

NOTES FOR AN ADDRESS BY J.A. DOUGAN, GENERAL DIRECTOR,  
CANADIAN HOST SECRETARIAT FOR HABITAT, THE UNITED  
NATIONS CONFERENCE ON HUMAN SETTLEMENTS, VANCOUVER 1976  
TO REPRESENTATIVES OF THE COMMUNICATIONS MEDIA, VANCOUVER  
SEPTEMBER 18, 1975

INTRODUCTION

1. Pleasure to welcome members of the communications media.
2. Honour for myself and colleagues of Host Secretariat to be in company of such prominent representatives of Vancouver's 5th estate.
3. Dinner with you important — particularly in view of past misapprehensions and misconceptions, which may have arisen out of the virtual cancellation of the Ministry of State for Urban Affairs, Urban Demonstration Projects, and the decision of the Canadian Government to seek postponement of the Fifth United Nations Congress on Crime and Punishment.

REASSURANCE

4. I would like to look at this dinner as a new beginning. In a word, the Habitat Conference is on.
5. The Federal Government, both through a recent exchange of telegrams between the Secretary of State for External Affairs, Mr. MacEachen, and the Secretary General of Habitat, Mr. Penalosa, and in a statement by the leader of the Canadian delegation on 25th August to 56-nation U.N. Preparatory Committee Meeting for Habitat in New York, gave unequivocal assurances that it would host Habitat under the rules that normally apply to United Nations Conferences.

WHY HABITAT ANYWAY

6. At Stockholm, the Environment Conference, it was recognized that problems of human settlements were sufficiently grave and complex to demand separate consideration. In nearly every major city today problems of overcrowding, unemployment, pollution, congestion, alienation — is increasing to dangerous levels.
7. Grave as these problems already are, in the next 25 years, they are going to get worse. In Canada, for example, if current population trends continue, we will have to build eight new cities the size of Vancouver.
8. Recognizing necessity to confront these problems — Canada offered to host a conference on human settlements.
9. It is expected to be the largest and perhaps the most important U.N. conference of this type held to date and could be one of the most significant world gatherings of the next decade.

WHAT IS IN IT FOR CANADA AND MORE PARTICULARLY VANCOUVER

10. Vancouver will be seen by representatives of up to 140 countries — they will look at this city as a prime example of Canada's approach to human settlements. They will also have the opportunity to examine other human settlement issues in other Canadian cities through study tours. But concentration will be on Vancouver.
11. Citizens of Vancouver and Canadians across the country will be exposed, via coverage of audio-visual presentations, to some of the approaches to and issues of human settlements of the participating countries. This should contribute in a major way to making Canadians aware of domestic and international settlement problems.

REVOLUTIONARY CONFERENCE

12. Through advanced audio-visual techniques, Habitat will be revolutionary in approach. It will be dramatic — it will provide a compelling focussing of issues and the need to improve settlement conditions.
13. There are already 204 audio-visual projects, full length versions of which will be seen by delegates in a specially built project presentation centre in the Hyatt Regency, and by the public at one or more downtown theatres, probably on scheduled basis as "festival of human settlements studies". Plenary Hall and committee rooms will be equipped to show capsule versions of films at a moments notice. Additionally, all this material will be available through closed circuit cable to other centres as well as to broadcast media who will be invited to use all or part of it in their own programming for local, national and international release.

DIFFERENCE BETWEEN HABITAT FORUM AND THE OFFICIAL CONFERENCE

14. Before proceeding further, I would like to say a few words about the Habitat Forum which is the parallel non-governmental conference. I think this might be useful in making clear the various fields and lines of responsibility involved.
15. While official conference is necessarily restricted to officially accredited delegates and observers, NGO's will participate by attending a separate conference called Habitat Forum which will commence May 27, a few days before the official conference. The Forum is expected to attract equal or even greater numbers of participants from organizations such as universities, professional associations, and citizens groups.

16. For people from Vancouver, British Columbia and indeed Canadians generally, the Forum is a key and important part of Habitat, permitting them to participate actively.
17. To this end, ACSOH (The Association in Canada Serving Organizations for Human Settlements) was incorporated by Federal Statute and is led by distinguished Vancouver citizens who are generously giving of their time to organize the facilities and services necessary to host the Forum's activities and accommodate the participants. The Forum will be centered at Jericho Beach but will also have facilities at U.B.C. and Harbourside Holiday Inn. The Federal Government has contributed financially and administratively to ACSOH toward its hosting functions.
18. Forum will function separately and is expected to have its own audio-visual presentations and exhibits. Responsibility for arranging and co-ordinating program rests with an international NGO committee, the chairman of which is Mr. Van Putten, residing in The Hague.
19. As far as possible, we expect that the official and non-official conferences will be complementary and to a certain extent, interactive. They will be linked by closed circuit TV and special transportation facilities. The Habitat Forum is expected to make a significant input into the official conference through NGO observers accredited to the U.N.
20. A representative from ACSOH is with us tonight and will be happy to answer any questions regarding its activities and the Forum on the conclusion of this talk.

PROGRESS REPORT

21. The 56-nation U.N. Preparatory Committee during its last meeting in August, reached agreement on the agenda for the Conference. You will get an idea of the Conference's scope from following substantive items: In addition to the general debate the conference will discuss recommendations for national states in the following areas:

- a. settlement policies and strategies
- b. settlement planning
- c. shelter, infrastructure and services
- d. land use
- e. public participation
- f. institutions and management

Habitat also intends to develop a program for international cooperation.

Enormous strides have been taken toward completion of audio-visual presentations, most to be completed by year's end and which will provide exciting input into debate of these agenda items.

From a promotion and publicity angle Vancouver producers will be asked to produce a film on Vancouver as the Habitat site which will be used by Canadian missions abroad and participating countries to promote the Conference. Further, a special brochure, covering all important aspects of Habitat will at the end of the year be available for general distribution. Around Vancouver and following an art contest, 300 billboards will sprout designs illustrating Habitat. These will be sponsored by various organizations, public and private

22. For Press - (some 1500 are anticipated) Core of operation will be in Begg Building. Will accommodate media registration, informal briefings,

computerized messages and reservations service, communications (telephone, telex, closed circuit TV) news agency offices, a major documentation centre, main news room including lounges and food/drink facilities.

23. For electronic media — Radio, T.V. and film facilities will be available convenient to conference activities. We have arranged with the CBC to act as Host Broadcaster. It will provide all the necessary facilities, including a major studio fully equipped for inserts, link-up, etc. An ancillary documentation centre will also be available together with mailing, shipping, transmitting and other services. Accredited broadcasters will be able to obtain studios, facilities, equipment and technical services through the broadcast booking office. In particular, every effort will be made to serve broadcasters who wish to make use of the audio-visual material. The complete library will be available.
24. Finally, a conference library and information resource centre will compile all printed and audio-visual material prepared for or related to the Conference. This will be available for reference during the Conference and will later become part of a permanent human settlements library.
25. Entertainment — In recognition of the scope and importance of the Conference, the City of Vancouver in conjunction with the Federal and provincial governments is organizing a major arts festival featuring international performers of stage and cabaret as well as strolling musicians and outdoor bands. Also for the duration of the Conference, the City's museums and art galleries will present exhibits related to Habitat themes.

ORGANIZATION AND RESPONSIBILITIES

26. It might be useful to say a brief word about our own internal organization and division of responsibilities.
27. The Canadian Government has established two special secretariats to implement its decisions: one within the Department of External Affairs, responsible for hosting and related arrangements, called the Canadian Host Secretariat for Habitat; and the other, within the Ministry of State for Urban Affairs, called the Canadian participation Secretariat. This Secretariat is represented on the West Coast by Dr. V. Wieler, who is with us tonight. It is responsible for Canada's participation in Habitat as one of member countries of the U.N. The position to be adopted by Canada on numerous issues that will be raised at the Conference is being evolved through large scale public consultations about which Dr. Wieler will say a few words later.
28. As for the Host Secretariat, which I head, as its name indicates, its specific areas of responsibility centre around the complex arrangements needed to ensure that all the necessary facilities and services are established and co-ordinated in a way which will meet U.N. requirements and be a credit to Vancouver and to Canada. This involves, as you will appreciate, a considerable public relations component.
29. In formulating the base from which we should proceed, the Canadian Government was anxious that we have adequate mechanisms of consultation with representatives of the various provincial and municipal departments and services that will have a role to play in assuring that Habitat is a proper showcase of the productivity and creativity

of all those involved. To this end, a host committee has been formed with representatives from the Canadian Government and the Governments of British Columbia and the City of Vancouver, and its members have met frequently since its inception, the last meeting being yesterday afternoon.

30. As planning progressed and the work load increased, eight sub-committees were formed, each responsible for specific aspects of the tasks at hand. Both the province and the city are fully represented in these and indeed in some cases have kindly agreed to provide chairmen.

31. With less than nine months to go to the opening of the official Conference on 31 May, the Host Secretariat and the Host Committee is rapidly accelerating the tempo of its activities. Our Vancouver office is being expanded and key personnel in the creative, infrastructure and communications fields are being posted here in early October to supplement those already on the spot. I would like to introduce some of the new arrivals to you.

32. First, to supervise all facets of our office in Vancouver, my Deputy General Director of Operations, Carl Pedersen, a Foreign Service Officer, who has just returned from London where he was studying international monetary and trade affairs at the London School of Economics. He will also ensure liaison with the provincial and city governments and with ACSOH. Of equal importance, I have asked him to assume major responsibilities in the Public Relations field.

33. Also coming to Vancouver are:

Mr. Frank Mayrs, Creative Director, and Mr. Claude Servant, Director of Infrastructure, with their assistants. Most of you already know Mr. Reg Rose and Mr. Mike Levy, who have been with our office here for some time. In Ottawa my Deputy General Director is Mr. George Yeates who is with us tonight and whom I would like to introduce. We also, of course, have the pleasure of having with us representatives



of the Province and the City.

Although the nuclei of our establishment, involving personnel with particular skills and experience will be provided from Ottawa, the great bulk of the Host Secretariat which is expected to reach over 300 people, will be recruited locally. Already two senior officers and a number of administration staff have been taken on strength from Vancouver.

#### CONCLUSION

34. From a highly visible profile, we expect that Habitat will produce a Vancouver charter that will be an historic document committing all nations to a bettering of human settlements. Watching Habitat by satellite, the world can identify Vancouver with its spectacular beauty as the city where a charter on human settlements was forged and proclaimed.
35. If however a vital debate is to take place, if Canadians are to participate meaningfully and intelligently, if the Vancouver charter is to lead to a dissemination of new ideas and solutions to the problems of human settlements, the level of public consciousness must be raised considerably and as a consequence, governments encouraged, and indeed compelled to confront important issues. As we well know, the role of the communications media is

crucial in this process. This was shown at the Stockholm Conference. Prior to 1972, only a few countries had full fledged environment ministries but as a result of the global "prise de conscience" fostered by the Stockholm Conference, most countries around the world now have made impressive commitments to solving the various problems of global interdependence and the United Nations Environment Program can be credited for several achievements in global monitoring. The challenge is clear — it is local, it is national, it is global and it is urgent.

36. In opening this dinner to questions, I would like to thank you for joining us tonight. We would like to open our doors to the fullest cooperation with you in order to help realize the needs and aspirations contained in that one word, "HABITAT".
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