

INTERNATIONAL CHILDREN'S EMERGENCY FUND

EXECUTIVE BOARD

CONSULTATION CONCERNING THE PROPOSAL OF THE
FRENCH GOVERNMENT TO ESTABLISH AN INTERNATIONAL
CHILDREN'S CENTRE IN PARIS

Summary Record of Consultation (2 Meetings)

Lake Success, New York

Friday, 26 September 1947, at 11 a.m.
and 3 p.m.

<u>Chairman:</u>	Mr. Henri LAUGIER	(Assistant Secretary-General, Department of Social Affairs)
<u>Present:</u>	Mr. S.V. ARNALDO (at afternoon meeting only)	(United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization)
	Dr. W.P. FORREST	(World Health Organization)
	Mr. Martin HILL	(Office of the Secretary- General)
	Mr. Awni KHALIDY	(Representative of the Social Commission)
	Dr. Jean F. MABILEAU	(France)
	Dr. L. RAJCHMAN	(International Children's Emergency Fund)
	Mr. Jef RENS	(International Labour Organization)
	Dr. H.M. SPITZER	(Food and Agriculture Organization)
<u>Secretariat:</u>	Mr. C. LITTERIA	(Division of Social Activities)

FIRST MEETING - 11:00 a.m.

Mr. LAUGIER explained that the meeting had been called by the Secretary-General at the request of the Programme Committee of the International Children's Emergency Fund to consider a proposal made by the French Government to establish an International Children's Centre in Paris.

/The purpose

The purpose of this meeting was to discuss informally with the representatives of the Specialized Agencies the Social Commission and the Children's Fund how this offer might come within the framework of the United Nations. The views and suggestions expressed would be transmitted to the Executive Board of the ICEF and to the French Government.

Dr. RAJCHMAN (ICEF) stated that the French offer had been made by Professor Robert Debré at the last session of the Executive Board of the ICEF. The Executive Board had referred the matter for study and report to the Programme Committee which at its recent meeting in Paris, had requested the Secretary-General to arrange for the present consultation.

Professor Debré's "Notes on the Children's Centre" - the document which had been presented to the Programme Committee - giving details of the French proposal (document E/ICEF/23, page 84) was read.

Dr. RAJCHMAN indicated that the main tasks proposed for the Children's Centre would be international teaching and surveys, both of which were urgently needed today. There was a widespread shortage of medical personnel, which in many countries had diminished by one-half. He stated that the ICEF in assisting Governments would utilize ninety per cent of the resources of the Fund for food in order to provide **one** supplementary meal a day for nursing and expectant mothers, children and adolescents. The remaining ten per cent would go to the help of the Governments for medical work. This would be in the form of plans to eradicate diseases, especially the fight against venereal diseases and tuberculosis.

He pointed out that the Centre in Paris would be international in character. Its activities would not be limited to any one particular territory. International surveys and studies concerning the problems of tuberculosis should proceed in conjunction with the Governments concerned and with the World Health Organization.

Dr. RAJCHMAN pointed out that the French Government was the first to respond after the United States had made a contribution to the ICEF and had agreed to contribute six per cent in francs of the amount contributed by the United States. The French Government proposed that the Children's Centre be financed out of the contribution to the Children's Fund for the duration of the latter.

Dr. MABILEAU (France) expressed regret that Professor Debré was not able to attend the meeting because of other pressing duties. He added that the French Government had accepted, wholeheartedly, the principles of the ICEF, and was very pleased to help the Fund establish its European Regional Office in Paris. He stated that the functions proposed for the Children's Centre were still tentative and that his Government was eager to have the advice of this group.

/Mr. HILL

Mr. HILL (Office of the Secretary-General) thought it was necessary to distinguish clearly between the short and the long term aspects of the French offer.

As regard the short term aspect, the Secretary-General had from the outset been anxious not to place any obstacles in the way of the French Government offering, or the ICEF accepting, facilities of importance to the ICEF in its urgent task. He had felt, on the other hand, that the longer term question, whether and if so how best the Centre could become a permanent part of the international facilities connected with the United Nations, should be considered with the other organs and agencies of the United Nations concerned with child problems.

Dr. FORREST (WHO) had some questions to put concerning the proposed Centre. It was not clear what the defined field of the proposed Centre would be. The proposed Centre did not seem to fit any category of international agency with which he was familiar. He wondered whether it was to be an International Governmental Agency or an International non-Governmental Agency or a National Agency with international facilities. Also he wondered who would have "title" to the organization, what would be the duration of the agency and how it would be financed.

Dr. FORREST pointed out that the Health Section of the League of Nations was concerned with the problems of Child Health before the WHO was organized. Since the WHO was taking over the health functions formerly performed by the League of Nations, the problems of child health are within the scope of the WHO.

The CHAIRMAN stated that the Representative of the ICEF would make a statement in reply after the representatives of the other agencies had presented their views.

Mr. RENS (ILO) stated that the ILO had taken cognizance of the proposal to establish a Children's Centre in Paris and the French Government should be commended for its efforts in the interest of the problems of children. If the proposed Centre were created, its management could count on the co-operation of ILO. The ILO had for years worked on problems relating to children and a number of international conventions had been concluded in the field, particularly as regards child-workers in factories. If the proposed Centre should be created, the ILO could obtain information on child problems and also be in a position to give information concerning these problems to the Centre. However, he would like to hear the replies to the questions raised by Dr. Forrest, such as the form of the Centre and the exact field of its activities.

/Dr. SPITZER

Dr. SPITZER (FAO) stated that his organization was always anxious to co-operate with the International agencies and this particular proposal was one in which the FAO was strongly interested. However, it was difficult to give any specific opinion on the proposal in its present form. FAO could be very helpful in any teaching plan by preparing technical material and lectures on nutrition. The FAO was also interested in Point 3 of the French proposal, "distributing mass information to the public." It would be happy to collaborate in these plans. However, it would be helpful if more details of the plans envisaging the character of the proposed Centre were available.

The CHAIRMAN said that information was still lacking on many questions of substance concerning the proposal. But he emphasized that the structure of the proposed Centre would depend on the suggestions of the specialized agencies made at this meeting. He then called on Dr. Rajchman to answer the questions which had been raised.

Dr. RAJCHMAN (ICEF) stated he could not presume to reply on what the final form of the proposed Centre would be. As Mr. Hill had pointed out, some Representatives at the last session of the Programme Committee considered that the proposed Centre should be limited to health while others felt it should go beyond health into the field of Child Welfare. In reply to the questions raised by Dr. Forrest, the Centre would be the property of the United Nations. It would be a permanent organization and plans would be made to establish close contractual relationships with the FAO, ICEF, ILO, UNESCO, and WHO. The proposed Centre would probably have a governing body including Representatives of the specialized agencies and the United Nations. Regarding financing in the future, in addition to the contributions from the French Government, there probably would be contributions from other Governments and from non-Governmental organizations. The ICEF itself was financed from Government and voluntary contributions. The extent of the finance would be determined by the terms of reference of the proposed Centre. The purpose of this consultation was to obtain suggestions from the specialized agencies and other bodies interested in the problems of children. Several of the specialized agencies were interested in child welfare and were now doing work in this field under the United Nations. Dr. RAJCHMAN pointed out that all organizations in the International field were policy making or administrative bodies and what was needed was an operating agency, an "instrument of work", to be utilized by the specialized agencies and by the organs of the United Nations. He pointed out that the ICEF was alive to the co-operative effort required in assisting children in need. In most countries the care of children was parcelled out. Children up to two years of age were the responsibility of the Ministry of Health, and later became the responsibility of the Ministry or Board of Education. In addition the Social Security and Health Insurance Agencies were also interested in the

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welfare of the children. The Ministry of Supply also had responsibility for the feeding of children. The ICEF had been confronted with these situations. In the agreements between the ICEF and recipient countries, usually the first paragraph indicated how co-ordination of the Agencies in the field of child problems was to be obtained. He was convinced that in the international field, co-ordination was indispensable for the solution of the complex problems of child welfare.

Concerning the question of the financing of the proposed Centre, the amount needed would depend upon the terms of reference. He pointed out when plans for establishing the ICEF were starting ten months ago, there were no funds available but today the ICEF had resources totalling approximately \$26,000,000. In his opinion if the will to find money was there, the money would be found.

Mr. KHALIDY (Social Commission) who had been absent during the earlier stages of the discussion, thought it would be more correct that the whole question of the status of the proposed Centre should be discussed first by the Economic and Social Council. He pointed out that any questions of finance by the United Nations for the proposed Centre would have to be considered by the competent United Nations organization.

The CHAIRMAN explained that the Secretary-General had called this informal and purely informative preliminary consultation in order that the decisions of the Council might be simplified.

Mr. MABILEAU (France) stated in reply to Dr. Forrest that the French Government with reservations on the approval of the French Parliament was prepared to pay fifty-one per cent of the total working expenses of the Centre, provided those total expenses did not exceed 10 million French francs.

The CHAIRMAN stated that the French offer was very generous, but that somehow forty-nine per cent of the budget would still have to be raised.

The meeting rose at 1:00 p.m.

SECOND MEETING

Friday 26 September 1947, at 3:00 p.m.

Summary Record of the Second Meeting

Mr. ARNALDO (UNESCO) stated that he had not had an opportunity to study the document and could not give an opinion at this time. The original representative designated by UNESCO could not come and he was taking his place. However, he would be glad to consult the Deputy-Director of UNESCO who was now at Lake Success, or perhaps communicate with the Paris Headquarters as soon as he had other data on which some constructive comments could be made.

/Dr. FORREST

Dr. FORREST (WHO) thanked Dr. Rajchman for the answers to the questions concerning the Centre which had been raised. He noted from the discussion that it was intended that the Centre would be a permanent organization. He appreciated the generosity of the French Government in offering to contribute fifty-one per cent of the budget of the Centre, but he could not see how an organization financed in this manner could be an international organization in the sense so far defined.

Dr. Forrest pointed out that the WHO, at the present time was collaborating very closely with the ICEF. However, the ICEF was a temporary agency while the proposed Centre was to be a permanent one. The WHO had agreed to be represented on the proposed advisory panel on training which was to be set up by the ICEF, and this would be a temporary commitment. This commitment did not essentially have any relation to the proposed Centre.

The problem of child health was primarily a function of WHO and, in his opinion, there was nothing to prevent the WHO from setting up just such an international Centre or any similar body should it so desire, since it would be in the terms of reference of the Charter of WHO as distinct from a "Foundation."

Dr. Forrest could not see how the facilities, financing and duties, as outlined for the proposed Centre would justify its creation as an international organization.

Mr. KHALIDY (Social Commission) stated that his views were in accord with those of Dr. Forrest. He doubted that the Economic and Social Council would agree to the proposal of the French Government to pay fifty-one per cent of the cost of the proposed Centre. In his opinion, it was impossible to determine at this time what the future needs of children would be; for this reason it was difficult to formulate an opinion concerning the permanency of the Centre.

During its Second Session, the Social Commission was very much concerned about the multiplication of organs which had sprung up in the United Nations. It was his opinion from the discussions held in the Social Commission that the Commission would be very much opposed to the establishment of the Centre.

Mr. ARNALDO (UNESCO) stated he agreed with the statement of Mr. Khalidy concerning the tendency of the Social Commission as he also had attended the meetings of the Social Commission. He regretted being absent at the morning meeting. He felt that the statement, proposing the Centre, should be thoroughly studied and he would like to give to this organization an opportunity to make constructive suggestions on this matter. He also would like clarification of the statement that "close contractual relations" would be arranged with the Specialized Agencies. He was concerned about commitments which such relations might imply. However, he was certain

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that if such a Centre was established, UNESCO would co-operate.

Dr. Forrest (WHO) stated he would not like to be on record implying that such a Centre would not have some usefulness. He wondered if a Centre set up as envisaged, would really be an international organization. He raised the question whether other bodies would be able to get help from the proposed Centre.

The Social Commission had established a Planning and Co-ordinating Committee to consider how co-operation and co-ordination could be achieved in some of the very tasks which the Centre proposes to do. The task of the Committee was to further co-operation and co-ordination between the agencies and organizations concerned with social problems.

Dr. RAJCHMAN (ICEF) stated he wished to dissipate some basic misunderstandings. The proposal to establish the Centre had been discussed twice in the meetings of the ICEF. Some representatives were for the proposal while others opposed it; however, there never was any question as to the international character of the Centre. He emphasized that the Centre would be international from the point of view of personnel, training, services rendered and the manner in which it would be governed. He wished to point out that neither this group nor the ICEF could establish the Centre; only the Economic and Social Council or the General Assembly could create the Centre.

He declared that very few Governments would be willing, as the French Government had proposed, to pay fifty-one per cent of the budget of an international organization. He recalled that some fifteen years ago, the French Government offered to place at the disposal of the Council of the League of Nations an International School of Public Health Studies in Paris and to bear its entire cost. This offer had been accepted, and there was no question of the institution not being "international".

He agreed with the Representative of the Social Commission as to the undesirability of multiplying independent international organs, but pointed out that this was no administrative or policy making body but an "instrument of work," a centre for study, for training and for experimental research.

Dr. SPITZER (FAO) wished to obtain a more complete "dossier" on the subject. He was interested to learn that the proposed Centre was in a sense the re-birth of a plan accepted by the League of Nations some 15 years ago. As far as the budget was concerned, Dr. Spitzer thought that as France would pay fifty-one per cent of 10 million French francs (\$80,000) the rest of the money needed might well be provided through some private Foundation. He felt, however, that not much could be done on a budget of \$80,000 a year, especially at current cost of living prices.

Dr. Spitzer asked if the Representative of France or Dr. Rajchman could give more light on certain questions. Was the staff to be permanent,
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temporary or borrowed; was the Centre to be permanent; what variety of subjects were to be taught; how much of the \$80,000 budget would be spent on scholarships; did the Centre have a planned programme for the next two years; how many persons would attend the courses at the Centre; where would the Centre fit within the general framework of the United Nations. If he could receive more information regarding these points, then he would be able to furnish concrete answers as to the attitude of FAO.

Dr. RAJCHMAN (ICEF) explained that it was intended to obtain assistance for the Centre from international specialists. WHO had set aside 10% of its budget for scholarships, for fellowships in the field of child health. Under the General Assembly Resolution No. 58 also some United Nations funds were available for scholarships in child welfare.

Contributions to the ICEF were made either in cash or in services. Some Governments could invite fellows from another country to study in their countries. It was expected that by the end of the year, five such offers would be made. It had been decided to set up a panel on training to give technical advice to the Fund. Fellowship-holders attending the courses at the Centre would be senior, experienced professional persons.

Dr. Rajchman felt that a constructive plan based on centres already in existence should be considered. He mentioned that there existed in Europe today in almost all countries National Institutions of Health that have sections dealing with the problems concerning children. He suggested that the staff for the Centre could be recruited from the staffs of these national centres, and that a joint international study mentioned in the ICEF might be undertaken.

Dr. Rajchman praised the work of the U.S. Children's Bureau and suggested that the Bureau could be an important participant in the Centre.

As the budget of 10 million French francs was rather limited when considering present day cost of living, other sources of revenue could be found, for instance, grants-in-aid might be available from the resources of Social Insurance Funds.

He thought that if and when the Centre came to be a reality it should not be limited to health only but should be extended to include child welfare in general. In other words, the activities of the Centre would extend beyond the fields covered by WHO.

The CHAIRMAN thanked the representatives for the information and suggestions they had given concerning this very pertinent question. He stated that this group did not have to submit any specific resolution, but had been called to collect views of the Specialized Agencies and the Social Commission concerning the proposal of the French Government to establish an

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International Children's Centre in Paris. The Secretariat would prepare a summary of the different points of view expressed in the course of the meeting. This summary would be communicated to the French Government and to the Executive Board of the ICEF.

During the discussion, several points of agreement had emerged and he would summarize them as follows:

1. It was agreed that the warmest thanks were due to the French Government for its generous offer to establish a Children's Centre in Paris. The members attending the meeting expressed great interest in the project which would, of course, have to be worked out in further detail and be submitted by the French Government to the Economic and Social Council for approval.
2. The Centre, it was agreed, would be an international organ working in close correlation with national institutions. It would not be merely a national body giving facilities to other national bodies.
3. It was not intended to create an autonomous body but an "instrument of work" to be available for the several agencies and organs of the United Nations.
4. While awaiting the decision of the Economic and Social Council, no time should be wasted and, in view of the urgent nature of its technical projects, the International Children's Emergency Fund should now undertake all necessary consultations and make temporary arrangements with the French Government for the utilization of the facilities thus offered by them.

Dr. MABILEAU (France) agreed with the summary suggested by Mr. Laugier. He wished to recall to the group that children in many parts of the world were dying because modern techniques, well known and proven successful, could not be applied. Because of the urgency of this problem, we are morally obligated to establish such a Centre, as quickly as possible, to overcome this serious situation.

Mr. ARNALDO (UNESCO) stated that the position of the Centre was clearer to him now. He wished to know where he could address comments to expedite correspondence.

Dr. FORREST (WHO) said he was now in a better position to inform his organization regarding the purposes of the Centre, and if any further comments from the Secretariat of WHO Interim Commission should arise therefrom, he would communicate them in a few days.

The CHAIRMAN, having ascertained that the representatives at the meeting were in general agreement with the above summary, declared the meeting closed at 4:45 p.m.
