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INTERNATIONAL CO-OPERATION

THE YEAR 1965, the twentieth year of the existence of the United Nations, has been designated as the International Co-operation Year. It began with a financial crisis for the organization, as the Socialist Republics, together with a number of other countries including Belgium and France, refused to pay for its peace-keeping operations. For the first time one of its 115 members, Indonesia, has withdrawn from it. And Mao-Tse-tung's China, which has succeeded in making a nuclear bomb, has not yet been able to secure its membership. Behind 1965, since the International Workingmen's Association was established by Marx and Engels in London in 1864, lies a century of international communism, and its spectre, in one garb or another, has by no means ceased to haunt the world.

The inspiration for the International Co-operation Year came from an address before the General Assembly on November 10, 1961, by Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru. A child of the East, but nurtured by the thinkers of the West, an agnostic intellectual who symbolized people's hope for peace and progress, Nehru had more poetic sensitivity than political realism. He was so outstanding an individualist—so much a part of India and yet so far apart from it—that he underestimated the domination of the individual by the organization which, in modern times, can achieve the callous perfection of an automaton. He hoped that by emphasizing the day-to-day co-operation, so essential to living, between men everywhere, we could create an atmosphere that would dispel some of the distrust and fear which give rise to many conflicts afflicting the world. But the voice of the individual, even with a prophetic ring born of clear vision, echoes back faintly from the high walls of the Organization.

Co-operation and sacrifice are, no doubt, as much a part of nature and society as strife and war. Nor is international co-operation a new phenomenon in the world. Long ago the disciples of Buddha and Christ, with devoted zeal and stern discipline, carried the message of the masters to distant and

foreign lands, without the comprehensive provisions of the Staff Regulations and the endless meetings of the Administrative Committee on Co-ordination.

But international co-operation in the modern world is a complicated matter. It is also an urgent need; in fact, it is indispensable. It is an amalgam of many forces and factors, neither always obvious nor definitive, intricate in their operation and diffuse in their impact. Its basic principles are as simple as they are timeless, but the requirements for its effective application must be determined with reference to a particular situation, comprehending all the relevant circumstances and conditions—unexpressed, articulated with care, or camouflaged behind deceptive phrases. Because the ideal of power is exclusive, it cannot brook a rival; its path is strewn with strife. The ideal of perfection, on the other hand, is all-inclusive; it invites everyone to share in its munificence; it leads to harmony and peace. In order to find Him, says the Upanishad, you must embrace all.

The two, of course, cannot be separated completely, but in the organized life, national or international, it is power, in one form or another, that dominates. When, as in the case of international organizations, power is truncated and is subject to numerous external pressures exerted in diverse directions, the pace of progress becomes dubious and fumbling. As a result, idealistic phrases begin to ring hollow, methods become devious and procedure overwhelmingly important, and the language of the grey documents, coming off the chain-belt system of the literary sausage machine in a ceaseless flow, acquires forbidding attributes—stale, synthetic, and soporific. As this drift gathers momentum, the organization runs a serious risk of dramatic posturing and artificial bustle at the top, and frustration, supported by routine activity and mental lassitude, farther down. The spectacle of a coterie of skilled fishermen busily engaged in mending their nets instead of catching fish is never very encouraging. And with all this, in order to achieve effective international co-operation, suitable methods and techniques must be devised so as to create an atmosphere of social service in a system geared to personal advancement. This is a formidable task, and the success, however limited, achieved by the international organizations, with their pitifully meagre resources in the face of immense problems, is highly significant. It shows, beyond doubt, that they respond to a felt need of the times.

Organization is essential, but it is only a tool and should not become a fetish. As it grows it acquires elaborate ritual, sophisticated priestcraft, and sleek devotees. In international life, partly because of continuously changing conditions and demands, and partly because of the lack of real power and also

excessive sensitivity to pressures from outside, the organization is constantly in the process of re-organization. The action may be mere activity and the movement mere motion, but its efficient organization is all-important. As a result, the indispensable management experts are ever busy keeping its sprawling limbs properly co-ordinated, even if the heart cannot supply sufficient blood to keep the brain working.

The post-war world has brought about many eventful changes. In the first place, never before in history have so many countries become free and sovereign in so short a period. Of the 115 member states of the United Nations, no fewer than thirty, mostly African, have gained independence since 1960; the majority of the European colonies in Asia acquired it soon after the war. This alone is very significant, for a nation ruled over by another can think of little except breaking its bonds. But this is only a beginning. If the dynamic forces generated by the struggle for freedom are not harnessed for a planned reconstruction of society, so as to enable every one of its members to realize his potentialities fully, the newly-won freedom would mean little more to these states than over a century of sovereignty has meant to most of the Latin American countries.

Secondly, in a shrinking and increasingly interdependent world, the conscience of opulence everywhere is mildly stirred by the danger of poverty anywhere. It is being realized, however slowly, that if the world cannot live half-free and half-slave, it will find little peace if it is half-limousine and half-oxcart. The fact that the more industrialized countries are prepared to help others in their efforts towards economic development and social progress is most encouraging. And whatever the motives—humanitarian, political, or inspired by enlightened self-interest combined with genuine idealism—the economic aid and technical co-operation, whether multilateral or bilateral, provided by them is most helpful. It may be too little or too diffuse, but it is not too late in coming. This effort has made it possible to organize a world-wide transfer and interchange of knowledge and technology.

Thirdly, the advance of science and technology has made it possible for man to achieve much. Barriers of space and time have fallen; isolationism is made impossible and peace indivisible. If harnessed intelligently, science and technology can liberate man from want and pave the way for his full growth in freedom. They can also throw an abundance of light in many dark corners of society, where human intelligence is still on its knees and human dignity a

stranger. The mere thought of what could be achieved if the resources now mobilized for armament (\$120 billion a year) could be used to alleviate the misery of man is enough to revive the sinking faith of anyone engaged in the reconstruction of society.

But the difficulties in the realization of this ideal are many and deep-rooted. The world is one, and yet it is highly diversified, often divided. Some of these divisive forces, such as nationalism and political ideology, are comparatively new; others, rooted in race, religion, and colour, are very old.

Nationalism, basically glorified tribalism, has travelled a long way from the time when the European nations, in their pride—for not even the sun dared set on their dominions—used the term “land of no nation” as a disparaging epithet. Under Hitler, nationalism reached monstrous proportions. It acquired the conscience of a ghost, sucked people’s individuality into an abstraction, and drugged their moral sensibility with doses of self-laudation until they could destroy civilizations with yahoo yells of exultation or mutilate humanity with the cold detachment of a machine. Now that new nations are born with every season, one shudders to think that they might follow the example of European nationalism. Worse, fears and hatreds, together with the ugly memories of the past, lying coiled up in the subconscious minds of the people, may, with the new weapons of power in national hands, lead to hideous results.

Men fall an easy prey to ideology, for ideas solidified into slogans absolve them from the responsibility of thought. The ideas of great men are often reduced to caricatures by their followers. Christ would be confused in the Vatican, Buddha stifled in the Lamasery, and Marx might be denounced as a stunted fundamentalist in Moscow and a vile revisionist in Peking. The market economy, on the other hand, points to an affluent society as a reward for its virtue, and invites the uncommitted world to enjoy plenty in freedom instead of suffering scarcity in slavery. But, apart from the fact that the compulsion of hunger is greater than the lure of freedom, the dilemma of freedom *versus* slavery is overdrawn. To a believer, he who has faith is free, and slavery begins only when faith dies. “Lord,” said St. Augustine, “I am free only when I obey your will.” In most developing countries, where the pressing need is the conquest of hunger and want, the basic problem is how to establish an economic foundation so that the “take-off” becomes possible. In such “neutral” territories, therefore, both capitalism and communism, their edges frayed and their

voices hoarse with stale clichés, tend to lean towards each other, and are often tempted into the loose liaison of a mixed economy.

Prejudices rooted in race, religion, and colour, so easily aroused and so irrational, can be most disruptive in a world which continues to grow smaller and more interdependent. They die a very slow death. In India, for instance, in spite of many enlightened forces—the message of Buddha, the egalitarian call of Mohammedanism, Sikhism, and Christianity, the charismatic personality of Mahatma Gandhi, and the legal provisions of the Indian constitution—“untouchability” still continues in many ways to bend low the erect form of human endeavour. A century after Lincoln liberated the slaves, the most prosperous Christian democracy in the world is compelled to launch a national crusade so that a Negro may eat a sandwich at a segregated lunch-counter without having his jaw broken, or a black student, seeking light, may enter a temple of knowledge under police protection. As for anti-semitism, a non-white non-Christian is completely baffled. In Europe, after four centuries of scientific progress, the question of Jewish responsibility for the decide, committed 1965 years ago, can be discussed in all solemnity by an august assembly of God-fearing men, editorialized in the enlightened press, and disseminated over the various mass-media of communication.

Indeed, in the dark prejudices of race and colour there lurks a grim tragedy for the world, for on this issue the enlightenment of modern man is very superficial. It can easily revert to darkness in the face of emotional clamour.

Nearly two thousand million people live in developing countries, and they are growing by some 40-50 million a year. The annual increase is about 2.5% in the Far East, the Near East, and Africa, and nearly 3% in Latin America. By the end of the century the population is expected to have doubled in Africa, to be two-and-a-half times its present size in the Far East and the Near East, and to have trebled in Latin America. In order to maintain the present low standards of living in these areas, therefore, production must be increased by 200-300% by the end of the century.

This makes obvious the need for birth control. But even family planning is effective only where the population is not too poor and ignorant, and where constant frustration has not broken its will and driven it to fatalism. India, for instance, accepts this remedy and yet, in spite of the Government's family-planning scheme, the population increase in the next 15 years is esti-

mated at 187 million—the entire population of the U.S.A. India's brave fourth Five-Year Plan will begin in 1967 with a handicap of 12 million unemployed, not to mention many more millions under-employed. In Japan, however, because of more educated public opinion, effective methods, and competent administration, population control has been very successful.

In housing, for instance, it is estimated that over 1,000 million people in Africa, Asia, and Latin America—about half the population of these continents—are homeless or live in dwellings which are a health hazard. In matters of public health and sanitation, even if the proposed target for the United Nations Development Decade (1960-70) is achieved, each under-developed country will have, by 1970, a minimum of one physician per 10,000 persons, one nurse per 5,000 persons, one sanatorium for 15,000 persons, and one sanitary engineer per 250,000 persons.¹

The tremendous task facing these countries requires planned economic development, and this cannot be dissociated from social progress. World peace, moreover, is essential for both, although the necessary effort to achieve them must be made by the country concerned. This effort would be forthcoming only if the dynamism generated by the struggle for freedom could be diverted to the less glamorous and more arduous discipline of hard work. International assistance, both economic and technical, could then, if it were strategically used, be of vital help.

Planning, fortunately, has become popular, and not even the most ardent knights of free enterprise now look askance at the professional planners, who no longer bear the grim look of the revolutionary. The United Nations and its specialized agencies are assisting in this field with enthusiasm. Advisory planning missions land in the developing countries with such frequency that the Governments are left with little time to do their own thinking.

Planning, however, is not a mere catalogue of needs arranged in some order of priority, or a group of projects loosely held together with an emotional introduction by the head of the state. In the first place a country must, through its collective will, decide upon the values it wishes to create and preserve. Only then can it establish a firm social and economic policy. The techniques of planning, the methods of implementation, the development of human resources, and the requirements of capital, all very important, can then be examined and applied in a social framework designed to motivate and encourage every member of society—the man in the factory and the man with the hoe. Where traditional privileges continue to prosper and new ones are created to bolster

them, it is vain to hope for an active participation of the people in building the new society.

Although the emergent nations secured their freedom on the wave of egalitarian passion, glaring inequalities continue in their midst. In fact, the process of economic development itself tends to create new inequalities, as is seen in the difference between the industrial and the traditional sectors of their economies.

Many countries have no basic social policy to even up the burden of existence which would release a dynamic surge for creative initiative. When social policy is enunciated, it is not spelled out in meaningful detail, and its implementation is handicapped by the lack of muscle and tendon in the administration.

As a result, the gap between the rich and the poor countries has widened, and in most countries social justice has still a long way to travel. And during times of rapid change, when the old is too effete to give stability and the new too chaotic to give direction, men, baffled by their problems, are tempted to embrace wholesale fanatical creeds which they see as magical panaceas.

In a world of conflicting forces, where increasing numbers of nations are striving for a rapid solution of pressing problems, international cooperation is essential. Peace is impossible without it, and peace is the first prerequisite for economic progress in developing countries.

The vital need for international assistance, both economic and technical, is being increasingly realized, although much more needs to be done before it can make a significant impact. In 1958, for instance, the total international economic assistance provided by countries other than the Socialist Republics to underdeveloped areas was \$3.26 billion (\$2.06 billion in grants and \$1.2 billion in loans); of this amount \$2.85 billion was given through bilateral aid and \$0.41 billion through multilateral aid. The corresponding figures for 1959 are \$3.8 billion, \$3.42 billion, and \$0.37 billion. Although the amount has increased at an average rate of 15% since the middle 1950s, it is still inadequate in terms of the objectives in view and by no means large in terms of sacrifice. The total volume of public aid on a bilateral basis remained less than $\frac{1}{2}\%$ of the combined gross national product of the donor countries.² To this must be added the economic assistance given by the U.S.S.R. and other states with centrally planned economies, which represented an estimated total commitment of over \$2.5 billion for the period from January, 1954, to May, 1960.

Additional assistance, normally in the form of the assessment of human or other resources and in the promotion of their more efficient utilization and development, has been provided under international technical co-operation. The annual expenditure during 1958 or 1959 under this heading amounted to \$514.0 million; of this, \$446.3 million (excluding expenditure by the U.S.S.R. and other socialist states for which figures are not available) was given bilaterally and \$67.7 million multilaterally.

The U.S.A. plays a prominent role in this assistance. In 1960-62, for instance, it contributed 57% of the net official flow of long-term capital from North America, Western Europe, and Japan, and from multilateral agencies to developing countries.³ It spent \$299.5 million on its bilateral technical co-operation programmes in 1963; the estimated expenditure in 1964 is \$258.3 million.⁴ On the other hand, the amount of bilateral economic assistance to developing countries committed by centrally planned economies, including mainland China, was \$1,168 million in 1961 and \$444.0 million in 1962.⁵

Heavy dependence of the international endeavour for peace and co-operation on two big powers is a serious weakness. When these powers are, to a high degree, addicted to ideologies, the polarization towards which is accentuated by the cut-and-thrust of the debate in the General Assembly, which is often designed for the gallery, the situation acquires additional and artificial tension, making fruitful action difficult. This exaggerated and deleterious influence of the two opposed powers can be corrected only if the remaining members of the United Nations have the will and the discipline to concentrate on immediate practical problems and are prepared to make the necessary sacrifices.

Secondly, if the goal of international co-operation is the long-term development, both social and economic, of the emerging nations, it can be provided more effectively multilaterally than bilaterally. It is not easy to keep the bilateral assistance free of political strings. When it is avowedly for the short-term objective of fighting Communism by strengthening the power of native oligarchies not rooted in the support of the people, it is engaged in a losing battle. Hunger, unappeased, cannot be contained by a Monroe doctrine; being itself terrifying, it has no terror of spectres.

Thirdly, international co-operation, with such meagre resources in the face of vast problems, needs to be efficiently co-ordinated. In spite of the facts that assistance is required in various fields of activity and human knowledge is becoming increasingly diversified, international organizations should not be allowed to proliferate to the extent that their representatives have to travel about

like corporation salesmen drumming up business and safeguarding their domains against poachers.

Fourthly, international assistance needs to be adequately co-ordinated at the national level so as to avoid duplication. It should, moreover, constitute an integral part of the national plan, so that suitable organisation and administration are established to continue the activity, with an assurance of the necessary financial allocation, towards a fruitful growth. Most emerging nations are in need of material goods. They would gladly exchange their hunger and misery for Western abundance, even if it were to be accompanied by Western neuroses and psychotherapy. This, however, even if desirable, is not possible without time and well-planned effort. Material advancement is not simply the product of machinery and skilled manpower; it requires a network of essential economic, social, and educational institutions to sustain it. Emergent nations must devise their plans so as to preserve and create the values essential for their cultures. These plans should aim at assuring the basic necessities of life to all and should imbue each citizen with a purpose, for a purpose is required not only for the development of the economy but also for the individual to grow in freedom.

Finally, of the three components of international technical co-operation—experts, fellowships, and equipment—the first is the most important. A good expert must have the necessary knowledge and experience, as well as the skill and understanding to impart these to others. He must have the personality which, in foreign surroundings, can pull various forces together and give them vitality for continued growth. He must know the language to communicate with the people, and he must be available at a particular place and time. All this makes the securing of a good expert extremely difficult, and the world has already acquired a volume of anecdotes in which the humour fails to cover the underlying pathos. Great improvement can result if the Governments and private employers in the donor countries can be persuaded to accept the assignment abroad, under programmes of international co-operation, of their employees as a normal part of their service.

From Moses to Marx, men of vision have attempted to recreate the world a little closer to the heart's desire—a world at peace, a world of justice, where work and worth go hand in hand, where want does not degrade man or fear make him betray his soul. The Charter of the United Nations, the Declaration of Human Rights and, earlier, the Philadelphia Declaration of the Inter-

national Labour Organisation, express similar ideals in phrases, often technical and legalistic, but not without a glow. But they cannot perform the alchemy of souls and turn base metal into gold. This requires the magic of a Garibaldi, a Lenin, or a Gandhi, magic which makes men reach out beyond themselves, lose much, but gain their souls in the self-abandoned joy of devotion to an ideal. The modern world may be too sophisticated to be guided by a pillar of cloud by day or a pillar of fire by night, but it has other advantages. Today, the means—material, technical, and organisational—to recreate a better world are available. But these means and possibilities need to be harnessed to the realization of an ideal as broad as humanity through the leadership of men with a vision, the pulsating warmth of life and the will to sacrifice.

NOTES

1. See *The United Nations Development Decade*, Proposals for Action, Report of the Secretary-General, United Nations, New York, 1962.
2. The contributing countries are Australia, Belgium, Canada, France, Germany (Fed. Rep.), Italy, Japan, The Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Portugal, Sweden, Switzerland, the United Kingdom, and the United States. See United Nations, Economic and Social Council, 30th Session: *International Economic Assistance to the Less Developed Countries*, Document E/3395 (July 4, 1960), p. 25.
3. United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (Geneva, March-June, 1964): *Financing for an Expansion of International Trade*, Document E/CONF. 46/9, table 2, p. 8.
4. FY Congressional Presentation, 1965; Statistics and Reports Division, Agency for International Development, November 18, 1964.
5. United Nations Economic and Social Council, Financing of Economic Development, *International Flow of Long-Term Capital and Official Donations, 1960-62*, E/3917, table 16, p. 41. The figures in this table refer only to the amounts of credits and grants specified in individual announcements and may differ from data relating to total aid extended to or received by different countries.