

designed to assist the States in developing and improving their health and welfare services for mothers and children, especially in rural areas and in areas suffering from severe economic distress. The emphasis in the 1935 act on the extension of services to these areas was a recognition of the uneven development of health and welfare programs in the country and the desirability of Federal aid to help equalize opportunities for the use of necessary facilities.

Demonstration of the value of specialized services in some areas has stimulated in other sections a sense of responsibility for providing better services to their mothers and children. As a result the level of health and welfare programs has risen throughout the Nation. In its work with State departments of public welfare and State departments of health the Children's Bureau has therefore stressed the importance of providing the necessary care to mothers and children no matter what their place of residence may be. It has defined child welfare services as the rendering of social case work service "to any child in need of such service."

The objective of child health in the postwar world, according to the program adopted in 1944 by the Bureau's Advisory Committee on Maternal and Child Health and transmitted to State agencies for their guidance, is "to make available to all mothers and children in the United States of America all essential preventive, diagnostic, and curative medical services of high quality which, used in cooperation with the other services for children, will make this country an ideal place for children to grow into responsible citizens."<sup>4</sup>

To emphasize the importance attached to equality of access to services, the Children's Bureau has repeatedly affirmed its belief that differential treatment of minority groups in different parts of the country has no place in a democracy. In November 1944 the regulations governing the administration of the crippled children's program were amended to make it mandatory that an approved plan

<sup>4</sup> *Recommendations of the Children's Bureau Advisory Committee on Maternal and Child-Health Services, 1935-1944*, p. 17.

"provide that diagnostic services will be made available . . . to crippled children without restrictions as to race, color, creed, economic status, legal residence . . ."

The State health departments in the South have generally been receptive to the principles cited. They recognize by and large that the group most acutely in need of health services is the rural Negro population and have developed their programs to take that fact into account. The principal problem in this respect is rather with the States in the Southwest, where efforts have been directed toward developing a greater concern in the State health departments with the health problems of Indians and Spanish-Americans. One difficulty has been a disposition to consider the health of Indian children as the responsibility of the Office of Indian Affairs, which is not, however, as well equipped as the State health department to furnish the necessary service.

There is a tendency to overlook the needs of another group—the children of migratory workers. Here the problem is not race but the shifting character of the family's residence and the reluctance of State and local health authorities to spend their limited funds on a transient population.

In the field of child welfare services, as distinguished from child health services, the Children's Bureau has found it useful to have on its staff for the past 10 years a special consultant on the welfare problems of Negro chil-

dren. She renders consultation on projects developed around the needs of Negro children, conducts conferences and institutes, assists in interpreting to various groups some of the special problems of Negro children, and helps explore community resources for the better protection of dependent and neglected Negro children and those in danger of becoming delinquent. Frequently the emphasis placed on meeting the needs of Negro children has served to direct greater attention to the needs of all children.

In 1943 the Children's Bureau called a 2-day conference on services for Negro children, attended by white and Negro representatives of national organizations in the fields of health and social work. The conference adopted recommendations for more adequate public services for children of minority groups as a necessary part of the effort to develop essential services for all children in the United States.

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The experience under all the social security programs emphasizes the importance of positive measures directed toward equality of opportunity and equality of access to needed services. The recommendations of the Social Security Administration have looked toward a comprehensive program of social insurance, supplemented by public assistance and welfare services, that would assure to all individuals and families a basic minimum support when earnings cease or are inadequate, and would also assure access to essential welfare services.

## Second Session of UN's Social Commission

By Dorothy Lally\*

THE SOCIAL COMMISSION of the United Nations met for the second time from August 28 to September 13 at Lake Success, New York. As in the first session,<sup>1</sup> 18 countries were represented on the Commission and the representatives of 4 specialized and 4 nongovernmental organizations were present. The Commission elected two new officers for this session—George Davidson, Deputy Minister for Health and

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<sup>1</sup> See the *Bulletin*, February 1947.

Welfare in Canada, who served as rapporteur in the absence of Henry Hauck, the Commission's regular rapporteur; and Y. C. Yang of China, who served as Vice Chairman since the former Vice Chairman had been replaced by a new appointment from his country.

As the session opened, the feeling was strong that the Social Commission must take positive leadership in developing international social policy and must recommend to the Economic and Social Council the measures re-

quired to effect such policy. How to achieve the necessary coordination of international activities in the social field was the focus of major interest during the session and the subject of the first resolution adopted.

Between the first and second sessions of the Commission, the Temporary Social Welfare Committee, established by the Commission to study certain questions in the social welfare field, had been working with the specialized agencies and the United Nations Secretariat. The reports made by the specialized bodies to this Committee and the Secretariat's analysis of the reports gave the members of the Commission the facts relating to the need for coordinated action in the social field.

International programs in the fields of health, education, agriculture, labor, social security, and social welfare are being undertaken by the various specialized agencies and by the Social Activities Division of the United Nations. Since the resources available to finance these international services are limited, planning is especially important if overlapping is to be avoided. Unmet needs in the social field must be identified and a plan for concerted action developed to meet them. After some discussion of operating problems, the Commission developed the principles on which coordination should be based. The relationships between the specialized agencies and the various organs of the United Nations, the Commission declared, must be such as to achieve "a completely cooperative network of organization, fully integrated and coordinated, and capable through joint cooperative effort of carrying out in their entirety the purposes and principles of the Charter."

Effective coordination, the Commission decided, must be based on a full and equal partnership of the specialized agencies and the Commission and must be developed through full consultation and constant cooperation between the two groups. Representatives of the agencies emphasized their willingness to cooperate in working out the guiding principles and procedures to make coordination effective. The Commission recognized and embodied in its resolution the general agreement that coordination must be

based on examination of the actual working programs of the various bodies concerned—both to avoid overlapping and duplication and to uncover areas that were not being actively explored and developed by any specialized agency.

During the discussions the United States member emphasized the Commission's responsibility not only for coordination of existing programs but also for planning their continued development. He pointed out that planning is especially important in those aspects of the social field not covered by specialized agencies and therefore in danger of being overlooked.

Consideration of what machinery should be established to develop recommendations for coordinated action in the social field led the Commission to set up an Advisory Committee on Planning and Coordination. The resolution establishing the Committee, which was proposed by the United States member, assigns a twofold function to the Committee. It is to prepare recommendations on practical methods of coordinating activities in the social field in general. Also, since none of the specialized agencies is mainly concerned with welfare activities, the Committee is to consider and recommend activities in the special field of social welfare that are urgent and essential in a continuing intergovernmental program in this special field. The Committee is expected to work with the specialized agencies and the appropriate division of the United Nations Secretariat and to report to the next session of the Social Commission.

The Commission gave considerable attention to needs in the special field of social welfare. Specialized agencies with their governing boards handle the details of policy developments in health, labor, and education. There is no international specialized agency, however, with complete responsibility in the field of social welfare. Except for the work of the International Children's Emergency Fund, international activities in this field are carried on by the United Nations Secretariat, and the Commission is constantly faced with the problem of advising on these activities.

The Social Commission's Temporary Social Welfare Committee, set up to study the establishment of a sub-commission on child welfare and other questions in the general welfare field, including advisory service and training, had recommended in its report to the Commission against a special sub-commission. Its decision was based largely on the fact that the International Children's Emergency Fund was already at work on the urgent problems of children. The Committee also felt that child welfare problems are so interwoven with problems of family welfare and general social welfare that they should not be handled through a special sub-commission at this time. The new Advisory Commission on Planning and Coordination, the Commission believed, would be able to include child welfare in its plans for general action in the social welfare field.

The Commission did, however, adopt a resolution setting up an interim program for action in the child welfare field, with the understanding that the priorities suggested for such services would be subject to modification in the light of the recommendations received from the Advisory Committee. The Secretary-General of the United Nations had already been authorized to take over the League of Nations' functions in this field, and the Commission advised that the Secretariat use as a starting point in the interim program the League's 1937 survey of all aspects of child welfare, with such revisions as were considered necessary to take into account the war's far-reaching effects on children. The Commission also recommended the continuance of the League publications and reports and advised that studies should be made as a basis for programs in specific child welfare areas. The priorities for study are embodied in the resolution.

Katharine Lenroot, Member of the Executive Board of the International Children's Emergency Fund and a member of its Program Committee, reported that the Fund's program for supplying supplementary food for children of the devastated areas is now getting under way. The Commission recognized that the Fund was moving from the stage of planning to that of action and adopted a reso-

lution expressing its belief that the policies of the Fund were in accord with the principles developed by the Economic and Social Council and by the Social Commission.

The Commission was also interested in the progress made in the program of advisory social welfare functions. This program, formerly carried on by the United Nations Relief and Rehabilitation Administration, is the most important action program being administered directly by the United Nations Secretariat. The progress report showed specific gains for the recipient countries. In all, 124 fellowships had been granted to 12 war-torn or underdeveloped countries to enable experienced officials to study abroad and observe new methods of welfare administration. Sixty-nine of these fellows are already studying in social welfare agencies in Australia, Belgium, Canada, Denmark, France, New Zealand, Sweden, Switzerland, the United Kingdom, and the United States. As another part of the program, social welfare consultants of the United Nations are assisting, at the request of the governments concerned, in the restoration and development of welfare agencies in such devastated countries as Greece, Italy, China, Czechoslovakia, and the Philippines. Seminars in social welfare practice, to which 20 countries sent representatives, have been given in Colombia and Uruguay under the direction of Walter Pettit, formerly dean of the New York School of Social Work.

There was general agreement that the advisory functions were an essential part of a long-term social welfare program and should be continued. Some differences arose, however, over the method of financing the services and the relative roles of the United Nations and the recipient countries in determining the services to be provided. Several members, while recognizing that each country should be consulted as to the nature of its needs, held that the greatest benefit could be derived from fellowships and seminars. The representatives of the Latin-American countries, in particular, were enthusiastic about the two seminars in South America and urged

that administrative machinery be set up to carry out additional programs of that type.

The United States introduced a resolution providing for the continuance of the advisory welfare services for the coming year. The majority of the members of the Commission thought that the services should be continued and financed as proposed, but concluded that detailed discussion of the actual sums of money involved in such financing was essentially the function of the Finance Committee of the General Assembly. The resolution, as finally adopted, therefore recommended only that the advisory services be continued for the fiscal year 1948. The Commission agreed, however, to keep in mind the financial difficulties of the United Nations and to explore constantly the possibility of having the recipient countries participate in financing the services. The resolution also recommended that continuance of the services to the individual countries and the character of the program as a whole should be determined on the basis of reports from the recipient countries and joint appraisal by the United Nations and the recipient countries of the value of the services rendered.

A report of the Social Welfare Conference in the Southeast Asian area, submitted in August, gave a new emphasis to the Commission's discussion of social needs. The fact that some 1,200 million people, slightly more than half the entire world population, live in this area makes the social needs of this part of the world of imperative interest to the United Nations. Following that report and during the discussion of the welfare program, the Soviet member presented a resolution on social problems in dependent territories, which focused the Commission's attention on the special welfare needs of underdeveloped areas and territories. The representative of the USSR proposed that the Commission adopt as its primary task the study of social conditions of colonial populations and of populations of backward and dependent territories and territories under trusteeship, with a view to formulating proposals to improve the social conditions of these

peoples without regard to language, sex, race, or religion.

The representatives of China, Colombia, and Ecuador submitted a second resolution, similar but broader in scope, which was adopted after amendment. This resolution applied not only to dependent territories but to all underdeveloped and economically underprivileged areas and territories. Under its terms the Secretariat will be asked to study the social needs and related problems in these areas, on the request of the Governments concerned. A study of the trust territories will be made only with the concurrence of the Trusteeship Council. The Secretariat's reports will serve as the basis for the recommendations to be made by both the Economic and Social Council and the Trusteeship Council to the General Assembly, to the members of the United Nations, and to the specialized agencies concerned.

The Commission reviewed the preliminary work done by the Secretariat on the question of standards of living. This is an area of study in which the Commission has constantly urged a program of work in cooperation with the specialized agencies, and its resolution on the subject stressed the urgent necessity of speeding up preparation of material for the Commission's next session.

The third session of the Commission should have before it the recommendations of its Advisory Committee on Planning and Coordination on the practical means for achieving a unified approach to international service in the broad social field—health, welfare, education, labor, and social security. It likewise anticipates recommendations for a continued plan of action on specific social welfare activities. If the Commission deals successfully with these two sets of recommendations, the ground work for an intelligent, orderly approach to the development of international social policy will be established. The Commission can then push ahead on the urgent questions of standards of living, housing, prevention of crime, and studies in underdeveloped areas, including the Southeast Asian area.