CF/RAI/USAA/DB01/HS/1996-0031

Full Item Register Number [auto] **CF/RAI/USAA/DB01/HS/1996-0031**

ExRef: Document Series/Year/Number **CF/NYH/SEB/HST/1996-0031 ; CF/HST/INT/DAVG-001/M**

Record Item Title

Interview George Davidson by Sherwood Moe: Background; Origins of UNICEF; First Exec. Director; Katherine Lenroot; Transition from emergency to

Date Created / on Item	*Date Registered*	*Date Closed/Superceeded*
10/5/1984	3/12/1996	

Primary Contact	
Owner Location	Strategic Information Section = 6090
Home Location	Strategic Information Section = 6090
Current Location	History Related Records =60909132
Fd1: Type: IN, OUT, INTERNAL?	
Fd2: Lang ?Sender Ref or Cross Ref	CF/HST/INT/DAVG-001/M
F3: Format	Form = 022 pp + 0 b
Container Record	
Container Record (Title)	

N1: Numb of pages	*N2: Doc Year*	*N3: Doc Number*
22	1996	31

Full GCG Code Plan Number

Da1:Date Published	*Da2:Date Received*	*Date 3*	*Priority*
	10/30/1989	10/30/1989	

If Doc Series?:

Record Type A02a Item Hist Corr - CF/RAI/USAA/DB01/HS

Electronic Details No Document *DOS File Name*

Alt Bar code = RAMP-TRIM Record Numb : **CF/RAI/USAA/DB01/HS/1996-0031**

Notes

= 22 pp + 0 b
Archive Code Valid Date: 10/30/1989
continuing organization; humanfactor in development; childsurvival revolution; Coordintnin Vietnam; UNAC; Pate
WU_Staff:

Print Name of Person Submit Images	*Signature of Person Submit*	*Number of images without cover*
JOHN MANFREDI	John Manfredi	22

DOUBLE SIDED

Blank Page

Back of

Cover Sheet

1218 ... 20 May 1985

Interview with G. Davidson
Conducted by Sherry Moe
at UN Headquarters on 5 Ocober 1984

Table of Contents

Moe: This is an experimental interview. I am Sherry Moe and we are starting our talk. I suggest you start by telling us who you are, your background, your bona fides, and especially your association with UNICEF in its early days.

Davidson: Well, Sherry, my name is George Davidson. I go back in my contacts with the United Nations and with UNICEF to the very earliest days, my first visit to the United Nations having been in September 1946 at the third session of ECOSOC. Therefore I can say that I was present close to the beginning of UNICEF, if not at the actual beginning. My official position then was Deputy Minister of National Health and Welfare with the Government of Canada. While I had no previous experience in the international field, I was asked to come down to New York as part of the Canadian Delegation to the third session of ECOSOC, principally to deal with the social items on the ECOSOC agenda. It was in this connection that I first came into contact with the concept of UNICEF. I don't recall precisely when UNICEF was born, but I do recall that at that time Dr. Ludwig Rajchman, who is, I think, widely recognized as the father of UNICEF, was doing his very able lobbying, proposing the creation of what was to be called the United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund. At that time, of course, the stress was on emergency. It was part of the post-war effort to develop, under the United Nations banner, entities which would assist in the reconstruction, principally of Europe. The Economic Commission for the Rehabilitation of Europe, which later became the Economic Commission for Europe, was brought into being at that September 1946 session of ECOSOC, and UNICEF was part of that developing trend. The attempt was to provide for some continuation of UNRRA (United Nations Relief and Rehabilitation Agency), the emergence of a United Nations High Commission for Refugees - all of these agencies were being brought into being in the early days of the United Nations centred very largely, though not exclusively, on the concept of the rehabilitation of Europe. It was in that setting that UNICEF was born.

I don't think a great deal of thought was given at that time, certainly not in my opinion, to the division of responsibilities which should prevail as between a wide variety of organizations, some of them of a more permanent nature, some of them of an emergency nature. Therefore you had the spectacle of FAO emerging - it had already emerged from the Quebec Conference - you had the spectacle of WHO emerging, and you had at the same

time, the spectacle of the Emergency Fund called UNICEF emerging, many of whose functions, let's face it, overlapped then, and overlap today, on the jurisdiction of agencies such as WHO and FAO. This was not a logical, well-thought out apportionment of the functions and responsibilities, although underlying the whole concept was perhaps a logical structure of specialized agencies. But overriding them all was this series of emergency organizations which were brought into being to deal with the problems, the very serious problems that Europe was facing in its attempt to re-establish itself. So you have an overlay of emergency organizations such as UNICEF.

It was certainly, I was going to say, almost entirely - but that is too much to say - but very largely, due to the persistence and efforts of Dr. Ludwig Rajchman of Poland that UNICEF was brought into existence. I was almost going to use the word, grudgingly, into existence. That's too strong a word, but Rajchman simply persisted and persisted; he wouldn't let go for anything. There was not an overwhelming enthusiasm at that time for the creation of this organization which seemed to confuse, rather than clarify, the tidy organization picture. But you just couldn't get rid of Rajchman, and it was almost entirely due, I think, to his obstinate, stubborn persistence that finally the Delegations got tired of listening to him; and the human, common sense of his plea was so obvious that it was almost impossible to back away. Therefore, Canada and other countries finally succumbed to his pressures and agreed on the creation of UNICEF.

Now, I am not saying it was very much to the credit of the Delegations who were present there or to the Delegates or the countries concerned that they were forced to back into the decision, but that is the truth: it was not received with a great amount of acclaim; it was received as something - well, we have no good reason not to do it - the children are important, children are suffering, and therefore UNICEF came into being.

And I can recall that — and this is a personal note — very shortly after the 1946 fall session of ECOSOC, where it was decided that UNICEF should be created, the question arose as to who should be the first Executive Director. This is not in the books nor officially on the record, but in January 1947, I was in Ottawa back on my job as the Head of the Welfare Department of Canada. I received a call from Katherine Lenroot, who was at that time head of the US Children's Bureau and the US Representative-Designate to UNICEF. She wanted to know whether I was interested in having my name put forward as first Executive Director for UNICEF. As it happened, the previous month, my own Minister, to whom I was responsible, had been changed. A new Minister had come on the job, and I explained to Katherine that,

apart from anything else, this was not a time that I could leave my duties there, because I had a new Minister that I had to indoctrinate into the problems that the Department was facing. I think this turned out to be a very great boon for UNICEF that those circumstances existed because, as it turned out, Maurice Pate, who was in many ways the second father of UNICEF, was chosen as the first Executive Director of UNICEF.

Maurice's record of accomplishment as the Head of UNICEF during its formative years is on the record for everybody to see. He turned out to be a very great leader, a very accomplished and understanding organizer, and he did one of the other things that my not being involved to any great extent in UNICEF made possible: namely, he stole Adelaide Sinclair. He borrowed Adelaide Sinclair from me on a temporary basis to assist him in the development of UNICEF, and Adelaide stayed with UNICEF for the rest of her career. I feel that was my greatest personal accomplishment as far as UNICEF is concerned, in that I released Adelaide Sinclair from her duties as my Executive Assistant in my Department at Ottawa and conspired with her to make possible the prolongation of her temporary assignment for, I don't know how many years.

Now, the second thing that I remember was that, as UNICEF came into being, appeals, of course, were made to governments to support UNICEF financially. The Canadian Government, again without any great amount of enthusiasm, played its part in contributing to the financial support of UNICEF during the early years, and UNICEF got off to a reasonably good start as an emergency organization. But emergencies pass, and pretty soon it became clear that the word "emergency" in the title and in the acronym of UNICEF was no longer really very meaningful. The difficult process then began of rationalizing the translation of an organization, which had begun as an emergency organization and which could be justified as an emergency organization, into a continuing organization which was no longer to be recognized as an emergency organization in the original sense, but which for its own reasons, very good reasons of opportunism, chose to keep the acronym so that, though it is now the United Nations Children's Fund, the acronym "UNICEF", containing the vestiges of its origins, remains.

And here I have to say that, in my opinion, the inconsistency, — not the conflict, — between the functions and the role of UNICEF, and the functions and roles of the specialised agencies which were at the base of the UN Economic and Social system, became more obvious and harder to rationalize. I don't know, for my part, if we have yet succeeded in rationalizing, in making completely rational, the relationship of UNICEF to the

organizations whose functions it overlaps with in so many ways, such as FAO and WHO. And about the only way it seems to me it can be rationalized is through the recognition that UNICEF is an operational, supply organization whereas the organizations in the other two areas, food and agriculture on the one hand, and health, on the other...

Moe: And education.

Davidson: And education, UNESCO, that's right, that's a third one - these are the basic, policy-making organs with which UNICEF works in providing the wherewithal by which operational projects in these three fields can be pursued. So much for that.

Then, there developed another feature related to the work of UNICEF, but not organically tied to it, in the emergence of an organization known as UNAC. Shortly after UNICEF got under way - there developed a proposal in ECOSOC again to create a United Nations Appeal for Children - a voluntary appeal - to people, rather than to governments. And this caused a great deal of concern, particularly in countries such as United States of America and Canada, where we had a vast network of private charitable organizations relying upon voluntary funds contributed by the individual citizens in the various communities, and in both our countries. This proposal to create an organization which appealed directly to the individuals struck us as being less than helpful. I can recall that I regarded the creation of UNAC as something less than desirable. It was a personal view; I'm not saying that was the view of the Canadian Government; but the Canadian Government, I think I can say, viewed the emergence of UNAC with even less enthusiasm than it had originally shown in going along with the idea of the creation of UNICEF. It could not avoid concluding that it had a duty and a responsibility to support UNICEF. It did not feel the same way about what it regarded as a second effort to raise money for a worthy enterprise through a completely different channel which would have, it was felt, in my country and I think in the USA, a negative impact on our attempts to provide the voluntary welfare services which are typical of the North American community. Therefore, UNAC did not get much support in Canada. The record of Canadian giving to UNAC was not impressive. And whereas other countries ,such as the Scandinavian countries, which did not have the problem that we had in terms of these community welfare agencies supported by voluntary gifts, did a very good job, — so did New Zealand, as I recall — Canada's record was mediocre to poor, to say the least. Fortunately, from the point of view which I had at the time and which I still have, UNAC did prove to be a temporary organization - it did not last very long. The overall result throughout the world was not outstandingly

successful, as I recall, and that project was very shortly abandoned. Some of the vestiges of it remained, for example, in the Christmas card operation of UNICEF, which is not identical with UNAC but which also involves direct appeal through the sale of Christmas cards to individuals in the various countries of the world to supplement the funds which UNICEF is able to receive from governments.

Well, about these early references, these early recollections, Sherry, the things that I remember about those early years at UNICEF might be helpful as a means of introduction into the rest of our conversation, which will bring us up to more modern times, where we will be dealing with some of the views which I and others may hold on the role of UNICEF in the United Nations family today.

The years in which Maurice Pate and Dick Heyward, Adelaide Sinclair were the leaders in the work of UNICEF were years in which very solid foundations of work were laid; in which UNICEF thrived and prospered; in which it showed many instances of courage in facing difficult political situations; in which it expanded its role and served many millions of children both in the emergency years and in the years in which its programmes settled down to a more continuing basis to the support of basic health, nutrition and educational welfare services provided in a variety of ways to many children and to the mothers and families, particularly of the developing world. I mention in conclusion the transition of UNICEF from an organization which is centred on children to an organization which extends to the relationship of mother and child, and more and more, increasingly, reaches out to the family and even to the community; because many of the activities of UNICEF now go beyond the family as such, and extend to the provision of milk supplies, feeding supplies, to community chores which are of basic benefit to the entire population of the community, not just to the children or to families where children exist. Well, I think perhaps I have said enough at this stage to set the stage, and I will turn the dialogue back to you and see where you want to lead the conversation.

Moe: Well, thanks, George. Although UNAC was a kind of, as you said, a maverick kind of thing, it probably did enable UNICEF to do something which, again, has been unique in the system, and that is to get so much support from the private sector, which in financial terms over the years amounts to somewhere between 20 and 30 per cent of its total income. But what is probably more important about that is its outreach to the individual citizen, enabling individuals to have a feeling that somehow they can participate in the system. And after all, as you know, the Charter is built upon these two pillars: it is an organization of

sovereign governments, but it also is the charter of "we, the peoples of the United Nations," which are the ultimate source of strength of the UN system. And I think the fact that UNICEF has been able to reach out to that extent is perhaps beneficial, not just to UNICEF but to the UN system as a whole.

Davidson: I will have to reply to that by asking you if you can imagine what the consequences would have been if other agencies in the UN system would have done the same thing. I think you would agree that it was fortunate, in a sense, for UNICEF that UNICEF was allowed to plough this particular furrow alone, because had UNAC been sufficiently successful in money terms - and its real success was in outreach to people - but had it been sufficiently successful in money terms to have encouraged other parts of the UN system to attempt the same direct approach to "we, the people," I think you will agree with me that it would have had perhaps a counter-productive effect, not only on the international organizations which would endeavour in this way to raise sums of money through voluntary appeals to individuals; but it would have had a counter-productive effect on the voluntary agencies of the respective communities where that money must be raised. But that is beside the point: I think you are quite right in saying that through the approach of UNAC initially and then what followed on from that in other ways such as the Christmas card...

Moe: The whole network of the international community...

Davidson: And the whole network of local organisations, you did succeed in establishing a contact with the people beyond the intermediary governments, and this has been one of the basic political underpinnings of the UNICEF effort all through the years that have followed.

Moe: I think you are right. And, of course, we, over the years, have always had this kind of ambivalent attitude. We believe that, in general, what we are doing is good for the UN; but at the same time, we have been rather jealous of our particular ability to do -- appeal to the private sector. We have tried to co-operate with a few of the organizations that have been able to do this. UNDP - I think I am correct - has been denied by statute the right to solicit private contributions from the private sector. On the other hand, certainly UNHCR, UNRWA, UNFPA -- a few others that depend on voluntary contributions, have not been inhibited from seeking the support of the private sector. We've tried to work out gentlemen's agreements with them; for example, we tried to establish, in a general but unofficial way, that greeting cards is our particular bag, whereas UNHCR, for a certain period of time, had a quasi-monopoly on production and sale of records.

I think they have gone out of that business now. But, anyway, what we tried to do is not to discourage the total effort but to cooperate in establishing our respect in "facts".

Davidson: You didn't try to monopolize, not totally; but in fact you were really the only successful exploiter of this particular source of revenue, and again the revenue was in many ways the least important part of this effort to UNICEF. What was really the important thing was that in this way you established a direct personal link between millions of people throughout the world and the institution known as UNICEF, which has given you a kind of monoply no other organization in the United Nations family enjoys.

Moe: That's true. I think it has been on the whole a beneficial thing for the system, untidy though it may be.

Davidson: It is illogical, and it was opportunistic at times; but it works and has established itself and has justified its existence in the way that no one can question its continued existence today, merely on the grounds that it started off on a rather hit-or-miss basis without due regard to all of the tidy set of organizational relationships which some bureaucrats would like to make possible. And the only time that UNICEF has really found itself in any kind of difficulty in the years that I have known UNICEF is the years in which it is being mistaken for and confused with some other part of the UN organization, which is not very comforting at all.

Moe: The GA passed all these ridiculous resolutions about Zionism being a racist thing - that hurt our greeting card sales, because we were the one thing they could reach out and grab.

Davidson: You were the direct personal target, just as you were the direct personal beneficiary previously.

Moe: This was their way of expressing disagreement with it.

Davidson: They were not disagreeing with the work of UNICEF; they were disagreeing with the posture of the world-wide Organization as such.

Moe: Of course, we immediately countered that by getting Abah Eban, a well-recognized Israeli politician and leader, to buy some of our greeting cards and have his picture taken, and that got over it, but...

Davidson: And you had an outstanding Israeli woman in the person of Zena Harman?

Moe: Zena Harman, Chairman of our Board in 1965, who was, I believe,

the first Israeli to be Chairman of a UN Inter-governmental body, and she conducted herself very well.

Davidson: Maybe the last? Oh, she's a fine, fine lady. I knew her well, and I had great admiration and respect for her. But I think she was not only the first, but possibly she was the last.

Moe: Could well be, because after that, everything changed gradually through the UN. Israel used to be the favourite child of the UN, and now it's become what it is. Partly, I think, it is its own fault, but there are other reasons which we don't need to go into. But jumping now sort of ahead to your seven years as Under-Secretary-General in charge of - you give it the exact title - generally involved with inter-agency coordination, we can perhaps pick up again on the theme of what you quite rightly said, that UNICEF is in a way an organization which shouldn't exist but does because of its performance. The only thing I would add to what you said before about UNICEF's activities in relation to and in cooperation with the standard setting and the research organizations of the UN - WHO, UNESCO, FAO - none of which, as you know, was also created to be operational but had that sort of challenge thrust upon it. I think perhaps one of the other major developments within UNICEF is the development of a kind of professionalism with regard to how you put together all these various components which we all know are central to children's well-being and have a time dimension which is unique for children. Adults can wait, but children can't. If they don't get it all, they probably don't get anything. I think we perhaps again had it thrust upon us to develop a certain special expertise in the design of what we've come to call the "basic services" of this whole package, which perhaps gives us a more logical or professional justification for continuing to exist within the UN system, so long as it is done in a sensible way.

Davidson: There are just two comments I would make on that, Sherry. You said that perhaps, from one point of view, UNICEF should never have existed. I don't think anybody looking back over the almost 40 years of UNICEF's accomplishments could ever today even think of the idea that UNICEF should never have been begotten. UNICEF has more than justified its existence, more than overwhelmed and convinced the skeptics, of whom there were quite a few, at the time, by its performance. And if its performance was opportunistic in a sense, if it was less than completely logical as an element in the total structure of the UN, — that rule of thumb goes by the board when you have to recognize what the actual accomplishments of UNICEF have been over these years.

Point no. 2: you have made, quite rightly, reference to the fact that because of the fact that UNICEF overlapped numerous other

areas of jurisdiction, you had an opportunity, — and you met that opportunity — by developing, in a rather unique fashion, an inter-disciplinary approach to the carrying on of operational projects, of conceptualizing projects, and of bringing into being projects of an operational nature which involve the melting together, the blending, the merging and the coordinating of a number of such widely varying professions as health, education, etc.

And you know the word "co-ordination" is a much over-used word in the lexicon of the United Nations, but what UNICEF was able to do in blending and mingling together these varying disciplines into projects which met the needs of the communities or the families which were concerned, this was real co-ordination. It wasn't co-ordination as we define it so much in the Organization, but as long as you don't call it co-ordination, it works!

Moe: Just do it.

Davidson: The minute you start talking about that or conceptualizing, you get so far away from the reality of the inter-disciplinary team that it loses all its meaning. And this has been one of the great difficulties of the United Nations, to bring co-ordination down to a realistic and meaningful and constructive level. UNICEF, because of the accident of its origins and method of operation, because it did reach out and overlap on health and education and welfare and food and nutrition and a variety of other special disciplines, brought together the experts in terms of irrigation and water supply and nutrition and child health. And it was able to forge an inter-disciplinary approach which I think has been the forerunner of much of the inter-disciplinary approach that is now prevalent in many of the other programmes of the United Nations family as a whole.

In the Population Fund, with which I am now connected, we also approach problems of the community through an inter-disciplinary team. And that is true of UNDP, that is true of the other organizations and I think we have all learned something from the fact that UNICEF, I use the word advisedly, 'blundered' into this approach to community development activity, and did so in a way that gave us some lessons that we can benefit from in later years.

Moe: That leads to an all-encompassing but interesting but perhaps unanswerable question: it has often been suggested that, again, in strict logic UNICEF should just be another division of the UNDP. And if UNDP had the drive to look after children to the extent that UNICEF had, that might have been one correct way of going about it. Jackson looked into this whole question of a capacity study back in the late sixties or early seventies, but

his conclusion was that although it might make sense: you shouldn't destroy UNICEF in the interests of organizational tidiness - those were, I think, his exact words. But I think there was something more fundamental, and I think that was the difference in operation between UNDP and UNICEF. We have always been our own executing agency; we raise the money and then we spend it, in contrast with the way UNDP does it, which may have been right for UNDP but probably would not have been right for UNICEF. What are your thoughts on this? Should UNDP go towards UNICEF's method of operation? To a certain extent, we know it is - they have a division of their own projects...

Davidson: Yes — project execution. In fact, I think UNDP has first of all moved away from the UNICEF approach initially and now is moving a little bit back.

Moe: It was often felt you had to strengthen the functional agencies; if they weren't directly involved in the operation or execution of projects, they couldn't give the expertise that would be needed. I understand that that was the basic interpretation.

Davidson: When UNDP was first developed, the concept, apart from the fact of using the executing agencies, the concept was one of, "we know best and we are the providers of the funds, we are the providers of the expertise and we will certainly consult with governments and do our best to find a way to meet what they see as their requirements. But in the final analysis we will programme and use the executing agencies for political and other reasons to act as our executing arm." Initially, and particularly prior to the Jackson report, the developing countries accepted this. But they didn't embrace it as the ideal arrangement, for they were being left out of the picture, and therefore as the programme matured, the concept of country programming, of giving the country an IPF...

Moe: Which I think we pioneered.

Davidson: And letting them develop their own plans and their own programmes, this began to emerge and more and more of the centre of gravity shifted from the agency to the country. And while that has not gone on as completely as perhaps we say it has, the countries have a great deal more to say now than they ever had before on what kind of programmes they want to be funded. The role of UNDP has become correspondingly more of a banker and less of a programmer, although I would not like to carry that analogy too far. You, on the other hand - and I don't know how you got away with this - don't seem to have ever encountered this problem, at least not to my knowledge. Governments seem to have been continuously prepared to have you at UNICEF "know best", and

it has not therefore been necessary for you to accommodate the concerns of governments to do their own thing to quite the same extent as in the case of UNDP. That's one point.

I would like to come back to your earlier remarks as to whether or not it would have been desirable from any point of view for UNICEF to have become a part, to have been merged into UNDP. Quite apart from what Jackson may have had to say on that, I agree with him that there was no point in tearing down a successful organization and risking its success by simply merging. I don't even think it was necessarily very logical because UNICEF had already established a certain pattern of operation. It was an operational agency, it did its own thing, it raised its own money, as you said, and did its own thing; and while it listened to and heeded and consulted with the government, it took the responsibility for what projects it chose to support. UNDP, as I mentioned, is more of a banker than it is a programmer or an operator, and while they have developed amid the great concerns and anxieties of the executing agencies and specialized agencies, their own office of project execution, this is really an appendage to the main programme of UNDP, which is to receive the proposals of the countries concerned, to develop an initiative in those countries and a capacity to development programme concepts and programmes, and farm them out by way of projects agencies, — leaving UNDP to do essentially the job of banking. I am over-simplifying because it doesn't work out entirely in that way. UNDP is heavily into programming; but still, the structure is so different from the UNICEF structure that I think it would not only have been counter-productive but also it would not have made sense at the time to have swept away what were clearly the operational drives of UNICEF at the time UNDP came into existence and try to convert it into an organization which was initially of a quite different kind, and is even today of a very different kind.

Moe: Part of the difference, and something we can explore further, is traditionally - as you mentioned earlier - UNICEF's main contribution to the countries was in the form of quite rapid delivery of supplies and equipment of precisely the sort of things they wanted, along with these funds for training, as compared with the UNDP package of assistance, which for perhaps good reasons was largely outside experts with a minimal component of supplies and probably a much longer lead time. For this you had the kind of odd paradox that, on the one hand, UNDP was officially, trying to advise governments more explicity as to the whole nature of their development, what they should do, whether they should go into agriculture or industrialization, or what the balance should be, and how they should plan their development, and so on. Nevertheless, they were delivering still, I think, or

not delivering what the governments want in a timely fashion, while we officially were not trying to advise anybody except to draw attention to the needs of children above all, and then delivering something quite quickly of the kind they needed which gave us the platform to talk. And now in a paradoxical way, it has come the other way round, because we've been doing this, and because it is a relatively new field - this real effective co-ordination and synergism among these various things - they tend to listen to us more readily, because we're not trying to tell them how to do their total development plan. But we are saying the human factor in development is absolutely crucial - give it more priority, and this leads us to this other last thing of the whole human factor of development.

Davidson: I want to come back to this. Can you imagine UNICEF functioning under an arrangement which involves, first of all, some assistance from UNICEF, but with the initiative still in the countries, leaving with the countries the responsibility of conceptualizing their total programme, of framing their proposals, of having them sifted through and examined by UNICEF more than initiated by UNICEF, and then having them farmed out to an executing agency, WHO, FAO or somebody else to implement? No wonder there is a lead time differential between UNICEF's approach and UNDP's approach - that's no. 1. You can't really conceive of UNICEF, in today's world, switching over to the approach that UNDP has developed.

Moe: That would be disastrous.

Davidson: Secondly, there is another factor to be taken into account. You referred, quite rightly, to the fact that UNDP is concerned with encouraging governments and helping them in their development planning. This is much more a political concept than helping children, and therefore it is inevitable that UNDP, to the extent that it would try to take on the same approach as UNICEF, would find itself stepping into some political quagmire in trying to promote somebody's idea of development. Whose idea of development, — the United States of America, the western world's concept of development, the eastern bloc's concept? The third world's? You'd be in trouble whichever one you choose.?

Moe: Whereas who could object to kids?

Davidson: Whereas, children are children, and it is much more simplified, less sophisticated.

Moe: It's very revolutionary.

Davidson: Yes, there's one thing which may have to be said which

counter-balances a bit. It may be that the UNDP approach, which leaves a great deal more initiative and independence in the hands of young countries, — even if they do it badly, — in the long run is going to create more of a sense of ability to direct their own affairs.

Moe: This is institution building in the legal and profound sense of the word.

Davidson: Yes. In that respect, UNICEF may be producing more short-term dividends, though a period of 40 years is not very short-term. But whether you have been as successful in institution building in your particular field of operation is a question that I frankly don't know anything about, but I raise the question as a conceptual question.

Moe: I think it is a very valid question. I also don't really have the answer. I do know that, of course, this suffuses everything that we think we are trying to do, which is not just to ship in a certain number of supplies which are actually marginal and less than the need, but above all to create the institutions and support them and the technique. And I think one perhaps indicator on that is that we have been in many countries now invited to work below the national level. In India and Pakistan we are working at the provincial level, which is, of course, again an indication of a non-political nature. But also I think it does point toward institution building and more

Davidson: The more you move into that area, in my opinion, the more problems are going to arise as to the popularity, if not the relevance, of what you are doing. Because it is much harder to sell institution building to donors, the donor governments and the donor individuals, than it is to sell the needs of children. You are moving from a very concrete, practical human down-to-earth series of problems to conceptual problems. And whatever the intellectual imperatives of that, it does make the problem of interpretation more difficult. And I would be less than human if I didn't suspect that the more you continue to move in that direction, the more you will continue none the less to put out front, in your publicity and interpretation efforts, your original efforts to help children and play down this other to a lesser degree until you can educate your constituency accordingly. There was one other thing I wanted to...

Moe: The human factor in development?

Davidson: No, but before we go to that, there was one thing I would like to remember.... Anyway, it may come back to me. The human factor in development.

Moe: Possible impact of UNICEF. I used to like to think we wrote one thing in the progress report to the Board, and the next year MacNamara would be echoing it in his major speeches, whether that's true or not,

Davidson: Well, you will pardon me for saying that I think UNFPA feels the same way, when the World Bank Report gets headlines because it puts population in the front row.

Moe: You say, well, we said this 10 years ago.

Davidson: But we're very happy to have the World Bank echoing it because their voice will carry into places - that's what the game's all about.

The human factor in development. I am puzzled because I have seen in the years that I have been associated with the UN such a diminution of concern with social policy and social matters in the great UN framework that I am not sure how much the human factor in development is really recognized, even with the supplementary efforts that you are making in UNICEF and UNFPA is making in this regard. What I mean to say is this: you can recall and I can recall that, when the United Nations Secretariat was first organized, there was a Department of Social Affairs, there was a Department of Economic Affairs, and at least they started off by being recognized conceptually as being of equal importance. This was before "development" became a word. But before "development" became a word, Social Affairs disappeared and you got a Department of Economic and Social Affairs in which there were a hundred economists and one poor Social Policy person.

Moe: The theory was, of course, that they were recognizing a connection.

Davidson: The-opposite-side-of-the-same-coin and all that jazz, and I have listened to this till it makes me sick, because the fact is that the opposite side of the coin has nothing on it. And Social Policy has disappeared to all intents and purposes from the lexicon of the United Nations Secretariat. There is Human Rights still, there is the Centre for Social Development and Humanitarian Affairs which is, I am afraid, a very sickly child in the whole set-up; but there is a huge organization called the Department of International Economic and Social Affairs, which is overwhelmed by economic concerns, and therefore Social Affairs has been driven to the periphery. And while I don't suggest that UNICEF and UNFPA are unimportant parts of that group, social development is not central to the concepts of development as they exist in the United Nations today.

Moe: Yet we have endless Resolutions.

Davidson: They are not central to the concept of development in the United Nations Development Programme. That is basically centred on economic development. And so it is left to UNICEF, it is left to UNFPA, to keep flying the flag which says the human element in the development process is also important.

Moe: It's fundamental.

Davidson: It is fundamental, but it is out in left field.

Moe: MacNamara brought it in to the Bank.

Davidson: MacNamara brought it in to the Bank and ...

Moe: Clausen says he still believes in it.

Davidson: I hear a lot of words about this, but none of it sounds as authentic to me, no matter out of whose mouth it comes, as the words that I hear coming from thousands of other mouths about economic planning and economic development. And I find myself wondering, I hear Mr. Sala talking about population and development, I hear you talking about UNICEF's contribution to the start of the development process, and I get the feeling that we are tying our kites to the tail of what we think is a current vogue of development. And we're trying to say, we're proud of that too. We know that the developing world, it is called the developing world, is concerned, is obsessed with development. But it is obsessed with economic development, and we are voices in the wilderness in trying to remind the developing world and the developed world that social elements are part and parcel of development, and that without human beings development makes no sense.

Moe: This gets us to the revolutionary sense.

Davidson: And, from some points of view, I think we are leading ourselves down a pretty bumpy road. In many ways, it seems to me that if we were not trying so hard to make children's programmes and population programmes part of development but were to sell them on the basis of their pure humanitarian values, it sometimes seems to me that that would be a more fruitful and productive approach. Now, there are other times that I think otherwise; other times that I recognize that whether we like it or not, we have to peddle this line. But it is a sort of a need-to line, it is a sort of acknowledgement, and I speak now of population - I won't venture to say this of UNICEF - it is almost saying we can't sell population by itself; it wont stand up. We will not

convince the world, and therefore we've got to use this buzz word "development"; we've got to link up population with development and say we're part of that thing you're all crazy about, you're all obsessed with, and if we can make it stick, fine. But I am afraid that despite the evangelism of Bob MacNamara - and God bless him, he's done a tremendous job - I am not convinced that the World Bank people down the line have really begun to take this into their inner thinking; they are still thinking basically of economic development. They are thinking basically of, — well they've gone past this, but you know and I know that back in the days of the UNRRA period and later, the Korean War it was an Army corps of engineers approach to the rehabilitation of those countries. And even now, it's investment in airports, television broadcasting stations, hydraulic power plants, all the paraphernalia of the sophisticated industrial world - that's development in the minds of too many developing countries. And that concept is still too much encouraged by the economic planners and development planners. And whether or not the human factor in development, as represented by UNICEF's efforts, the Population Fund's efforts and other efforts, can really find a meaningful place, in the thinking of bureaucrats, technocrats, is still in my mind, a very open question.

Moe: I hear you very loud and clear; we have run the changes on this in UNICEF endlessly, and we basically tend to come to the conclusion that development in the hard, classical sense as you've been describing, and the human factor are, or should be - they're different sides of the same coin, they're both motivated by essentially the same (we like to think) essentially the same motivations whether they are religious - all the great religions in the world agree that the rich should help the poor - and if you're not religious, if you're just a modern-day humanist, in which the UN was founded, that too provides you with your basic motivation to do both things. So it's not development versus humanitarianism, it's exactly the same thing. But there is, I think, the other quite revolutionary question, and since we're talking more or less off the record - I want to see how much of this is going to be published - but I think there is a very fundamental question of whether in the so-called developing world, the elites really want to have human development. Because this would change - it's absolutely fundamental - in ways that they can only begin to imagine, it's like letting the genie out of the bottle.

Davidson: I shouldn't say this, but I think that basically we are catering by and large to what it is that the elite in the developing countries want, and not to what the poor underneath need, and this brings you back to the dilemma of UNDP versus UNICEF. UNDP talks to the governments, to the planners, saying "you put down

on paper what you need, and we will see what we can do to finance it." You in UNICEF go underneath that upper level of élite bureaucracy a bit. You say, "We think we know what your people need, and we will offer you certain things, but we keep a bit more of the control of the money and the project planning and project operations in our own hands." Now you've got away with that, you haven't had a rebellion.

Moe: Because we're still small-scale.

Davidson: You haven't had a rebellion and perhaps you've been protected by the fact that UNDP has more money. And we in UNFPA have been the same; we operate more in the Population Fund on the basis of the UNICEF approach; we keep much more of the control in our own hands.

Moe: But we're both so small-scale that it's very well for them to say yes and they go along with what we're doing, but we don't command sufficient resources to make that much difference.

Davidson: And whatever we give them is gravy. They will take whatever we give them. But what they really want is more of the kinds of things that would be production, rather than people-oriented. That is what the elite, the upper crust of these countries, really prefers.

Moe: Now we get to where UNICEF is today, and if what Jim Grant is trying to do, as you say, is possible. He's talking in terms of the child survival revolution; it's a public relations gimmick, but it also has, I think, potential of profound importance. Because what he's saying is that thanks to what we have been doing over the last forty years, there is a synergism in terms of technological development, the various immunization techniques, the clean water, the little simple pumps and so on that we've developed, the oral rehydration package, the controlled diarrhoea now at the village level in a very simple way, plus a considerable pay-off in basic training. There is a far greater level of the capacity of literacy around the world than there was forty years ago. It's literally possible, with a certain amount of adequate support, especially from the so-called developing countries to literally (we call it a go-to-scale in our jargon, that is) have collectively country coverage. We've already, for example, given practically every village in Bangladesh a well for clean water, because it has to be technically very simple to do it because there's an ever-flowing stream underneath the soil. But that sort of thing is possible. Clearly that's what the countries really want, and will it have the kind of support that's needed?

Davidson: Well, the countries will passively accept that, as long as it doesn't interfere with their getting their main meal from the main thrust. But if Brad Morse and the Bank were to go whole hog in that direction, you would have an uproar. Now if the Bank were to have this as a marginal, added benefit that might be acceptable. But developing countries still want what they think of in terms of the economic development. Well perhaps, it should be the dominant theme, but I think it's a constant struggle for organizations like UNICEF and the population to keep their concern with the human element in the development process in the forefront of the total picture.

Moe: Ironically, it is the so-called Socialist countries that are more receptive to these ideas than the so-called capitalist countries or the friends of the West.

Davidson: Are you talking of developing countries?

Moe: Developing countries. It puts us again in an odd situation.

Davidson: Because if you're talking of the Socialist countries -

Moe: I am talking about the Ethiopias, the Cubas, the

Davidson: Because I'm talking of eastern Europe. They are the robots of the section, their economic development is zilch, but their concept of development is almost pure and simple, economical. You won't see much of the human element in that department, but as you say some of the countries - I suspect that Yugoslavia is one of them -

Moe: Ethiopia, Cuba, Haiti, even.

Davidson: Do you remember back in the 1950's there was a thing called "community development?" It's disappeared. It was a bit of a counter-revolution to the army corps of engineers' approach - Korea - and then they went the other way and said everything had to start at the primitive community level and you build from there. And that approach was too drastic. You talked about the kinds of things like water supply in Bangladesh - everything you say, every illustration you give makes me think, FAO, WHO, UNESCO, and I just want to put on the record one experience I've had, I think I've told you about this. When Victor Umbrucht was named the coordinator for the rehabilitation of Vietnam, I used to read his reports - he had no money of his own and therefore his job was to go out and stimulate activity of all the agencies in Vietnam to do their thing. And don't forget that UNICEF was the first and only organization that was able to get into North Vietnam even before the end of the war. And Victor, every six

months, would bring together a compendium in a report. What was being done? What progress was being made? The railway was being relocated, so many miles, and so on, and so on. So much was being restored through agricultural production, etc., etc. And at the end of his report there was always a little - two or three paragraphs or perhaps a page - of each of the agencies which was working with him and I would read these. And so help me, I would wind up so confused at the end of this, because everything I read, WHO seemed to be overlapping on what FAO was doing and UNICEF was overlapping on what UNESCO was doing, and so on and so on. I'd turn to FAO and find that there were interesting things that they were doing which were the same things that I'd just read in WHO. Then I'd come to the UNICEF chapter and the UNESCO chapter, and he'd put the whole thing together and they were all - the way I read it, I could be completely wrong - they were all doing, or participating in doing exactly the same things. Digging latrines, procuring water supplies, well baby clinics. Everything, everything, everything, and it didn't seem to me that they were just describing their part of the same individual project; they each one had their own series of things that they were doing. Now I may be wrong in that, but it does leave you, even having said all the good things that we have said about UNICEF and the system generally, and all that, with an unsatisfied feeling that this is a pretty untidy way of doing the thing that we're doing, because you get the clear impression that they're all doing essentially the same thing. If you were working on the West Coast of the Peninsula and you go into a village, you find yourself doing the necessary things, and if you happen to be UNICEF you do, and fifty miles across the Peninsula WHO has landed on a village and it found the same things that needed to be done and is doing them. And it's all very good, but you would like to see a little bit more of a sense of organization and then you come back home to your accustomed offices, and you find things not much different over here. We are overlapping and duplicating, with each one doing his own thing. So maybe the confusion that you see in the international programming of the international organizations is simply a reflection of the same kind of democratic confusion that prevails in the donor countries. And you know, this is embarrassing, but if you were ever to think what is the unthinkable, of giving the money that comes from these different sources to the country itself, you have to ask the question, would they spend the money more efficiently than we are doing? Nobody's going to do that because there are other reasons including political, that we are putting money into and programmes for these countries, but it is not the way you would go about it if you had control of all the offices in your hands, or if you were the "one voice" that Jackson kept talking about. It's not the way you would go about planning your expenditure of the money in that area.

You spoke to me once earlier, about where I see UNICEF in the overall picture. My impression, a little bit, has been that UNICEF has an inclination to go its own way in the family of organizations. I don't know about the present regime. I knew best the regime of Harry Labouisse, and there's no greater United Nations figure, in my opinion, apart from possibly Hammarskjöld than Harry Labouisse. Now Harry had a single-mindedness of purpose, and he was co-operative in the United Nations system as long as co-operation did not impose any obligations on him. But when he had a thing to do, he just went ahead and did it, and he let other people in the organization find their place around the edges, or fit in as best they could. Harry was not one of these people who was obsessed with the importance of working out plans for co-ordination with everybody else in the world, before he did it. I have seen him so often sitting in ACC in discussions on how we must co-ordinate our efforts. And it would come Harry's turn, and all that Harry would say was, this is what we're going to do, or this is what we've done, or this is what we're doing, and that was the end of it. You could fit in your own ideas around that if you wanted to, but that was Harry's way. I won't say he was a lone wolf but he had such a sense of his own mission that he didn't waste too much time on non-essential work, if something was absolutely essential then he would work out on the right pragmatic basis a kind of working relationship but that was the beginning and end of it. He didn't get all cluttered up with this miasma of coordination that is one of the signs and symptoms of the United Nations.

Moe: You're absolutely right. I used to be a theoretician of cooperation and keep saying even you don't you have to at least appear to be and the system is bigger than UNICEF and say "yes, yes, yes, but..." this is our job.
I want to put on record - thank you very much, George. We haven't talked about emergencies, but let me get this typed up and then we'll have another session if that would suit you.

Davidson: OK, absolutely. I am around.

Moe: Thanks again.
