dying each day from causes which we could not do much about, that would be tragic and regretable. But when nearly 40,000 children die every day for largely avoidable reasons, then it becomes not only tragic but also obscene.

The third historic factor is the harsh reality that few of the hard choices that have led to major advances in the past century have been made without there first having been tragic, severe crises which provided the tremendous energy required to overcome the inertia of prevailing policies.

Thus it took the great depression to achieve the breakthrough to the New Deal. World War II preceded the establishment of the United Nations and the Bretton Woods institutions. World War II and the awful, often painful struggles of whole peoples to control their own countries and their own destinies preceded the end of colonialism. World War II and the advent of the Cold War were the background for the unprecedented act of international economic cooperation known as the Marshall Plan. Crises, of course, are dangerous - they are not only costly themselves, but they can lead to still more costly crises. We saw this in the 1930s, during which the Great Depression that brought on the New Deal also contributed to the rise of fascism and World War, and we have seen it in the past three decades, during which the Cold War that has encouraged economic assistance by both blocks has cost the tremendous price of the global arms race and externally supported regional conflicts. In all of these cases, we paid dearly - in terms of massive human suffering - before finally facing up to the fact that true innovation was required. Only then did choices which were difficult to push through on the short-run came to be recognized as not only essential but reasonable for our humane survival as a civilization.

Our challenge today is to determine, first, whether the present multiple crises are sufficiently severe to stimulate a major new opportunity for creative approaches. Or perhaps stated more accurately, it is to determine whether we have developed the political will and sophistication to react to the present multiple crises - without the further catastrophic suffering of a world war or a major depression - by making the hard choices to exploit new development opportunities.

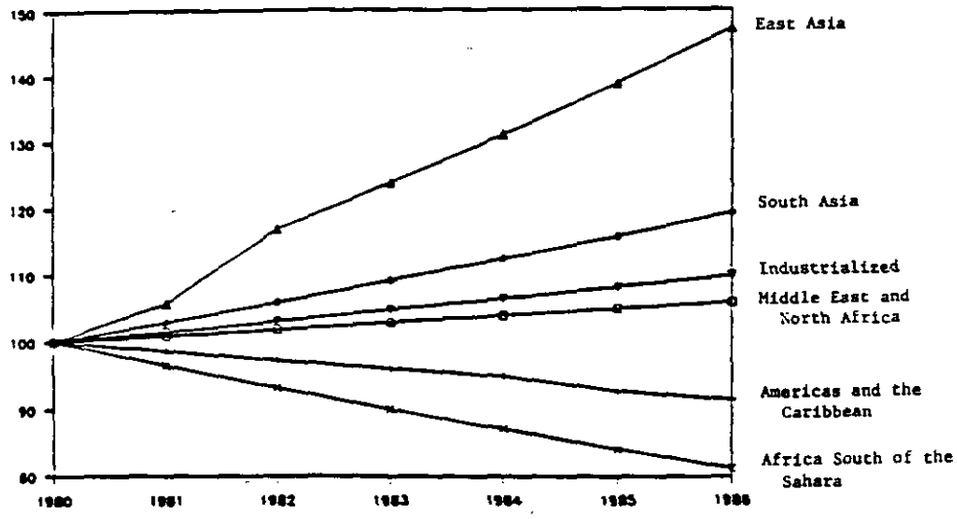
If, indeed, we are up to this challenge of political will, then we must face a second: how to use that precious political will effectively, to determine whether we can present creative, do-able plans of action to take advantage of the new will to support opportunities for progress in overcoming poverty, restoring development momentum on a sustainable basis, and promoting domestic survival. This second is the principal challenge for this conference.

Darkness before the dawn

The first question is, of course, whether we have reached that "darkness before the dawn" - that point at which we have tolerated all that we will, and at last have the political will to support major new policies. The eminent K. B. Lall, former Ambassador of India to the European Economic Community, referred recently to exactly this delicate balance of social forces when he said that the wisdom of our ancient seers tells us that when the night is at its darkest the dawn is but moments away. He went on to say, "Is this so? Or am I dreaming? Do you not detect some glimmer of dawn on the horizon?"

We certainly have been given ample evidence of the dark times currently everywhere around us. The financial crises of much of the Third World are very real indeed. Latin American per capita income is significantly down. African per capita income is down even more. The impact is heaviest on the poorest countries, and even within them, a disproportionate share of suffering is borne by the most vulnerable.

GROSS DOMESTIC PRODUCT PER CAPITA 1980-1986
(1980=100)



A few years ago President Nyerere asked, "Must we starve our children to pay our debts?" I regret to say that actual practice has all too often answered with a "yes", and possibly some millions have died as a consequence. Remedial actions are in process, but still too little, and still too late. Canada's Ambassador to the United Nations, Stephen Lewis, speaking at the Society for International Development Conference in New Delhi in March, discussed the encouraging prospects attainable for Africa for US$5 billion, yet he noted that even that was too small a sum for comprehensive minimum improvements. Furthermore, he pointed out that the length of time it would take to actually reach the people in need is unreasonable. At the same meeting, Mike Faber of the Institute of Development Studies (IDS) at Sussex,

articulated the case that the 1982-87 IMF-led adjustment strategy has failed. or rather, that it has brilliantly succeeded in containing the Third World external debt problems, but at the cost of tremendously increased human suffering in many Third World countries. It has kept the Third World part of the international financial system, and banks have had time to strengthen their balances. In short, it has worked relatively well for some. But make no mistake: the costs of this "success" for many developing country debtors have been appalling, and cannot be continued for long without catastrophic consequences. Living standards are down 15 per cent in Latin America and 25 per cent in Africa south of the Sahara, and the relevant debt ratios in both continents were worse in 1986 than they were in 1982. In the midst of such deliberations, the image of Sisyphus was given this sad but appropriate rendering for the 1980s: "The Third World debtor is the Sisyphus of the modern age - but with this difference from the tragic hero of antiquity - every time this Sisyphus' rock rolls down to the bottom of the mountain, he finds that it has become heavier, and each time that Sisyphus looks up at the top, behold the mountain has become higher!"

Furthermore, we see arms expenditures still rising - now to more than one trillion dollars. Environmental degradation is still accelerating, as is so usefully documented and analysed in the "Brundtland Report", Our Common Future: the Report of the World Commission on Environment and Development. AIDS is a new problem - an actual threat in itself - but also a great threat to other necessary programmes as increasingly large sums are diverted to the necessary fight against this new and growing danger.

Crises in the North; solutions in the South

Two additional major areas of deterioration which will contribute further to this darkness before the dawn deserve more attention than they have yet received in terms of their potential for releasing creative pressure in the near term to overcome the inertia of past policies. It is these two which hold the potential to reveal, against the horizon, rays of a greater hope for the future than the other crises which we have been discussing, because they directly and significantly affect the well-being of the North.

The first is the emerging economic crises of the Western industrial world, in which far more difficult circumstances exist than surface appearances indicate. The United States needs to reduce its great balance of payments deficit by more than one hundred billion dollars a year if it is not to acquire the altered standard of living, status, and power of an international debtor society.

The economic crisis of the West has been largely concealed and ameliorated in the mid-1980s by virtue of the U.S. becoming the "engine of growth" for much of the world, but at the cost of more than doubling its national debt and shifting from being the world's largest creditor nation to the world's largest debtor. This is a role which is no longer sustainable. The October stock market plunge was one manifestation of the weakened economic foundation, and, frankly, candid discussion of this problem has been restrained by the U.S. elections.

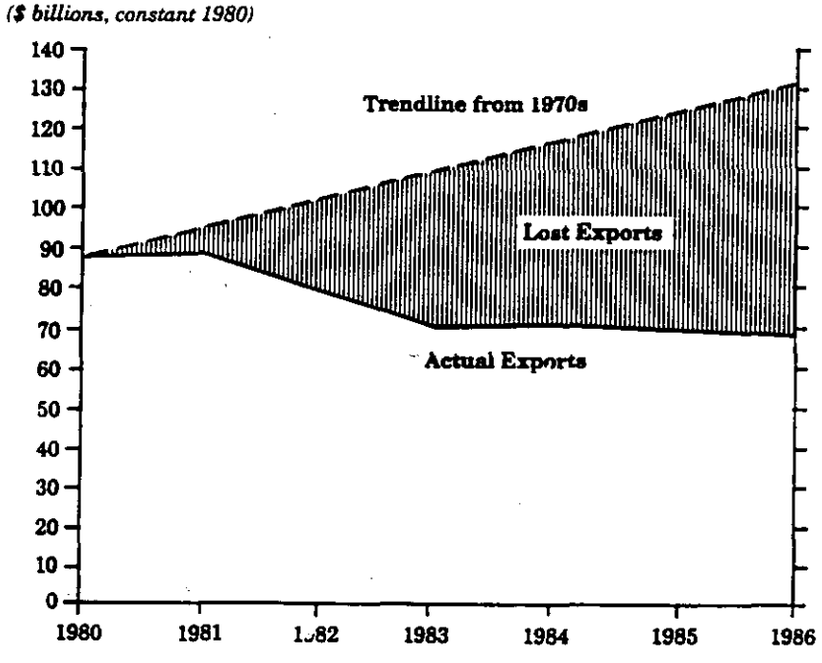
We are faced with two alternatives. One is for the United States to get out of its present situation through recession and devaluation. However, this would bring incalculable disaster to the entire world. It would constitute a modern day Samson bringing down the pillars and walls of the temple.

There is another major alternative, however: to do it through growth - to design the entire progressive restructuring of the imbalances between the United States deficit and the Japan/Western Europe surpluses in the context of global growth. The prospect of restructuring the United States external deficit through growth is not new; it has, however, been interpreted primarily within the context of the United States, Japan and Western Europe. Frankly, it will not work within that limited framework. This is because the democratic political processes in the United States, Japan and Western Europe at this point do not allow the rapidity of structural response within each society which would be needed to restructure the Western industrial world within an acceptable time frame of, say, five years. Domestic pressures slow the opening of the Japanese market to imports; fears of inflation hobble German planning for domestic expansion; and creeping protectionism is seen in the U.S.

Restructuring through growth does have the potential to work, and could help us avoid major catastrophic economic upheaval. But it can work if - and only if - we can involve the Third World in a major way with this restructuring. The Washington-based Overseas Development Council (ODC) in early 1988 issued the most trenchant discussion I have seen of this problem in its Agenda 1988: Growth, Exports and Jobs in a Changing World Economy, which stated that, for the economic well-being of the United States and the North generally, it is imperative to restore economic progress in the South. In the report, ODC President John Sewell said:

> "The negative impact of the economic downturn in the developing countries on the U.S. economy was direct and measurable: U.S. exports to all developing countries dropped from US$88 billion in 1980 to US$77 billion in 1985. If exports had grown in the first half of this decade at the same rate as in the 1970's, the exports would have totalled about US$150 billion in current dollars. The impact on employment also was dramatic. The actual and potential employment loss (if exports had grown as they did in the 1970's) amounted to 1.7 million jobs - or nearly 21 per cent of total official unemployment in 1986. In addition, the global recession cast doubt on the ability of the middle-income debtor countries to make their debt service payments to commercial banks in the industrial world."

U.S. Exports to the Third World in the 1980s: Lost Opportunities ($ billions, constant 1980)



Source: ODC calculations from *U.S. Department of Commerce, Highlights of U.S. Export and Import Trade*, various December issues.

The economic downturn in so many developing countries has adversely affected the exports of other industrial nations as well.

Furthermore, a recent study conducted for the World Institute for Development Research (WIDER) by Professor Jeffrey Sachs of Harvard University indicated that restructuring of Japanese and German surpluses through foreign aid and other financial transfers to the Third World would have a far more rapid and beneficial impact on the global restructuring than comparable expenditures devoted to domestic expansion. The study showed that a US$25 billion expansion of expenditures within the Japanese economy would benefit the U.S. balance of payments by US$2 billion, but that a comparably increased expenditure on foreign aid would benefit the U.S. balance of trade by US$9-11 billion dollars - a five times more beneficial impact - as well as, significantly increasing Third World markets for other industrial nations.

Western Europe, the USA and Japan would do well, therefore, to look to low- and middle-income countries for export markets to help them restructure with growth. There are many similarities, but on a more global scale, to the late 1940s and early 1950s when the Marshall Plan and related measures restored economic growth to Western Europe and Japan which then laid the basis for decades of U.S. prosperity as well.

So we are seeing the entry into our calculations of a really major new factor of crisis for the North which highlights the depths of our global interdependence today. While the reverse situation of Southern dependency on the North has long been all-too-evident, without yet evoking an appropriate policy response from the North; today it is becoming undeniable that in order to address the problems of the North, the North will be required to focus on restoring development progress in the South.

The other major new area contributing to the darkness of our times, and which warrants heightened attention, is that the USSR and the socialist countries, too, are nations in crisis. This, of course, is one of the major reasons for Mr. Gorbachev's initiatives. Consequences can already be detected in the arms race - nuclear and conventional - as well as in regional areas of conflict, such as we see in Afghanistan and other areas. And consequences can be seen in hopeful prospects for increased Soviet participation in the United Nations where the USSR has now paid its back debts. Major possibilities are opening up for a whole new participation by the socialist countries in the United Nations and its associated Bretton Woods institutions.

In short, both industrial East and industrial West have increasingly inescapable reasons for a global restructing. The time may soon be coming for a call by the North as well as the South, and by the West as well as the East, for a new global economic order - an "NGEO".

Once the political will is in place, the means are available to support an effective new policy. First, the debt issue needs to be managed to stop the financial haemorrhage of massive net capital flows from the South to the North. Jim Robinson of American Express, Percy Mistry and others have proposed do-able processes. Second, new capital flows are needed to restore developmental momentum. Again, major opportunities exist, as through increasing the leverage for private borrowing by the multilateral banks, and through increased official development assistance, particularly from Japan and Wester Europe, but also from a U.S. aid program which restructures the current aid mix, now grossly distorted for military security purposes of declining relative importance. But the political will for these actions must first come from a clearer vision by leadership in the North, and particularly in the U.S., Japan and the Federal Republic of Germany, of the severity of the economic crisis of the industrial West and of the contributions needed and available from a new economic and social dynamism in the South. You in this conference have a major opportunity - and responsibility - to promote this clearer vision, both in party platforms before the November election, and to policy-makers immediately after the U.S. elections.

Prioritising what is do-able

Let me shift quickly to focus on the second aspect of the challenge before us - ie, whether we can present creative, do-able plans to restore development momentum in the social sectors. The present economic crises are providing, in addition to their negative effects, a major beneficial impact in terms of creating a new political will for highly cost-effective social action which could well lead toward overcoming the worst aspects of absolute poverty by the year 2000. We all have known for many years that it is possible for a low- or

low-middle-income country or region to overcome the worst aspects of poverty, if it only has enough political will. This has been demonstrated in the 1950s and 1960s for low-income areas by China, by the Koreas, Taiwan, Sri Lanka and Kerala, and for middle-income countries by Cuba and Costa Rica.

The 1980s have forced a re-examination of the approaches to meeting basic needs and of the assumption that the ever-growing size of the pie would carry with it, like a boat on a rising tide, improved conditions which would encompass the meeting of human needs. That growth has now slowed, stopped or retrogressed in a majority of this world's countries.

A keen look at today's situation reveals two arenas in which we must respond quickly with a redirection of approach. The first has come to be called "adjustment with a human face". To have developing countries modify their structure to meet human needs while adapting to the new circumstances inherent in economic adjustment is one way to protect their most vulnerable human resource side while developing their more directly productive side. Such policy is an investment.

Secondly, there is an imperative that the social as well as the economic sectors improve their efficiency, too. For us in UNICEF, this re-examination has led to a newly identified potential - for a health breakthrough for children so dramatic that it carries with it the title of a "Child Survival and Development Revolution" (CSDR). Like the Green Revolution in Asia two decades ago, this arises mainly as a result of two converging forces. The most important factor is a by-product of recent development and technological progress - it is our new potential to communicate with those who most need to know. Today we see radio, TV, schools and teachers in the great majority of villages, literacy rates greater than sixty percent, and even the immensely increased capability for social benefit of traditional channels of communication, such as folk art and the deeply entrenched networks of organized religions, with their highly respected spokespersons at every level of society. In fact, a communications revolution has taken place - and is still rapidly expanding - in the developing world which has given rise to a potent new capacity which has barely begun to be used in the context of its most significant potential - to empower people with the vast mass of knowledge that could be put to work on people's own behalf. We at UNICEF have been particularly involved with tapping this new resource for health purposes. It is being used dramatically in scores of countries, for example, to achieve the United Nations goal of Universal Child Immunization by 1990. For fifty cents worth of vaccines per child, vaccines which have been greatly improved over the past 20 years, a population can be protected for life against six diseases which only a few years ago were taking the lives of more than four million of the world's children each year. But first, parents must bring their infants multiple times for immunization. Similarly, we still have more than three million children dying every year, because their parents have not yet been empowered with the knowledge first developed 20 years ago of how to use low-cost oral rehydration therapy (ORT) at home against the dehydration from diarrhoea which remains the biggest single killer of children in the world. The communications revolution gives society the capacity, if mobilized for these purposes, to educate and motivate those parents: to bring their children for immunization, and to administer ORT.

A tremendous new potential exists with this increased capacity to communicate that is now only beginning to be used for developmental purposes. These interventions, as well as the other measures singled out in the CSDR - growth monitoring, breast feeding, female literacy, and family spacing - are not only low-cost and high-impact health tools. Fortunately, in a time of our financial austerity, such approaches can have great political significance as well. They can be extremely good politics. This helps explain why leaders of country after country are turning to these methods for bringing progress to the poor. And all of this - the good politics aspect - is being helped by the spreading democratic process in so many countries - because the more effective the democracy, the greater pressure on parties competing for power to do - be seen as doing - something for its poor majority. Parenthectically, it is the lack of a meaningful democratic process in Washington, D.C. (which does not enjoy the full democratic franchise of the rest of the United States) that largely explains the apparent anomaly of that "shining city on the hill", which despite its far above average per capita income, has the highest infant mortality rate of any major political entity in the United States, including Mississippi and Puerto rico, and of having the highest black infant mortality in the United States as well.

The mobilization of this new capacity for the health sector is already resulting in major achievements. The "twin engines" of universal child immunization and oral rehydration alone saved two million child lives in 1987, and the total could reach five million annually by 1991, thus providing a whole new emphasis to primary health care.

We are finding, furthermore, that it has a favorable impact on reducing population growth as families rapidly increase their confidence in the survival of their first children because of the means largely in their own control.

We are also learning in the health sector that major expansion of primary health care infrastructure is possible through new forms of social organization that mobilize greater local and financial participation. The Bamako Initiative, launched just last September by the Health Ministers of Africa and now approved for support by the UNICEF Executive Board and the World Health Assembly, is a major new initiative for achieving universal primary health care for women and children by the mid 1990s. The mainspring of this initiative is a new way of funding and managing essential drugs for each African community. The drugs, bought in bulk at low cost for approximately 50 cents per year per person covered, and largely financed through development assistance, would be sold at prices which, while much lower than the present local retail cost in their foreign-exchange-short societies, would be sufficient to finance not only the local currency cost of replenishing the drugs themselves. They would also finance the development of district health services to the point at which maternal and child health care is available by the mid 1990s to more than 80 per cent of mothers and children - even in these difficult times. This method of increased external assistance for maternal and child health, possibly reaching $100 million annually by the early 1990s, will leverage increased domestic private support several times larger than that which would otherwise be available.

At this historic juncture, we must act quickly not only in the health and nutrition sectors. We must also explore the applicability of lessons gleaned in the Child Survival and Development Revolution to other fields essential for meeting the basic needs of the world's poor: to the low income food producers - particularly to women food producers; and to meeting literacy and education needs. As we apply these approaches we must also remember that we are finding that the present trend toward increased democracy is a very major and effective supportive means for securing increased basic services and redistribution for the poor if only we in the development field can come up with workable proposals, as in the Child Survival and Development Revolution, that empower families to do more without requiring massive increases in governmental expenditures.

A related glimmer of hope in these dark times is that we are also seeing a changing attitude towards the efforts on behalf of the rights of children. Poland in 1979 proposed that there be a Convention on the Rights of the Child. At the time, I thought that such a legally binding convention was not feasible in my life-time. Today, prospects are quite good that the Convention will be adopted by the United Nations General Assembly in 1989, the tenth anniversary of the International Year of the Child.

In fact, what we are witnessing is a new effort emerging - worldwide and at all levels, from international to village - for seriously addressing one aspect of our portfolio - children and mothers. A long-overdue shift in priorities toward children and mothers is clearly beginning to take place, in the United States as well as in the Third World, because of a synergistic combination of crises and creative responses.

Planning to meet the challenge

In conclusion, I will focus on how we might organize and prioritize that which is do-able at this moment of history. First, the world economic crisis is now becoming sufficiently serious for all, rich as well as poor, West as well as East, to think of a new Global Summit - an enlarged Cancun - which would draw on the major regions of the world: the European Community, North America (U.S., Canada, Mexico), South America, Eastern Europe, Asean, Japan, China, South Asia (SAARC), the Arab World with its oil reserves, and the Organization of African Unity (OAU) with its special problems.

The agenda for this Summit should include:

- first, restoring development momentum for the global community, and giving particular attention to the fact that a most rapid and economically feasible leading edge could be gained through restoring development progress to the Third World;

- second, focusing on environmentally sustainable means of development, which will carry us well into the next century;

- third, mapping out the strategy to overcome the worst aspects of absolute poverty by the year 2000, including for each country reducing severe malnutrition to less than one per cent, and halving the under-5 child mortality rates of 1980 or reducing them to 70 per 1,000, whichever is less; and

- fourth, exploiting the linkages between disarmament and development to move toward increased global co-operation on the only war we all seek - that against the evils of disease and the worst consequences of poverty.

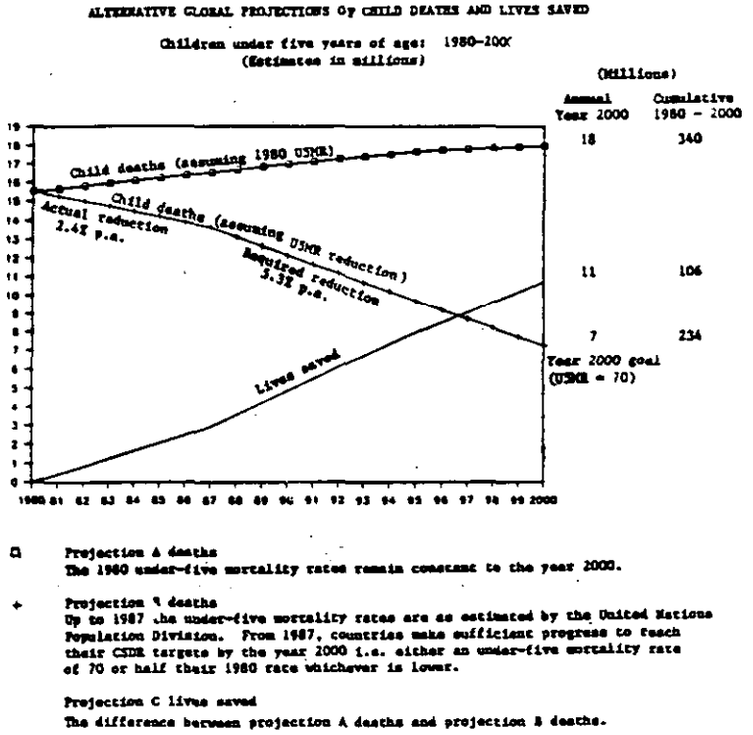
The new global summit might be convened in 1990, on the eve of the Fourth Development Decade - which will take us to the end of this millenium.

Such a meeting should be preceded by intergovernmental consultations during 1989, following the U.S. elections, through all channels - through the U.N., and through the OECD, and other regional groupings.

And the non-governmental organizations should start now - in 1988 - to complete the analyses and to build the public pressures which will create a receptive environment not only for urgent action, but equally important, for the right kind of urgent action. They should track the issues, and focus discussions onto do-able propositions for their own countries, and, for their own reasons, maintaining awareness of our global interdependence. I commend the sponsors of this conference and of the meetings and papers leading up to it, for having already started the process.

Are we, at this conference, alone in these aspirations? I would say "no". I have been privileged this year to attend three other major sessions of participants attending in their private as well as public capacities which similarly examined agendas for the 1990s and into the next millenium. The first was a major - the largest ever - meeting of Nobel Laureates, held in Paris, and hosted by President Mitterand. From that group of distinguished individuals (I should hasten to add I participated on behalf of UNICEF, which received the Nobel Peace Prize in 1965), came the conclusion that, of the outstanding problems facing us as we moved into the next century, quite possibly first among them was the gap between the North and the South. The second session I attended, at Talloires, France, was called "Bellagio III", which gathered health ministers and health secretaries from most major developing countries of the world, heads of major international organizations such as Barber Conable of the World Bank, Halfdan Mahler of the WHO, and myself, plus major aid agency administrators such as Margaret Catley-Carlson of CIDA, Carl Tham of SIDA, and Alan Woods of USAID, and private leadership from the Rockefeller Foundation and Rotary International (which has already raised more than US$120 million to support the world-wide polio immunization effort). And out of this review of the world immunization/child survival effort, came the exciting conclusion that with a modest additional amount of political will it is do-able - by the end of this century - in twelve years - to reduce the 1980 child death rate by more than half, saving from death or disability in this process some one-hundred million children over the period while slowing population growth as well. There was determination to pursue

further goals, including, as a further gift of the 20th century to the 21st century, the eradication of polio to add to the already accomplished eradication of small pox. I have attached the Talloires Declaration to this speech.



□ Projection A deaths
The 1980 under-five mortality rates remain constant to the year 2000.

+ Projection B deaths
Up to 1987 the under-five mortality rates are as estimated by the United Nations Population Division. From 1987, countries make sufficient progress to reach their CSDR targets by the year 2000 i.e. either an under-five mortality rate of 70 or half their 1980 rate whichever is lower.

Projection C lives saved
The difference between projection A deaths and projection B deaths.

Among the many important proposals and analyses which came out of the recent watershed World Conference of the SID in New Delhi, one stands out. K.B. Lall proposed that, after an enlarged Cancun-type summit, such efforts be regularized into the U.N. system by creating an Economic, Environmental, and Social Security Council, an EESSC, to parallel the Security Council that now exists for political/conflict issues. I strongly endorse this proposal. I further support the proposal that there be a special early warning group set up to advise this developmental security council. This, too, warrants vigorous follow-up at this time.

This conference at Michigan State meets at a propitious moment which may be characterized as the best of times and the worst of times. We are all sorely aware of the threats to the very existence of the human race and life on the planet we inhabit and of the tragic and costly regional conflicts in Latin America, Africa and Asia.

And yet these are far more opportune times for action than many of us thought possible even just a year ago. It is moving toward a moment of potential political breakthrough in our ability to "make the benefits of civilization available to the whole human race". As some of the current crises worsen, but before they become too much worse, let us once again, as in the post-World War II era, put these crises - which have already been so costly in human terms - to work to overcome the inertia of past policies. Let

us make the hard choices at this time of opportunity, to commit our resources, our creativity, our wisdom, and all that we are and can be, toward ending this century by overcoming the worst aspects of absolute poverty for all humankind - and while doing so create the human climate for returning the world economy to growth, for facilitating cooperation on our environment, and for enhancing the prospects for continual progress on peace, a reduction of regional tensions, and disarmament.

DECLARATION OF TALLOIRES

12 March 1988 - Talloires, France

Remarkable health progress has been achieved during the past decade. Global recognition that healthy children and healthy families are essential for human and national development is steadily increasing. Consensus has been reached on the strategy for providing essential community primary health programmes. The international community has become engaged in partnership with national governments in the creation of successful global programmes, ensuring the availability financial support and appropriate technologies. These include:

- immunization programmes, which now protect more than 50% of infants in developing countries with polio or DPT vaccines, preventing some 200,000 children from becoming paralyzed with polio and over a million children from dying each year from measles, whooping cough, or neonatal tetanus;

- diarrhoeal diseases control programmes which now make life-saving fluids (particularly oral rehydration salts) available for 60% of the developing world population, the use of which may be preventing as many as 1 million deaths annually from diarrhoea;

- initiatives to control respiratory infections which hold promise in the years ahead of averting many of the 3 million childhood deaths from acute respiratory infections each year in developing countries not prevented currently by immunization;

- safe motherhood and family planning programmes which are so important in protecting the well-being of families.

Progress to date demonstrates that resources can be mobilized and that rapid and effective action can be taken to combat dangerous threats to the health of children and mothers, particularly in developing countries.

This progress is the result of:

- enthusiastic world-wide agreement for the development of health strategies based on primary health care;

- the commitment of national governments, multi- and bilateral development agencies, non-governmental organizations, private and voluntary groups and people in all walks of life to give priority to these programmes;

- co-ordinated action by the sponsors of the Task Force for Child Survival: UNICEF, the World Bank, UNDP, WHO and the Rockefeller Foundation.

We, The Task Force For Child Survival, conveners of the meeting "Protecting the World's Children - An Agenda for the 1990s" in Talloires, France on 10-12 March 1988:

1. EXPRESS appreciation and admiration for the efforts made by the developing countries to reduce infant and child deaths through primary health care and child survival actions.

2. COMMIT OURSELVES to pursue and expand these initiatives in the 1990s.

3. URGE national governments, multi- and bilateral development agencies, United Nations agencies, non-governmental organizations and private and voluntary groups to commit themselves to:

- increase national resources from both developing and industrialized countries devoted to health in the context of overall development and self-reliance;

- improve women's health and education, recognizing the importance for women themselves, recognizing women's contribution to national development and recognizing that mothers are by far the most important primary health care workers;

- accelerate progress to achieve Universal Childhood Immunization by 1990 and to sustain it thereafter;

- accelerate progress to eliminate or markedly reduce as public health problems the other main preventable causes of child and maternal mortality and morbidity, striving to reach sustained universal coverage of children and mothers by the year 2000;

- assure the development of new vaccines and technologies and their application, particularly in developing countries, as they become appropriate for public health use;

- promote expanded coverage of water supply and sanitation;

/....

- pursue research and development, including technology transfer, in support of the above actions.

4. SUGGEST that the following be considered by national and international bodies as targets to be achieved by the year 2000:

- the global eradication of polio;
- the virtual elimination of neonatal tetanus deaths;
- a 90% reduction of measles cases and a 95% reduction in measles deaths compared to pre-immunization levels;
- a 70% reduction in the 7.4 million annual deaths due to diarrhoea in children under the age of 5 years which would occur in the year 2000 in the absence of oral rehydration therapy, and a 25% reduction in the diarrhoea incidence rate;
- a 25% reduction in case/fatality rates associated with acute respiratory infection in children under 5 years;
- reduction of infant and under five child mortality rates in all countries by at least half (1980-2000), or to 50 and 70 respectively per 1000 live births, whichever achieves the greater reduction;
- a 50% reduction in current maternal mortality rates.

Achievement of these targets would result in the avoidance of tens of millions of child deaths and disabilities by the year 2000, as well as a balanced population growth as parents become more confident their children will survive and develop. The eradication of poliomyelitis would, with the eradication of smallpox, represent a fitting gift from the 20th to the 21st centuries.

5. DRAW world attention to the potential for enlarging upon the successes outlined above to encompass low cost, effective in[illegible]ives to:

- improve the quality and coverage of educational services to obtain universal primary education and 80% female literacy, and
- virtual elimination of severe malnutrition of under five children while also significantly reducing moderate and mild malnutrition in each country.

6. WELCOME the progress being made in drafting the Convention on Rights of the Child and join the United Nations General Assembly in urging completion of the Convention in 1989, the 10th anniversary of the International Year of the Child.

We are convinced that vigorous pursuit of these initiatives aimed at protecting the world's children will ensure that children and mothers - indeed whole families - will benefit from the best of available health technologies, making an essential contribution to human and national development and to the attainment of Health For All By The Year 2000.

The Task Force For
Child Survival

PROTECTING THE WORLD'S CHILDREN:
AN AGENDA FOR THE 1990's

March 10-12, 1988