

Remembering
Jim Grant:
Champion for Children



JAMES P. GRANT PLAZA



JAMES P. GRANT
UNICEF EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR
FROM 1980 TO 1995

A CHARISMATIC AND COMPELLING FORCE WHO MADE
IMPOSSIBLE HOPES AND DREAMS COME TRUE.

Remembering Jim Grant: Champion for Children

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James Grant | © UNICEF/UNI51221/Rubino1991



UNICEF Executive Director James Grant, together with children representing several countries around the world, addresses the Outdoor Forum, held on the North Lawn at United Nations Headquarters on September 26 in celebration of the World Summit for Children. | © UNICEF/UNI51127/Barbour1990

Introduction

By Roberto Savio*

Twenty-one years ago, Jim Grant died.

On his death, there was universal expression of sorrow. The then US President Bill Clinton even signed the Convention on the Rights of the Child (which the US Congress never ratified) to pay homage to his memory. No head of an international organisation had ever visited so many heads of state, personalities, academics and other major social and political actors, as Jim did during his time at the head of UNICEF. His amazing activities are well illustrated in the excellent book written by Adam Fifield, *A Mighty Purpose*.

Yet, while travelling round the world for different conferences, I am surprised to see how little reaction Jim's name elicits today. At the World Social Forum, which usually gathers no less than 70,000 activists from different fields of civil society, very few have heard of him. This is the destiny of the unusual men and women who, in the 1970s and 1980s, shaped the agenda on global issues, which until then had been absent from political and international agendas but have now become part of our general awareness.

Another good example is Maurice Strong, the Canadian who was instrumental in calling the Stockholm Conference on the Environment in 1972 that led to the creation of the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP). Maurice was its first director, and then again played a crucial role as Secretary-General of the UN Conference on Environment and Development (the "Earth Summit") in Brazil in 1992, which opened up the path that culminated in the UN Climate Conference in Paris in December last year. Maurice died just a week before the Paris conference and was not even mentioned there.

In a sense, the best measure of success is that such issues no longer need a champion ... or do they? After all, the right of the child is no longer just a legal treaty but is considered part of our general view of a better world. During his tenure at UNICEF, Jim saved 25 million children from death, yet

today we still have 16,000 children under the age of 5 who die every day! So Jim has certainly left a void that nobody has filled so far. It is clearly not in the spirit of the times to take on difficult battles or daunting risks. What Jim achieved is a telling lesson for today's world and its political establishment. Here was somebody who took action based on ideals and carried that action forward with ferocious tenacity, making possible what was until then considered impossible, such as getting warring factions to agree to a cease-fire so that children could be vaccinated.

Today, the first call we hear is to be realistic, pragmatic, and Gallup polls have become the limits to imagination. The difference between utopia and chimera has shrunk. Since Jim's time, we have slipped into a world of greed, and we are on the threshold of a world of fear and, according to a general view among historians, greed and fear are what change trends in history.

However, Gallup polls also tell us that young people are disenchanted with the system (in fact, US elections show us that the older generations are also disenchanted), and one of the problems is that they lack idols and human points of reference. A generation without idols is a generation which lacks embodiments of ideals. In an age in which images, tweets and computer pages have become the windows through which the world is observed, symbols have become even more powerful than ever. And it will not be the billionaires, successful stockbrokers and lavishly-paid CEOs who can become idols. Nor will it be politicians intent on administering the possible, while avoiding any risk with the impossible.

When I speak to young people of Jim Grant, they usually remain in silence ... for a while. It is so unexpected for them to come across someone who did so much in his life for humankind, that they struggle to process this fact through their view of the present world, and they have to think it over. They often ask me: "Why are there no longer people like this?" The problem, I tell them, is not that there are no more Jim Grants, there are not many left of his companions in travel who laboriously worked with him to make the children's agenda a central one. The success was a collective success. And then, asking them what they are doing to change the present world if they do not like it, I say to them: "My generation screwed it up, leaving it no better than the one I found. But this is your world. This is your time!" I believe that, besides greed and fear, fighting for a better world can also change societies and history.

The United Nations is a shade of what it was at Jim's time. To different extents, the great powers have been reappropriating the power that they originally devolved to the United Nations. Would it be possible today to have the United States agree to contribute 25 percent of its budget? Would it be possible today to pass the Universal Declaration on Human Rights as it is? Globalisation has two engines – trade and finance – and they are out of the UN system. Meanwhile, new fora have been invented to shape agendas out of the multilateral system, from the G20 to the World Economic Forum in Davos ... and the same mechanisms are at work in Europe against European institutions.

This is why I took the initiative to publish a short collection of testimonies on Jim Grant from those who worked with him and met him. This is a personal initiative, which I have taken not only as a

friend of Jim but because of its symbolic value in today's times. Nine long testimonies were published recently by Other News, but then we collected around 40 short testimonies. There was no editorial policy and those who wrote did so because they chose to do so. The job of putting these contributions together was done by a few "victims", whose names you can see in the editorial team, and many worked pro bono. I want to thank all of them, not only as the publisher of this short book, but because all the work of those who wrote and those who edited brings Jim to life for those who never met him and can now see him through the eyes of his travelling companions.

I am convinced that this collection of testimonies will be a suggestive contribution to focusing anew on ideals and commitments, on the fact that it is possible to change the world if there are those who believe in it and work towards it. The growth of civil society, towards which this short book is dedicated, is possibly the element of globalisation which carries the seeds of a transformation to the better world, to the world which Jim wanted to make reality.

Rome, March 2016

**Roberto Savio is an Italian-Argentine journalist. Co-founder and former Director General of Inter Press Service (IPS). In recent years he also founded Other News, a service that provides "information that markets eliminate".*

A Mighty Purpose: How UNICEF's James P. Grant Sold the World on Saving Its Children, by Adam Fifield⁽¹⁾

Reviewed by Peter Adamson*

When UNICEF Executive Director Jim Grant died at the end of January, 1995, The New York Times mourned the passing of "one of the great Americans of this century." Amid a flurry of other tributes, Nelson Mandela wrote to say that "his death is a great loss to each and every needy child in this world" and Chinese Premier Li Peng added that Jim's death "was an irretrievable loss to the children of the world."

And then – nothing. The world moved on and Grant's achievements sank back into the common clay of progress. And this despite the fact that this was a man whose extraordinary efforts had saved the lives of tens of millions of children around the world. Only now, with the publication of Adam Fifield's biography *A Mighty Purpose* is the Jim Grant story beginning to take its place in the history of humanitarian achievement.

A message from Gates

Five years after Grant's death, a few of his close colleagues responded to an invitation from Richard Jolly, the British development economist who had for many years served as Grant's deputy at UNICEF, to contribute essays to a commemorative book. The result – *Jim Grant – UNICEF visionary* – sold modestly for a few years, helping to keep alive the memory of the man and his achievements.

Ten years later, while researching the history of vaccination efforts, Bill Gates came across a copy

of the book, by that time long out-of-print. There he read for the first time the story of the man who had led a fifteen-year campaign to lift child immunization rates from around 15% to over 70% world-wide. That year, in his annual letter to colleagues and followers around the world, Bill Gates wrote:

"I'm surprised by how little attention his story gets and how long it took me to find out about it ... Jim Grant's achievement is the greatest miracle of saving children's lives ever"

Suddenly, people around the world were asking 'Who was Jim Grant?

One of those who knew the answer was New York based writer Adam Fifiel.

While working at the US National Committee for UNICEF, Fifiel too had happened across an old copy of "Jim Grant – UNICEF visionary". And he had exactly the same reaction as Gates – "How was it, I wondered, that I was just now learning about someone who had so profoundly altered the course of recent history, who had shattered the idea of what is possible and impossible in the fight against poverty?"

Perhaps because Fifiel had young children of his own, he saw what Jim Grant's work must have meant to so many parents around the world. And his commitment to make the Jim Grant story known was born.

Tumultuous years

Now began 'three' years of interviewing and corresponding with over 80 of Jim Grant's former colleagues, and some of his critics, as Fifiel began piecing together the story. The result is *A Mighty Purpose – How Jim Grant Sold the World on Saving its Children*. Neither a comprehensive biography nor a formal history of Grant's tenure at the UN Children's Fund, *A Mighty Purpose* is a selective accounts of the ambitions, judgements, gambles, crises, people and relationships that made the Jim Grant years so tumultuous for UNICEF and so significant for the children of the world.

For those who to this day have never heard of Jim Grant, the bare bones of the story can be quickly sketched.

In 1980, when Grant was appointed to head UNICEF, approximately 14 million children under the age of five were dying every year in the developing world. The majority of those deaths were caused by just five or six common diseases. often in conjunction with poor nutrition. For each of those diseases, proven means of prevention or cure were available and affordable. They simply had not been put into practice on the necessary scale. Vaccine-preventable disease, for example, was killing 4 or 5 million children a year; yet only 15% of children were being immunised. Diarrhoeal disease was killing another 3 million a year when cheap oral rehydration therapy could prevent most of those deaths at almost negligible cost.

These were the basic facts that Grant never allowed to stray from the centre of his sights. And his aim was simple in concept; it was to put the available low-cost solutions into practice on the same scale as the problems. Gone were the days of projects and programmes that reached out to a few hundred children here and a few thousand there. The grand plan that Grant put before a shocked UNICEF, was that the organisation should lead a 'child survival revolution' that would reach out to all the children of the poor world and reduce child deaths by at least 50% in ten years.

Refusing to bow

A Mighty Purpose tells the story of what turned out to be fifteen years of sustained focus on this breathtakingly ambitious goal.

Woven around this central strand of the child survival revolution are the stories of many other emergencies and crises to which Jim Grant's UNICEF had to respond during those same years: the tragedy of Cambodia's killing fields; the great Ethiopian famine in 1984; Operation Lifeline Sudan in 1988. In the hands of a less storyteller, such dramatic events would have distracted from the main narrative of the struggle to bring about the child survival revolution. But what makes the book all of a piece is Fifield's focus on how Jim Grant brought the same qualities to bear on the disparate goals and challenges that UNICEF faced – the undimmed determination, the outrageous opportunism, the refusal to bow to the 'impossible,' the constant search for ways to 'end run' seemingly insuperable problems.

Gradually, as the story unfolds through successes and setbacks, the scale of achievement begins to emerge.

By the time Grant's fifteen years at UNICEF came to an end, immunization rates world-wide had risen from below 20% to more than 70%, saving more than three million children a year. Over the same time, the number of children being crippled by poliomyelitis fell from 400,000 a year to under 100,000 a year.

Almost unheard of in 1980, oral rehydration therapy was by 1995 being used in some form by between a half and two thirds of all the families in the developing world – saving at least a million young lives annually. Iodine deficiency, the world's major cause of mental retardation, was close to defeat after 82 of 90 developing countries with iodine deficiency problems had been persuaded to pass new laws requiring the iodization of all salt. Seventeen developing countries, including some of the largest, had all but eliminated Vitamin A deficiency and the deaths, disease and blindness it had visited on so many millions of their children.

Admiration

For the most part, Fifield maintains the proper stance of the objective biographer and is at pains to include some of the criticisms that inevitably accompanied an attempt to galvanise governments and the UN bureaucracy itself into action on such an unprecedented scale. But the book is all the

better for the fact that Fifield's admiration for the man and his achievements shines through ever more clearly as the book reaches its conclusion:

"Over the course of 15 years, he had defied every doubter in the most extraordinary way. He had tapped the potential of the UN as no one else ever had. He had unlocked a whole new realm of possibility in health and international development. He had shown that poor children did not have to die in mass numbers. He had mobilised the entire world to take better care of its young citizens."

Nor, thankfully, does Fifield attempt to screen out the emotion as he describes the day the Jim Grant story came to an end on that January day in 1995 in the small hospital at Mount Kisco, Westchester County:

"On that day, in jungle hamlets in mountain villages, in cacophonous slums and sprawling refugee camps, on worn concrete floors and under roofs thatched of rice straw and banana leaves, in clay brick homes, on rutted, red dirt roads, and on scorching swaths of sand, children cried and screamed and sang and giggled and toddled and ran and fell and got back up and climbed on their mothers' laps and pulled their siblings' hair and gazed out in the wonder of the big, bright world that swirled around them. Millions of boys and girls whose lives were reclaimed, who stories were allowed to continue, who were not mourned or grieved or buried, but instead were loved and held and fretted over and scolded and prepared for the challenges of living, of surviving, all because of a man they had never met and whose name they would likely never know.

In short, *A Mighty Purpose* is the biography and the epitaph that Jim Grant's life deserves. A wonderful story, wonderfully told.

⁽¹⁾Adam Fifield is the author of the newly released book *"A Mighty Purpose: How Jim Grant Sold the World on Saving Its Children"*, Other Press, New York, 426 pp., October 2015

**Peter Adamson, founder of the monthly New Internationalist magazine, was Senior Adviser to UNICEF Executive Director James P. Grant and was responsible for UNICEF's annual State of the World's Children report from 1981 to 1996 and The Progress of Nations (1990 to 1996). He also created the publication Facts for Life – 'the health information that every family has a right to know' co-published by seven United Nations agencies. From 2000 to 2012 he was editor of the UNICEF Report Card series on problems facing children in OECD countries.*



In a brief ceremony on 31 January at United Nations Headquarters in New York, President Boris Yeltsin of Russia signed the 1990 World Summit for Children Declaration and Plan of Action. The signing was witnessed by (from left to right foreground including President Yeltsin), United Nations Secretary-General Boutros Boutros-Ghali, UNICEF Executive Director James P. Grant and (holding the Declaration) UNICEF Deputy Executive Director for External Relations Marco Vianello-Chiodo. President Yeltsin joins more than 130 Heads of State or Government who have signed the Summit Declaration, committing their countries to specific goals and time-tables to promote the survival, protection and development of all children. NYHQ | J© UNICEF/UNI24030/Mera



Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia of Bangladesh delivers a statement at the Roundtable, accompanied by UNICEF Executive Director James Grant and Chairperson of the UNICEF Executive Board for 1994 Anna Semamba Makinda. | © UNICEF/UNI49491/Toutounji1993

Jim Grant's Unfinished Agenda for Children: Remembering Jim Grant 20 years on

By Jon Rohde*

For the 15 years that James Grant headed Unicef children became the focus of the UN. The success of his Child Survival Revolution in mobilising health services in virtually every nation provides important lessons today as we look to the future.

Soon after he took over the leadership of Unicef in 1980, Grant realised that the call of Alma Ata of "health for all by 2000" posed an impossibly large agenda in too short a time. Jim sought a limited set of interventions with quantified predictable outcome that could reach all children – "universal" was the key concept – never before had the world done something for everyone.

What was important for him was the idea of reaching every child – once accomplished, it would break the self-defeating belief that "it simply couldn't be done". It was his "Trojan Horse" – the proof of principle that Toynbee's trenchant observation : "our age is the first generation since the dawn of history in which mankind dared to believe it practical to make the benefits of civilization available to the whole human race." could actually be realised. This vision became Jim's mantra. It is hard to underplay the importance, and uniqueness, of this vision – that made Jim's dream a possible one.

At a strategy retreat in 1982 we identified malnutrition, diarrhea and immunisable diseases as killers for which affordable and effective interventions that could prevent the death of millions of children were available but not widely used. GOBI (Growth promotion, Oral rehydration, Breast feeding and Immunisation) was born and with it the idea of the Child Survival Revolution (CSR) by

analogy with the Green Revolution.

I soon learned that Grant, like most of us, learned best from first hand experience. And so we travelled to remote parts of the poorest countries to see these miracles in action. From Haiti, to Bangladesh, from Nigeria to Bolivia Jim saw the potential of knowledge placed in the hands of poor villagers and he dreamed of making it universal. He would attend immunisation outreach far beyond the reach of postal services. He saw illiterate mothers accurately mix home ORT and explain to him the value of hydration in a sick child. He marvelled at entire Indonesian villages that weighed all the babies each month and, without even the presence of a formal health worker, initiated effective local means of restoring growth in kids whose weight was faltering.

He readily appreciated the impossibility of safely bottle feeding an infant in most poor settings and the tremendous value of mother milk, virtually for free.

Grant envisioned GOBI expanding to other interventions once success was achieved in these few key high impact programs, eventually reaching comprehensive primary health care through incrementally expanding the range of high coverage interventions. By the late 1980s, the push for universal immunisation became the major thrust of the CSR, Jim needing something to reach everyone, and needing to prove it. As Jim had promised, success in immunisation became the justification for a wider agenda for children embodied in the World Summit for Children (WSC) in Sept 1990.

The WSC was the first ever gathering of world leaders for a common cause, attracting over 70 heads of state to speak for children. No event had ever come close to this level of participation, never before so many political boundaries crossed. WSC produced a precisely defined list of goals; almost all of them objective, clear, measurable, affordable, and "doable". All other summits since have produced documents running in the hundred's of pages. This one was encapsulated in 26 one-line goals and a few pages of introduction. The targets were time bound, to reach by 2000, designed to fall within the political lifetime of the heads of state who were signing the declaration. Jim challenged Unicef to monitor and report to the general Assembly on progress.

For most regions, the "state of children" became a standing agenda item on their Summit, and for many, a source of pride.

Grant often attended these Summits, in Latin America, Africa, SAARC, ASEAN, complimenting success and urging greater efforts. This was enhanced by Unicef's annual State of the World's Children Report and later, by the nation-by-nation ranking in the annual Progress of Nations. Jim was not averse to embarrassing states, though he preferred to highlight positive examples and cajole others to come up to that level of success.

"Keeping the promises to children" was a theme kept alive and nurtured through persistent leadership. Grant turned children into a politically viable issue, a universal concern of every household that could capture votes and win elections. He refused to deviate from the focus on a few priorities,

realising that was the only way to achieve universality. He withstood the criticism about being tunnel visioned, and spoke of "staying the course" in the face of competing priorities.

No one has ever held one-to-one discussions with anything like as many of the world's Presidents and Prime Ministers as Jim Grant did in those years. He would remind every President and Prime Minister he met what the country's immunization rate was, and how many of the country's children were being killed and disabled by diarrheal dehydration or vaccine-preventable disease. Pulling out his packet of ORS he knew just how little it would cost to prevent these unnecessary deaths – citing the miniscule percent of the local defense budget to save those young lives. "For heads of state", he said, "you have to propose a simple, doable proposition." "Sure, you appeal to their idealism, but you also tell them how they can drastically reduce child deaths at a cost they can afford and on a time scale that can bring them tangible political dividends." Jim said, "You just don't say "no" to kids!"

The results within a just few years were impressive: deaths due to measles reduced by 85%; the reported cases of polio reduced by 83%, with this crippling disease eliminated in at least 110 countries – today present in sporadic cases in only 2 countries of the entire world. But, as he had predicted, it went beyond just immunisation: a million child deaths averted every year by popularising oral rehydration therapy ORT for the largest killer of children, diarrhea; millions prevented from becoming blind by lack of vitamin A; and tens of millions preventing irreversible mental retardation by iodine deficiency; guinea worm disease affecting over a million people in Africa reduced by 95% to a handful of cases today – eradication of this age old scourge now inevitable. By the time Jim died in 1995, it was estimated that 25 million children were alive that would not have been, but for the courageous efforts he spearheaded.

What would Jim Grant be promoting today, were he to be continuing as Unicef 's leader?

First, he would focus on the unfinished agenda – those most left behind in the progress of the last decades. In essence, Jim would attack disparity at all levels placing emphasis on reaching those left out for whatever reason. He would insist on disaggregation of data – averages always obscure the real truth – seek out those left behind. Measure, compare, and expose – restore Progress Of Nations and create other communications where success can be heralded and failure exposed.

Second, in spite of the epidemiologic transition that attracts so much attention today with resources and attention diverted to diseases of aging, mental health and over consumption, Jim would reject the contention that health services must bend to these needs unless and until we complete the job at hand. We are seeing an epidemiologic polarisation where the poor are stuck in the same trap as ever – infectious diseases, malnutrition and insalubrious environments – while attention shifts to those better off or who luckily survived the vicissitudes of poverty. The most effective interventions and the best buy still lie with addressing the most basic needs of children.

"Stay the course, till the job is finished" Jim would say, and children's needs come first.

Third, he would transform Unicef back into the agency it was when he joined – known for field presence and field action – its staff the best informed about the intricacies of life amongst the poor in the varied circumstances of each country. Unicef staff are increasingly office bound and bureaucratically tied up.

Fourth, he would defend the right to child survival with the same intensity we defend civil and political rights. He would demand that we organise programs for survival of children with the same thoroughness and resources as we now do for elections. He would defend the right of freedom to learn to read with the same ardour we defend freedom to write in the press. He would protect children from forced prostitution and exploitative labor with the same energy we protect accused adults in a court of law. In essence, the basic rights of children must no longer take a back seat to the rights of their more articulate and politically active parents.

Fifth, he would urge us to use epidemiology, health technology, social mobilisation, harnessing modern communications technology and political activism to promote a package of relevant, locally identified activities that would intensify and extend the CSR within the control of and responsibility of each community and political jurisdiction. Real advances in survival and health are largely in behaviours and given the power of modern communication tools, behavioural change is possible on a much more ambitious scale than ever before.

Sixth, he would strengthen Unicef support for education, especially of girls insisting on universality, practicality and quality. Somehow he would see that this most critical element of societal transformation spearheaded all development agendas across nations and agencies.

Seventh, he would forge an alliance amongst all partners – integrated concerted effort. More than ever, agencies need to come together backing a common effort and approach – not competing.

Global Fund and PEPFAR have mobilised billions for HIV while programs for children languish. Grant convinced scores of leaders that speaking out for children, allocating state resources and mobilising society are sound political strategies – where do we see that today? Why have they forgotten such a basic lesson? Jim would put children back on the political agenda.

Eighth, Jim would be planning ahead for 2030 – highlighting the success of the MDGs and preparing for the next set of challenges, stretching the limits of the possible, harnessing the latest technology and always harping on the mantra “children first”. He would place children as the sensitive indicator in each of the seventeen 2030 SDGs recently adopted by the UN.

Finally, and most tentatively, I suspect Jim would take up the leadership to end the stranglehold that the military and its industrial partners have over every aspect of our lives. In the last half of the past century, more children lost their lives in wars than did soldiers. The economic devastation to social programs by the military has been even greater. While he was always reluctant to stray into areas not within his mandate for children, I think he would, by now, agree that there can be

no secure future for the world's children as long as the vast resources of the richest peoples are dedicated to the aggressive pursuit of power, profit and war.

With his energy and drive, he just might convince us that the war machine must be curtailed, dismantled to make possible the dream that drove Jim Grant. He saw through children, the chance of peace and decency for everyone. Indeed, children are a valid aim in themselves, but more so a means to uncover the humanity in us all and bring about a better world in the process. This is the legacy he left for us – the challenge lives on.

Jim Grant achieved what he did by exerting leverage. 'Give me a fulcrum' said Archimedes, "and I will move the world'. Jim's fulcrum was UNICEF. He could not have done what he did standing in any other place. Not as an American politician, not as the head of a large non-governmental organization, not even as the head of any other UN agency. UNICEF is a household name in virtually every country of the world. It is a name that commands respect and affection everywhere. It is the name that opened the doors to Jim Grant. And it is the name that predisposed those inside those doors to listen. That fulcrum is there yet today, waiting to be used to move the world.

**Jon Rohde, a pediatrician and public health expert served as Grant's advisor in health and nutrition throughout his time as Unicef Executive Director. He was Grant's Representative for Unicef in India and has also lived and worked in Bangladesh, Indonesia, and South Africa*

A Leader With Vision and a Master Strategist

By Nyi Nyi*

Once upon a time, over 35 years ago, I met and worked with an extraordinary man, a giant of a man, a gifted genius and a leader of man. He had the rare quality of combining theory and practice, looking for down to earth and innovative solutions for problems. Many leaders in development are strong conceptually, but weak operationalizing them. While recognizing the importance of projects in searching for methods and modalities, he rightly believed that they need to be elevated to the level of movements in order to achieve momentum to make a difference and to have an impact globally and at the level of national policies and practice.

Thus "Going to Scale" was inherent in all his thoughts. He was James P. Grant, the third Executive Director of UNICEF , known affectionately among us as JPG : The Maximum Leader. Due to his efforts, millions of children were alive today and millions more every year due to the systems he helped established over the years.

I first met him in 1978 when he wanted to know about the " positive deviance" of Burma in literacy, an element of PQLI (Physical Quality of Life Index). Later in February 1980, a month after being the Executive Director of UNICEF , he called me in Jakarta where I was working with UNDP, He urged me to return to UNICEF and I told him that I had already accepted to go to Bangladesh as the next Resident Representative of UNDP. He said that in Bangladesh, I would be able to work for only one country in UNICEF , we can change the world for the better. I was intrigued and enticed by his charm, enthusiasm and passion. I had never looked back as I was hooked on the mission to change the world for the better, steered by JPG.

JPG's foresight was unparalleled . When there was a debate in the Italian Parliament by dissat-

ified members questioning the spending of the development budget in southern Italy instead of developing countries where it was intended, JPG set in motion the preparation of a \$ 100 million project for child survival in Africa with a focus on former Italian colonies. He rightly guessed that the Government would not be ready yet with projects and ideas so soon after the debate. He went to Rome and returned with the proposal approved and Italian funding secured.

When we were in the midst of UCI and child survival, we were always in need of additional funding. (In those days, the Gates Foundation had not yet been incorporated). The national budgets were not that easy to maneuver in short notice whenever a new priority emerged. There is always a need for bridging support of a year or two till the governments can include them in their budgets and take over.

JPG was working with the US Congress to establish a Child Survival Fund in USAID in order to broaden the field of support. When he returned from Washington, D.C. with the good news that the Congress had not only approved it but they even doubled the amount proposed and that it would be happy to entrust it to UNICEF if so desired. I asked JPG why didn't he take it and he said allocating it to USAID meant that they would not only have to spend Child Survival Fund but also their core money in the programmes for child survival. JPG was of course proved right; all USAID programs began to include child survival.

A unique programming tool was introduced by JPG which he named Social Mobilization. It entailed involvement of government at all levels, ngo's and civil society, professionals, artists, writers, etc., and media and communications. We applied it extensively in UCI and Child Survival efforts. I knew its effectiveness as we had used it in our literacy movement in Burma and in fact it was the first discussion we had between JPG and me.

JPG changed the function of facts and figures from the role of providing Information only to communications to inform as well as motivate and mobilize the country as well as different segments of population for the movement. Let me cite two examples. When I visited Vietnam, the Prime Minister presented me with a poster of himself administering polio drops, signed by himself and dedicated to me with my name on it. It indicated not only his involvement for children, but also sending a message of his leadership of the movement to the whole country. It also showed that he was proud to be involved.

The second example was the publication of the PROGRESS OF NATIONS where the achievements of all the countries were listed. It unwittingly set up a process of competition between countries, a healthy competition as to who can serve their own children better.

JPG had a strategic mind and he would display it like a Chess Grand Master. When we were operationalizing UCI, JPG and I had several sessions to work out focus, priorities and approaches. We came to the conclusion that we could not reach UCI without China and India, the two most populous countries. If China and India could achieve it despite their huge population, other countries would have less excuses not to do so.

Although not at the scale of China and India we could not really ignore the second tier countries like Brazil, Indonesia, Nigeria, Bangladesh, Pakistan, Vietnam, etc with population still in the range of over or about 100 million. Smaller countries could not contribute much in numbers, but they would add the number of countries achieving, providing a picture of universality and of respectable performance and achievement by the world. JPG played a major role in this exercise giving his personal assessment of each country and we thus our national dialogue as appropriate.

JPG always did his home work, compartmentalizing the data in his brain. I would always remember the way he converted His Majesty King Hassan of Morocco to the cause of UCI. It was classic. I heard this story from him as well as from the Moroccan Health Minister (Ben Sheikh). When the King was eulogizing Morocco as France, south of Mediterranean, it would be impolite and inappropriate to contradict him as it would cause the King to lose face in front of his courtiers.

On the other hand, if no further action was taken the purpose of the visit would be lost. JPG's intervention that while agreeing with His Majesty's portrayal, Morocco was not like France in one aspect. It's IMR was ten times higher than that of France. That broke the proverbial back of the camel and the King asked his Health Minister to do whatever Mr Grant suggests to bring down the IMR to the level of France. I often wondered how would I handle it if I were confronted with such a situation.

In the early 1990's when the mid-decade goals were pursued, JPG had become frail and less mobile. We strategized and he suggested that I start with Benin in West Africa because it was a country with enlightened leadership. I also liked the country because it was the home country of our Regional Director, Stanislas Adotevi and our Representative, Guia Mendoza was doing well.

When I visited Cotonou, the President was traveling abroad and the Defense Minister was acting as President. When I presented him with the mid-decade goals, he was overwhelmed with the list. So, I narrowed it to more interesting goals like universal iodization of salt. I could notice he was being polite but not excited.

I asked myself what would JPG do were he in my place now, So, I changed my conversation from goiter to mental underdevelopment, IQ Deficits. I told the Acting President that both he and I were from developing countries and our children would have to compete one day with not only children from industrialized world but also from other developing countries.

We started with many disadvantages and we would not want to add an IQ deficit to it. That struck a cord with the President and he asked his aide to call the Minister of Industry and the Minister of Health. We discussed whether it should be iodized at source in Tunisia where they bought the salt from or at the port on arrival. My whole visit was most cordial and pleasant and Benin became a showcase as predicted by JPG earlier.

I often wondered what would it be like if JPG were alive for another five years. I thought we would continue to save millions of lives, but also would probably have eradicated polio, saving hundreds of thousands of children from death and disability, while saving billions of dollars (in 1995, there were only a few countries left with polio incidences, and they were not in turmoil like now) and children of the developing world would have higher IQs through universal consumption of iodized salt. January 2016.

**Dr Nyi Nyi, Special Adviser to the Executive Director, James P. Grant.*

Remembering the Man who Put Children First

By Adam Fifield*

Twenty-one years ago today, the world lost the greatest advocate for children it has ever seen. Around one in the afternoon of January 28, 1995, in a small hospital room in Mount Kisco, New York, James Pineo Grant died quietly in his sleep after a long battle with cancer. He was 72.

Grant was the transformative — and now, seemingly, largely forgotten — leader of UNICEF from 1980 until a few days before his death in 1995. The American lawyer and international aid expert hit the UN like a typhoon and, according to many, harnessed the potential of the world body unlike anyone before or since. In 1982, he launched a "child survival and development revolution" that would save tens of millions of children's lives and redefine what was possible in global health and international development. Grant put the needs of vulnerable children squarely at the center of the world stage for the first time and, as long as he lived, made sure they stayed there. He was a visionary, but, even more importantly, he was an irritant — a pest who relentlessly and shamelessly badgered the leaders of the world to put children first.

He encountered fierce resistance, including at his own agency. Some thought he was crazy and might cause serious damage to UNICEF. During his first two years, a rumor fluttered in the corridors: Jim Grant was so delusional and out-of-touch that he would be fired. Fortunately for the children of the world, he wasn't.

Patient and uncommonly persuasive, he was able to win over even his staunchest detractors. Known as the "mesmerizer" by some of his staff, Grant even convinced brutal dictators like Syria's Hafez al-Assad and Haiti's Baby Doc Duvalier to implement significant child health programs.

He spurred a historic surge in childhood immunization rates — from Colombia to China to Bangladesh — and was arguably the most powerful champion of vaccines in recent history. He pioneered the practice of humanitarian ceasefires in warzones, so that even children trapped by conflict could receive lifesaving interventions.

In 1990, he convened the largest gathering of heads of state at the time — the World Summit for Children — which elevated the welfare of children to an unprecedented point in history and ultimately inspired the creation of the Millennium Development Goals. Much of the progress in global health and international development over the past two decades bears his fingerprints.

Like most other Americans, I had never heard of Grant. That changed around six years ago, when I came across a tattered copy of an anthology of essays about him that was edited by Richard Jolly and entitled *Jim Grant: UNICEF Visionary*. It had been published by UNICEF and was out of print. I thumbed through the pages and was transfixed — how was it, I wondered, that I was just now learning about someone who had so profoundly altered the course of recent history?

I had become a new father a few years earlier — I now have a son and daughter — and felt an immediate, palpable admiration for what Jim Grant had done for so many other parents around the world. Who was this man? How and why did he do this? And why has his story essentially been lost to history?

These were among the questions that inspired me to write “A Mighty Purpose: How Jim Grant Sold the World on Saving Its Children.”

In the course of my research, I interviewed 86 people — many of them former UNICEF staff — and read thousands of pages of documents and personal correspondence. I leafed through Jim Grant’s notebooks, which were packed with his frenzied, tiny handwriting and filled with layer upon layer of Post-It notes. I soaked up his fascinating oral history, which is based on interviews done just before death and which chronicles his childhood in China and his relationship with father, Dr. John Black Grant (a hugely influential public health pioneer). I pored over photos and watched dozens of hours of video footage of Grant in the field.

As I delved more deeply into the life of this unusual and singularly driven human being, I came across one amazing story after the other. Some were inspiring, of course, and some were also zany. Grant was a truly eccentric character — someone who pushed the boundaries of time and protocol and reason.

One of my favorite anecdotes came courtesy of Dr. Jon Rohde, who was Grant’s close friend and adviser and himself pivotal to the launching of the “child survival revolution.” During a visit to Haiti, when Grant and his wife Ethel were staying at Jon Rohde’s friend’s beach house — they liked to snorkel there — Grant slipped in the bedroom. The floor may have been wet or he may have been in a mad rush, or both. Either way, he jammed a toe and broke it.

The toe stuck out from his foot at a right angle, and the pain was searing, excruciating. Rohde tried to reset the toe, "but we could not get it fixed," he says. Grant was scheduled to meet Baby Doc Duvalier the next day. Getting proper medical attention meant he would miss the meeting. So he improvised by cutting a hole in a tennis shoe and wedging his toe through it. It protruded about an inch. On his other foot he wore a dress shoe. This is how he went to see Haiti's president, jutting toe and all.

This stubborn determination compelled Grant to set goals many people thought were simply inconceivable, foolish even. In 1985, he decided to launch an immunization campaign in El Salvador. And what about the inconvenient fact of the country's vicious civil war? Grant's reply was simple: We stop the war. This would elicit an almost audible gasp in a meeting at UNICEF headquarters in New York.

The indefatigable lawyer then tasked his Central America representative, a jovial, chain-smoking Armenian-Lebanese man named Agop Kayayan, with arranging a truce that would allow El Salvador's children to be immunized. Working with the Catholic Church (a pivotal UNICEF partner), Kayayan, Grant and several others managed to do just that. These so-called "Days of Tranquility" would be reprised year after year until the end of the war in 1992. Thousands of children likely lived as a result.

Grant's dazzling triumphs were each the result of a collective effort, of course. A "grand alliance," as he called it — including UNICEF staff members, volunteers, government immunizers, parents, teachers, students, community leaders, religious figures, doctors, midwives, nurses, NGOs, partner agencies, service organizations, labor unions and donors — rallied to make the "child survival revolution" a reality. It was a global movement involving millions of people.

But would any of it have happened without Jim Grant?

As Richard Reid, the former UNICEF regional director for the Middle East and North Africa, put it to me: "Jim cleared all the brush away. He went ahead despite tremendous drag from old-timers and naysayers, and he steadily collected allies and believers. He put people together in such catalytic perfection."

Perhaps Grant's greatest contribution was a radically changed set of expectations. Some people had considered the mass deaths of children to be unavoidable, a grisly but inevitable byproduct of poverty. Grant proved that this was simply not the case. In doing so, he showed that lifesaving interventions could reach virtually everyone on earth. As a former UNICEF staffer put it: he swept the impossibility away.

So why is Grant's story so little known?

Maybe it's a reflection of the population he and UNICEF and their partners set out to help — mostly nonwhite children from Africa, Asia, Latin America, and the Middle East.

Maybe it's partly due to Grant's lack of self-importance and his penchant for liberally sharing credit with others. Maybe it stems from the paralyzing cynicism that envelops the UN and international development — we hear a lot more about the bad news stories than the good news ones. Maybe it's partly because of the media's failure to recognize Jim Grant's significance.

His death registered a few faint blips on the American media's radar. One of his admirers, activist and consumer advocate Ralph Nader, penned a column noting that Grant's obituary in the New York Times was short and buried deep in the paper; a few days later, the Times devoted a major front-page story and editorial to the passing of playwright George Abbott (Abbott's obituary was 2,427 words long; Grant's was 497 words). Wrote Nader: "The message from The New York Times in late January was: if you wish to be commemorated for a productive life, be a famous writer, producer and director of plays and not a person who is most responsible for saving the lives of 3 million children in the world every year."

On that day 21 years ago, Grant may have died quietly — but the moments preceding his death were anything but quiet. The indefatigable UNICEF chief fought for the cause that had consumed him with every last breath in his body. On that gray Saturday morning, a nurse came into Grant's room and asked how he was doing. Gaunt, wheezy, barely able to speak, he answered: "Full of enthusiasm!" He then raised his sinewy fist in the air and said: "Fight, fight, fight!" Later, as he drifted in and out of consciousness, he started hallucinating and seemed to think that he was in a UNICEF board meeting and was addressing his directors. At one point, as one of his sons later recalled, he blurted out: "And I wrote it myself!"

Two days previously, he had used a letter that had arrived in his room as a final point of leverage. It was a short note from President Clinton, thanking Grant for everything he had done for the children of the world. Grant knew the letter gave him a fleeting opportunity born out of his impending death. On Friday, he insisted a response be sent to Clinton. He wanted to ask the president to sign the Convention on the Rights of the Child. The United States was, embarrassingly, one of the holdouts to not endorse the landmark treaty guaranteeing children's basic rights. And Grant wanted the president to know that this was his last official act — his final request. How could the president of the United States refuse a dying man? Grant's executive assistant (and de facto chief of staff) Mary Cahill faxed the letter to the White House on Friday afternoon.

At Grant's memorial service several weeks later, then-First Lady Hillary Clinton announced that her husband's administration would honor Grant by signing the treaty. In a sad testament to the stunning lack of political will in the US capitol, the treaty has still not been ratified by the US Senate (the US is, in fact, now the only UN member state not to have ratified it). Several UNICEF staffers suggested that, had Jim Grant lived another few years, the treaty might have been ratified by the US long ago.

So what can Jim Grant still teach us? UNICEF veterans like Jon Rohde, Kul Gautam, Dr. Nyi Nyi, Richard Jolly, and Mehr Kahn and John Williams can speak far more authoritatively about this question than I can (you'll find contributions from each of them in this series).

But from where I sit, there are two basic lessons that stand out. The first is that, as the world pursues the Sustainable Development Goals, children must be at the center of the international development agenda — the survival and well-being of children is a linchpin for so many other things. The second is that the world needs another zealous advocate for its youngest citizens, someone who is shameless and relentless, someone who won't give up, someone who knocks on the doors of world leaders and whispers insistently in their ears: Put children first! Put children first!

The world needs another Jim Grant.

**Adam Fifield is the author of the newly released book "A Mighty Purpose: How Jim Grant Sold the World on Saving Its Children".*

Jim Grant – the Joy of Working with a Visionary Leader

By Kul Chandra Gautam*

When James P Grant was appointed as its third Executive Director in 1980, UNICEF was already a highly respected organization that had won the Nobel Peace Prize and earned great reputation as the world's premier humanitarian institution to help women and children in times of war and natural disasters. As a development agency, UNICEF was known for its practical actions and effective operations in community-based health care, education and certain social services. It was also beginning to play an advocacy role in supporting governments for better planning and policy development at the national level. However, the scope and coverage of UNICEF supported development programmes were rather limited, and it was not seen as a major development organization of the world.

Jim Grant came to UNICEF with the determination to turn an already good organization into one that could make massive national and global impact. He was convinced that in a world ravaged by political and ideological conflicts, the cause of children would be the most fitting to unite peoples and nations following different faiths and ideologies. He was inspired by his personal experience of how the Barefoot Doctors scheme in China had led to massive coverage of basic health care, and the Green Revolution in India had averted dire predictions of famines and led to food security and prosperity for many farmers. His experience in Sri Lanka, where he had served with USAID, had convinced him that even an economically poor country could achieve impressive results in basic health and education if it followed the right approach. He wanted to replicate such success globally in the areas of child health and human development.

Grant came to UNICEF like a tornado, with a bright rainbow on the horizon. He was bubbling with

grand ideas, and bouncing with extraordinary energy and enthusiasm. He wanted to shake-up things and build a dream world that was fit for children. Upon becoming the head of UNICEF, he sounded as if all his life he was preparing to come to lead it. UNICEF seemed to provide him the perfect bully pulpit to espouse his grand ideas and bold vision.

Before coming to UNICEF, Grant had been champion of a school of thought that we now call human development. Development, he argued, had to be measured not by the gross national product of a nation but by the physical quality of human life. He argued that infant mortality rate, life expectancy, literacy rates and other social indicators were far more important measurements of a nation's development than its economic wealth or military might.

Grant articulated a bold vision of unleashing a Child Survival Revolution. It was unconscionable, he argued, that 40,000 children a day, or 15 million annually, were dying at that time, when there were many low-cost, readily available interventions to prevent such deaths. He came up with an initial package of interventions comprising growth monitoring to promote child nutrition; oral rehydration therapy against diarrhoeal diseases; breast-feeding; and immunization – which together could greatly cut down child deaths and promote child health and nutrition. These interventions would be even more powerful if they were combined with family planning and female education. The whole package became collectively known as GOBI-FF.

Specific, time-bound goals and targets were set for each of these interventions – e.g. to increase childhood immunization rates in developing countries from less than 20 percent to 80 percent by 1990. Grant was convinced that the required financial resources and political will could be mobilized if one could show demonstrable progress on a large scale at relatively low-cost.

Within a decade of the Grant-led child survival campaign, the results achieved were impressive. Compared to early 1980s, some 10,000 fewer children died every day a decade later, thanks to the spectacular increase in childhood immunization, and similar rise in oral rehydration therapy and other child survival interventions.

Cumulatively, it was estimated that the child survival and development revolution that UNICEF spearheaded saved the lives of an estimated 25 million children and protected the health of millions more. In the words of the leading New York Times columnist Nicholas Kristof, "...the late James P. Grant, a little-known American aid worker who headed UNICEF from 1980 to 1995 and launched the child survival revolution with vaccinations and diarrhea treatments, probably saved more lives than were destroyed by Hitler, Mao and Stalin combined".

Besides saving lives, the success of the UNICEF-led child survival campaign led to improved health and nutrition, and enhanced learning and earning capacity of millions of children, and real empowerment of women and local communities. Most importantly, it led to elevating the well-being of children high on the world's development and political agenda as a subject of regular discussion in Summit meetings of world leaders, and a topic of increased media coverage.

Was Grant too simplistic?

Some of Jim Grant's critics accused him of over-simplifying the world's development challenges by boiling them down to just a few technical interventions aimed at reducing child mortality. After all, development is much more than reducing the quantity of deaths. How about the quality of life, social justice, gender equality, economic development, human rights, protection of the environment, and building of systems and infrastructure to sustain development gains?

For those who knew Jim Grant, this was a false and superficial critique. Far from being simplistic and narrowly focused, Grant had a broad and holistic vision of development. He was very aware of the multi-faceted nature and complexities of development. He spoke forcefully on issues ranging from the need to end the "apartheid of gender", to reducing military expenditures, providing debt relief and fair terms of trade for developing countries. He even challenged the prevailing orthodoxy of powerful international financial institutions and called for "adjustment with a human face".

With the help his Deputy, Richard Jolly, and other colleagues, UNICEF documented how the structural adjustment policies of the Bretton Woods institutions – IMF and the World Bank – that forced many governments to balance their budget by cutting expenditures on health, education and social services, were having a damaging impact on women, children and vulnerable groups in terms increased rates of malnutrition, inability of governments to replenish essential drugs or even pay the salaries of health workers and teachers. Grant used this evidence to challenge the orthodoxy of these institutions with a clarion call for "Adjustment with a Human Face."

UNICEF's well-reasoned and passionate case for protecting the poor and vulnerable in designing structural adjustment programmes gathered strong support from development activists, and eventually forced the World Bank and IMF to change their policies.

Grant advocated for the child survival revolution with a small number of highly "doable" interventions, not as a simplistic formula for just reducing mortality, but as a "Trojan Horse" for combating poverty, promoting democracy, slowing down population growth and accelerating economic development.

Putting Children on the Political Agenda

Jim Grant personally persuaded hundreds of leaders – democrats and dictators alike – as to why it was in their political interest to promote child survival interventions. But he did not want them to focus on small scale, symbolic pilot projects and marginal, incremental progress. He wanted to see action that was commensurate with the scale of the problems. Many leaders were persuaded that provision of such life-saving services would give them great political dividends at minimal financial cost.

Grant's meetings with local, national and world leaders were never simply formal courtesy calls, as those of many other heads of agencies. When Grant met leaders, he always had a handy list of four or five specific things he wanted them to do. He presented them in a compelling manner explaining

why undertaking those actions would be not only good for their country's children, but how these would be politically beneficial for the leader concerned.

Heads of State and Government routinely meet many visiting dignitaries from international organizations. But most would not even remember their names and messages even shortly afterwards. Not so with Jim Grant. Leaders remembered Grant not only as a visiting Executive Director of UNICEF, but many referred to him fondly as "my friend Jim". One could be pretty sure that long after their meeting with Grant, many leaders would still remember and recount the four or five things that they were asked and agreed to do.

Beyond political leaders, Grant approached religious leaders, the mass media, film stars and sports personalities, and non-governmental organizations to promote immunization, ORT and other child survival actions. In an era before the advent of mobile phones, the internet and today's social media, such outreach and social mobilization greatly reinforced and energized the usually weak and lethargic health ministries.

Grant was masterful in generating a healthy competition among countries, provinces and municipalities to outperform their neighbours. If an economically poor country like Sri Lanka could reduce infant mortality to a low level why was not a much richer country like Turkey or Colombia or Indonesia doing better? Grant skillfully used such comparisons not to humiliate countries but to motivate them.

Grant's crowning achievement was the convening of the World Summit for Children in 1990. It was the first ever world Summit, attended by the largest gathering of world leaders in history until that time. I personally had the great privilege to work closely with Jim Grant, including serving as his point man to draft its outcome document the "World Declaration and Plan of Action for the Survival, Development and Protection of Children". The Summit laid down many time-bound and measurable goals for children to be achieved by 2000. The origins of the Millennium Development Goals adopted by the United Nations at the turn of the century and today's newly minted Sustainable Development Goals can truly be traced back to the intellectual legacy of the goals of the 1990 Child Summit.

Jim Grant's Ten Commandments for sustainable development

How can one summarize key lessons of Jim Grant's approach to development, and might these be relevant in implementing today's Sustainable Development Goals?

In a book entitled 'Jim Grant: UNICEF Visionary', I contributed an article on the 'Ten Commandments of Jim Grant's Leadership for Development'. The headlines of the commandments comprise: 1) Articulate your vision of development in terms of inspiring goals, 2) Breakdown goals into time-bound, doable propositions, 3) Demystify techniques and technologies needed for large-scale development, 4) Generate and sustain political commitment, 5) Mobilize a grand alliance of all so-

cial forces, 6) Go to scale, 7) Select your priorities and stick to them, 8) Institute public monitoring and accountability, 9) Ensure relevance to broader development agenda, and 10) Unleash the full potential of the United Nations system.

As the world community strives to implement a new set of ambitious Sustainable Development Goals, I believe these commandments can be as relevant today as they were three decades ago.

For those of us lucky enough to have known and worked closely with Jim Grant, his memory and legacy are a source of constant inspiration. For me personally, the greatest privilege of my life was the chance to work with and observe him at close quarters.

I know this is a sentiment shared by many who had such opportunity. One such person is former US President Jimmy Carter who personally worked closely with Grant, and is proud to acknowledge that nominating him to be the head of UNICEF was one of the best decisions he had taken as US President.

**Kul Chandra Gautam (www.kulgautam.org) is a former Deputy Executive Director of UNICEF*



At the Panzi military camp for soldiers of the former government army of Rwanda, near the town of Bukavu, UNICEF Executive Director James Grant helps to stack a pile of military shirts that some 500 children, mostly boys, spontaneously took off and tossed into the air, on hearing that they would be given new shirts and shoes, and transferred by UNICEF from the military camp to a nearby UNICEF-assisted centre for unaccompanied Rwandan refugee children. | Zaire | © UNICEF/UNI50605/Press1994



In the town of Baidoa, UNICEF Executive Director James Grant watches a UNICEF-trained nurse vaccinate a child against measles, part of a national immunization campaign. | Somalia | © UNICEF/UNI29016/Maina1992

Jim Grant – A Few Snapshots

By John Williams*

In November 1979, I spent an uncomfortable 10 days or so in Mexico City working simultaneously for two UNICEF Executive Directors who had almost nothing in common –except, of course, a devotion to helping poor children.

Henry Labouisse, executive director since 1965, had been US ambassador to France and a key figure in implementing the Marshall Plan; he had accepted the Nobel Peace Prize on behalf of UNICEF. He had guided UNICEF through the minefields of war in Biafra and Vietnam, helping children on all sides.

Born in Louisiana, he was a patriarchal figure, elegant, courteous, a gentleman of his times, and with an incandescent temper only rarely on display.

And he was cautious. When Peter Adamson produced the draft of the first State of the World's Children report, Labouisse changed the title to the Situation of Children in Developing Countries because, he believed, UNICEF was not entitled to speak on behalf of children in rich countries.

With the help of his principal deputy Dick Heyward, an Australian of formidable intellect, Labouisse led a group of seasoned men, and a few women, who had helped save children in post-war Europe, and then broadened their horizons as UNICEF became a global agency. Their current focus was on "basic services." working with poor communities to ensure basic nutrition, health care, education and shelter. This sounds obvious now but, as is often the case, it only became obvious after someone had done it.

Early in the UNICEF Executive Board meeting in Mexico City, it was announced that Jim Grant, founder and president of the Overseas Development Council in Washington DC, would succeed Labouisse as executive director in 1980.

This had long been expected. In fact, Labouisse had felt for some time that Grant was breathing heavily down his neck, and was not happy. Earlier Grant had written to Labouisse, urging him to introduce goals into UNICEF's work; the proposal was brushed away in a cool, short response.

Now, in Mexico, Grant was full of energy and ideas. At his early morning strategy sessions with selected staff, Labouisse did not conceal his extreme irritation.

After the announcement of Grant's upcoming appointment, media clamored for interviews. This was when I became aware of Grant's unnerving capacity to ignore situations he found inconvenient. Reuters asked for details about Grant's service in Vietnam. Grant never wanted to talk about this; he was not proud of it. Besides, America's internal divisions on Vietnam were still bleeding.

"Tell them," Grant said, "that during the Korean War I worked as etc etc." For the first time I saw the metallic gleam in Grant's eyes. So we told Reuters about Korea, and amazingly, they never came back at us about Vietnam. Grant had escaped.

The Executive Board meetings were being held in the Plaza de los Tres Culturas, and, as they wound towards an end, Grant (who was not yet executive director) said we should all gather on the steps of the nearby basilica for a photo. "C'mon John," he shouted, "help me to get 'em in place." And he began arranging people on the church steps, including Labouisse, which was not a good idea. The pictures were taken.

Later, back in New York, I looked at the pictures with a colleague from the Executive Board Office. "Who are these women in front?" he asked me, pointing to a few square, stone-faced women who Grant had put into position. Each of them clutched a huge pile of documents.

I said that he was supposed to know who all the delegates were, not me. But suddenly it hit me. These were the cleaning women from our conference rooms. This explained why so many documents had been mysteriously disappearing. They were selling them as waste paper.

Grant's energy, of course, was awesome. Lisbet Palme, widow of the murdered Swedish prime minister and for a time president of the Executive Board, once remarked that Grant seemed to have "overcome the laws of time and space that prevent mere mortals from being in two places simultaneously."

I did not often travel with Grant, but once I accompanied him on a 40-hour round trip visit to Copenhagen where UNICEF was opening a new supply building.

I have had a lower back injury since my youth, and as we walked through the arrivals terminal Grant insisted on carrying my bag as well as his own. "But Jim," I said, "how will it look if senior Danish Government people are there to greet you, and you are carrying your junior colleague's case?"

Grant stopped and said, "You're right. Tell you what. I'll carry your bag until we get past customs and then you carry it until we see who's there." But instead he carried both bags all the way, until the chauffeur of his official car scrambled to take them.

In Copenhagen, Grant met Queen Margrethe of Denmark, opened the new building, gave two press conferences, conferred with the Danish cabinet, attended a formal dinner and held three staff meetings. That was pretty standard for him.

At one point, I had some urgent messages to send back to New York, so I found an empty office and started working. An attractive woman appeared at the door. It was Queen Margrethe, touring the new building. "No, no, don't get up," she said, "I'm delighted to see that at least someone around here is working." And with a smile and a wave, she was gone.

As his own ambition always seemed to be to work non-stop, Grant was always delighted to find UNICEF people working at unexpected times and in unexpected places. So when I told him about my meeting with the Queen, he was thrilled. "At least someone was working," he chuckled, "Great!"

I have tried here simply to give a few glimpses of Jim Grant at work, leaving others to describe his extraordinary achievements and dedication.

But I will close with just one observation on that. Grant's strength lay on simple foundations. He knew that healthy children were the key to a society's future. He believed that, therefore, all societies should make children their first priority. Although this almost never happened, it continued to amaze him and to propel him into action. He believed that bringing about this change was a matter of communication, and of will.

And that will he always had. He never wavered. Or if he did, we never saw it.

**John Williams is an Australian journalist who worked many years in southeast Asia, and who became UNICEF Communication Director in New York and later executive director of UNICEF Australia in Sydney.*

James P. Grant: the consummate advocate

By Mehr Khan Williams*

In the last two decades of the 20th Century, a massive campaign was launched to save the lives of millions of children who were dying from preventable causes. An estimated 25 million children are alive today who would not have lived without it. And, while the campaign ended with the death of the man who initiated and led it, the world can never again say that it cannot be done. The momentum generated continues to save lives today.

It was a global effort in which governments, non-governmental actors, donors, private citizens and many agencies of the the United Nations all took part. Together they made it happen. But without the vision, the boundless energy and unshakable commitment of one man, James P. Grant, it would not have been possible. Jim, as he liked to be called, drove himself and the agency he led, the United Nations Children's Fund, to guide and steer the campaign.

Over the years since then, much has been written and published about Jim Grant and the effort he led. But the years have been long enough for memories to fade. And the world has become infinitely more chaotic and complex. However, the principle of Children First that Jim worked for has become far more broadly accepted. He showed us that it can be done.

Jim took over as UNICEF's third Executive Director in 1980. He succeeded two eminent men, Maurice Pate, the first Executive Director and Henry Labouisse, the second. UNICEF, the agency he led, was small, certainly in comparison to its size today. But it had a solid reputation and had won a Nobel Peace Prize for its humanitarian work for children in a post-war Europe.

Maurice Pate had recognized that UNICEF could not attempt to do its work alone. Advocacy for children had to be a cornerstone of the agency's efforts to fulfill its mission. People had to be informed of the situation of children and to become involved in helping to address the issues. He recruited the film star, Danny Kaye to speak for children; established the first National Committee for UNICEF to raise money and to generate public and political will; and established a Greeting Cards programme so people could participate in the effort by taking personal action.

His successor, Henry Labouisse expanded and solidified the agency in the developing world. He established key principles of assisting all children who needed help regardless of the politics of their countries. And he continued to strengthen UNICEF's communication and fundraising arms.

But at the beginning of the 1980s, some 14 million children were still dying every year. The majority of them from such preventable causes as measles, tetanus, whooping cough, pneumonia and diarrhoeal diseases. All this compounded by malnutrition and endemic poverty. The richer more developed countries of the world had dealt with most of these preventable causes of child death through political will and the application of available technologies.

Jim decided to do everything in his power to try to do the same for the children of the poorest people in the poorest countries. He said it was a scandal that they were allowed to die through inaction and neglect. He said urgent action was needed now because children could not wait for plans to evolve and structures to be built. He worked tirelessly to generate political will, to raise money and to put in place the programmes and structures which could make it happen.

This is a very brief attempt to tell the story of his advocacy and communication efforts on behalf of the most voiceless and poorest children of the world.

When Jim launched himself and UNICEF into a "child survival and development revolution", he was working with a small but principled agency with strong programmes, communication and fundraising. In Jim's 15 years with UNICEF, the clarity and single-mindedness of his vision and the zeal and devotion he brought to his work, inspired and transformed UNICEF from a good agency into a powerhouse. But more than that, he helped to start to change the way the world perceived its responsibility towards its poorest and most vulnerable children.

Jim was a superlative advocate. His belief in the inherent rightness and urgency of the cause was contagious. And he was a man in a hurry. He did not wait to bring all his staff along with him as many urged him to do. They had to catch up with him because the work was urgent and no time could be wasted.

But once the at first reluctant staff were launched into the campaign, Jim's personal example inspired them. The great cause he championed became their cause. He was an inspiring leader because he was tirelessly devoted to the mission and appeared to have no personal agenda or ego. It was not about himself or about UNICEF, it was for the children. They came first. He would work with anyone and do anything necessary to achieve the desired results.

He began by clearly articulating his vision. UNICEF, with the help of Peter Adamson, had already published its first report on the situation of children in the developing world before Jim took over. Under Jim The State of the World's Children's Report became an instrument with which to eloquently and passionately push for an end to preventable child death. UNICEF's formidable and rapidly growing communication machinery worldwide broadcast the message and it was repeated by the media globally year after year. The aim was to make sure the message was heard and acted upon. It played a large part in building a movement for child survival over the next 15 years

He raised money, lots of it, offered programme support and built partnerships with UN agencies, non governmental actors and heads of state everywhere. He used every opportunity he saw and was fearless both in his dreams and in his actions. The story of how he engineered a world summit for children has been well recorded. The goals articulated and established at the world summit for children became part of the Millineum Development Goals and continue to be a basis for the UN's future agenda.

He believed the world needed to make firm and quantifiable commitments to children and be held accountable for the promises made. Progress on the goals was consistently monitored. In Jim's time, the Convention on the Rights of the Child became the law of almost every country in the world even if they did not always have the means to implement it. He believed that the castles had to be built first and then foundations established under them. He demonstrated that it could be done. The world had to work together to save and improve children's lives. He took us all on a ride we will never forget.

The work has not finished yet and never will be. But even if the times have changed and the challenges are different, Jim Grant offers enduring lessons on what our priorities must be and to show us how we can achieve them.

**Mehr Khan Williams began her career as a journalist in Pakistan and subsequently worked for the United Nations for over 30 years, 28 of them in UNICEF where she also served as Director of Communication and Regional Director for East Asia and the Pacific. In her last two years with the United Nations, she served as Assistant Secretary General and Deputy High Commissioner for Human Rights.*

Jim Grant – Messianic Champion of Children

By Mary Racelis*

To have been part of UNICEF in Jim Grant's time was like riding on the tail of a shooting star. He whooshed through our lives, pulling us in to join him in making the Child Survival and Development Revolution happen. How did he succeed in inspiring thousands of staff to go far beyond the capacities they thought they already had, to give their all and more toward making a transformational difference for children?

Having joined UNICEF in 1979 as a Headquarters-based Senior Policy Specialist (a glorified term for Adviser) on Family Welfare and later Women's Development and Community Participation for four years, served concurrently as Chairperson of the Global Staff Association for two of those years, then spent nine years as Regional Director for Eastern and Southern Africa, I got to know Jim Grant rather well.

Let me try to convey to the reader how he brought together two elements – programmes and staff relations – to transform a respected but still modest child-serving agency in 1979 into a well-funded organizational dynamo that by his departure in 1995 had stirred millions of people to take action for children. From community health workers to world leaders, from village chiefs to prime ministers, from grassroots women's groups to NGOs, and secular business associations to the Vatican, Jim Grant mesmerized them all.

Given my conviction that women are central to successful programs for children, this account will focus on how Jim Grant moved UNICEF from its earlier mode of casting women primarily as mothers into the transformed vision of women as women. Affirming their multiple roles in the family,

workplace, community and society meant that UNICEF could now legitimately support programmes fostering women's empowerment as income earners, family nurturers, educators, community caregivers, leaders and even women as holders of rights. Always in the UNICEF world of Jim Grant, however, these roles were linked to benefits for children.

What propelled the transformation in UNICEF from the maternal-and-child-welfare mode to the more feminist-empowerment portrayal that justified new programme orientations? The answers lie partly in evolving global development thinking and social movements on women's roles and gender issues, on the one hand, and partly in growing advocacy pressures within UNICEF to recruit and promote women into higher positions in the organization, on the other.

That advocacy found ready approval from Jim Grant, a strong believer in the democratic process and in equal rights for women. If he should falter on the latter, his social worker wife, Ethel, kept him on track. Yet, Programme Division leadership in the early 1980s was predominantly male. While not against promoting women's rights, they refused to accept that UNICEF's mandate on maternal and child health could include programmes for strengthening women's capacities in a wide range of domains.

Since a policy paper on women and development was to be discussed and approved at the 1980 Executive Board meeting, which would also serve as UNICEF's statement at the 1980 UN Mid-Decade Conference for Women in Copenhagen, I ran a survey in country offices on how women's issues were being handled and what recommendations for change were needed. A fairly new set of Regional Advisers on Women supported by other like-minded women and male staff collaborated enthusiastically and supervised the research process in their respective areas. This led to a workshop drawing on the Regional Advisers to outline and write the policy paper, with Hoda Badran from the Middle East and North Africa Regional Office taking the lead.

The ensuing draft circulated to the all-male Programme Division decision-makers brought a shockingly negative response. The paper, they said, was too radical and not in keeping with UNICEF's mandate for children. A tame rewritten version was then prepared which became the 1980 Board paper. Because, however, the women's advocates had earlier circulated informally their more progressive version to a number of women Board members, the latter seized the platform at the Board to criticize vociferously the watered down version before them and demand that the progressive ideas in the earlier version be brought forward.

After considerable debate, the Board confirmed its commitment to the new vision of women in their multiple roles, effectively overturning UNICEF's internal patriarchy. The controversial income generation programmes for poor women, for example, could now take center stage. A major rationale asserted that when poor women earned, they invested some 90 percent of the proceeds in their children's wellbeing. The same could not be said of men.

Jim Grant recognized the strategic importance of championing this new perspective. His 1980

speech at Copenhagen was music to the women advocates' ears: "A woman's right to share whatever fruits the process of economic development has to offer is absolutely fundamental to all her roles..... We now accept that the issue of women's rights is central to the whole process of development ." In asserting that women were now to be welcomed as partners and agents in decision-making processes, the Executive Director put UNICEF field offices on notice that they would have to expand beyond motherhood roles to include women's broader concerns in country programmes. His speech placed UNICEF at the forefront of progressive thinking compared to many other still ambivalent UN agencies in the mid-80s.

Yet, as always, his thinking focused on the strategic aspects of this latest orientation. In his view enhancing women's capabilities was necessary because of their potential to do much more for children. That enabled women's advocates throughout the UNICEF world to create variations on women's empowerment programmes conducive to accelerating child survival and development. Five years later in Nairobi at the 1985 UN International Conference on Women, Grant emphasized the potential for " a revolution in child survival and health, largely through a new empowerment of women which could have major beneficial implications for women as well as children."

Advocates for women in UNICEF programmes still ran into difficulties, however, convincing Jim Grant that if his drive to have women's associations incorporate CSD into their ongoing activities was to succeed, a quid pro quo would call for UNICEF to integrate some of the women's association issues, like trafficking and domestic abuse, into UNICEF programmes. The reciprocal link was sometimes difficult for him to accept. Only when UNICEF eventually adopted girls' education as a key concern were the women's NGOs ready to collaborate. There Grant saw the girl child focus as a practical approach; the women's associations saw it also as feminist vindication. Whichever position one too , convergence had been achieved.

What other developments among UNICEF staffing fostered the shift? The pressure to recruit women's advisers in the regions signaled a major breakthrough. My own entry at the P-5 level in the rarified atmosphere of mostly male colleagues further reinforced that trend. Later, women took on Deputy Executive Director positions. While my position had not been advertised as one encompassing women's issues, its initial family welfare and family planning thrusts led the organization by implication to locate women's issues there. Not long after, I formalized that reality by adding "women's development" to my title, followed by community participation. Still later, a global policy specialist/adviser position was established at headquarters generating a series of training workshops for staff and their country counterparts worldwide on programming for women – and children.

The growing in-house network of women professionals bolstered by supportive male programme officers made a point of raising staff concerns on gender equity within the organization. The Global Staff Association pressed for and followed up measures for greater attention to the issue. Its being accorded a seat on the Executive Committee and gaining a speaking slot in the Board agenda to

express staff concerns directly to the members meant the chairperson (myself for two years) could ensure that staff issues, including women staff issues, would be raised at these top-level meetings. They were reinforced by Jim's strong commitment to staff rights, needs and aspirations. In the broader context, the UN itself was contributing to the shift by drawing attention to affirmative action for women in recruitment, training and promotion.

As early as 1982 Grant set a quota for women professionals. Continuing pressures to assess what progress women had been made resulted in an in-house study carried out by Eimi Watanabe in 1994. She presented evidence on patterns of still problematic recruitment and promotion trends for UNICEF women and urged Jim Grant to set actual targets that would be monitored systematically to achieve those goals. He agreed. Soon afterwards he announced that by 1990 the international staff would constitute 33 per cent women. Accordingly, the Department of Personnel, Regional Directors and Representatives received their marching orders.

His incredibly enthusiastic and optimistic outlook was counterbalanced by his everyday assessments of how best to expand doable children's programmes. New ideas calling for significantly reformulating programme directions took time to sink in. Eimi's study brought about a breakthrough in his understanding on women's issues. An avid listener as long as you presented solutions to the problems raised, he ended the study presentation with the story of the mule who had to be hit on the head with a 2 by 4 piece of wood before moving in the right direction. "Sometimes you need to hit me with a 2 by 4," he advised us. Occasionally when one would apologize for pointing out a problem he might not want to hear, he would reassure the staff member by pointing out that after all, "It's the squeaky wheel that gets the oil!" Conflict among his staff members did not sit easily with him. When disagreements erupted in his presence, his unease shone clearly. He would deflect the discussion to some other topic, not necessarily resolving the disagreement but implying that some other top officer should handle it.

His enormous energy was contagious even if also exhausting. UNICEF staff enthusiasm and avid participation grew because of the model he himself sent with his indefatigable work pace. Not only did staff respond to his high expectations of reaching many more children than ever before; they were overwhelmingly motivated when they saw that programs were working and expanding. They especially noticed that national leaders were responding positively to his views and taking appropriate actions. How could they do any less? Field staff thus kept pace with their inspiring and driven leader to achieve quantum leaps in country programmes.

Staff actions for the benefit of Kenyan or Guatemalan or Moroccan or Filipino children also meant that their country would place high in world rankings, a testament to their own energies in helping to make it happen. With Jim Grant unleashing his successful barrage before presidents and prime ministers, the chances for success became greater. He came across as a disarmingly friendly and persuasive salesman who with an ever-available ORS packet or other gadgetry in his shirt pocket or coat jacket mesmerized national leaders into promising they would get the CSD Revolution

underway. The country's success thus also became UNICEF's success and a source of great pride to staff. UNICEF was by acclaim the UN agency that got things done. They threw themselves into the task of mobilizing bureaucrats and leaders to push child survival and development, fostering activities appropriate to the country. It was hard work but worth it for children's saved lives and Jim Grant's approbation.

How could one not react positively to such a motivating a set-up? So determined, for example, were my Nairobi staff to succeed that I would find them in the office working Sundays and holidays. At some point responding to complaints from spouses that while their UNICEF parent was taking care of the world's children, their own children were being neglected, I forbade staff from going to the office on Sundays or holidays unless there was an emergency underway. Such was the momentum generated by Jim Grant's inspired presence.

To have served UNICEF under Jim Grant is an experience never to be forgotten and remembered always with profound joy and gratitude.

**Mary Racelis is Research Scientist at the Institute of Philippine Culture, Ateneo de Manila University, and its former Director. In UNICEF, 1979-92. In New York as Senior Policy Specialist, Family/Child Welfare and Women's Development.*

Jim Grant and the Sustainable Development Goals

By Richard Jolly*

Jim Grant showed the world how to link global UN goals with worldwide action, country-by-country, to succeed in their implementation and make a revolutionary difference. In the 1980s, Jim Grant mobilized UNICEF staff, then UNICEF country offices, and most important, Presidents, Prime Ministers and other key political leaders, as well, of course, as key government ministries. The goal was to reduce child deaths and improve child survival and development – by specific actions in health, nutrition, education and services for children which are vital for their upbringing and future welfare. He convinced world leaders to commit, first to immunising every child in the world, and then, gradually, to a set of 26 precise goals for children to be reached by 2000. Setting UN goals was nothing new, the first had been fixed in 1960. But Jim Grant showed how the UN and political leadership could be mobilized to ensure implementation and achievement.

The boldness of Jim Grant's vision and follow-through action is brilliantly captured in Adam Field's recent book, *A Mighty Purpose*. Adam presents vivid and detailed accounts of Jim Grant's ability to mobilize action for children in the most difficult circumstances – in poor countries round the world, midst wars and civil conflict and often under brutal, self-serving dictatorships. Adam also recounts how Jim boldly sold the idea of holding a world summit for children, to set goals for the next decade.

At first, the rest of the UN was far from convinced. WHO was initially critical. The UN bureaucracy opposed the calling of a meeting at summit level on the grounds that it was against UN rules. (The World Summit for Children was thus technically not a UN meeting but a meeting held in the UN

building called by six governments and attended by 71 heads of state, far exceeding expectations and a record at the time). The practical demonstrations of goals leading to action and to worldwide achievement gradually shifted opinion. Further summits were held and UN has adopted many further goals, including most recently the SDGs, the sustainable development goals.

The adoption of the SDGs presents a new opportunity –and a vital reason to remember the lessons of Grant’s approach. The SDGs present new and complicated challenges. Several critics have decried the large number –17 goals and 169 targets. How will they all lead to concrete, country-country action?

Jim Grant and UNICEF in the 1980s and early 1990s showed the way – on what countries need to do and how the different parts of the UN at country level as well as globally, can provide the encouragement, technical support, monitoring and catalytic finance to help get national action underway and keep it sustained:

UN country teams must work with governments and civil society to help turn the SDGs into national priorities, plans and programmes for action.

The UN country teams must then work to help mobilize commitment, funding and whatever else is needed to accelerate action. UN Women and UNICEF long ago pioneered processes of publicly reviewing national expenditure budgets to see how well the proposed allocations in these budgets were aligned with the priorities of women and children. This process should now be extended to all the SDGs.

For poorer and least developed countries, extra finance will be needed. The World Bank and IMF have already committed themselves to the SDGs and must be made part of this process –along with bilateral donors and civil society.

Monitoring and reporting of progress in each country is vital –with the results publically and widely disseminated and compared with other countries.

So far this may seem merely good logic, ticking the boxes of a log-frame of orthodox planning. But Jim Grant showed that much more was required: leadership at all levels to accelerate action, leadership to sustain the focus, leadership to mobilize widespread participation and leadership to galvanize the media, especially to report results and maintain interest and attention on country-by-country progress in relation to the goals.

Leadership is not only from the top. UNICEF has a decentralized structure with offices in some 150 countries and within countries, strong civil society support. UNDP is equally widespread and supports the UN Resident Representatives (RCs) and the country-led teams. The country level teams must now be motivated and mobilized behind the SDGs. Critics might say this is a hopeless task. The RCs are often chairs of a disparate talking group, with UN agencies, mostly taking instructions from their individual headquarters. This must change. Only if follow up to the SDGs is made the top priority by each and every UN agency – and their field offices brought into supporting these

priorities along with their national counterparts – will full SDG implementation be possible.

Fortunately, UN support for implementation need not be a vain hope. The very breadth of the SDGs shows that they encompass all the main concerns of all the UN funds and specialized agencies: poverty, food and hunger, health, education, women and gender, energy, economy, inequality, habitation, consumption, climate, marine and terrestrial eco-systems, infrastructure and above all, peace. The collective aim is to promote peaceful inclusive societies and sustainability.[1]

This long list of SDGs(1) seems daunting and excessively diverse. But one can identify the main UN agencies which should take leadership in key areas and drive local action. For instance:

Poverty Reduction – World Bank and UN country teams

Food and hunger – FAO + WHO + WFP and World Bank

Nutrition – WHO + UNICEF + UNFPA and World Bank

Education – UNESCO and UNICEF and World Bank

Women – UN Women + UN country teams

Water – UNICEF and World Bank + UN country teams

Habitation and Cities–Habitat + UNDP and UN country teams

Energy – UNDP and World Bank

Economy, employment + consumption – World Bank + ILO and UN country teams

Climate – UNEP and FAO and World Bank

Marine Eco-systems – UNEP

Eco-Systems – UNEP and World Bank

Infrastructure – World Bank

Sustainability, Institutions and inequality – World Bank + ILO + UN country teams.

With strong support from their headquarters, the many agencies and funds could provide the UN leadership for each of the SDGs at country level. It could breathe new life and collective purpose within the UN country teams. Competition between the agencies and between countries is a vital part of the process. Reports on progress must then be taken to higher levels –to regional and eventually to global level, and at global level to ECOSOC and the Security Council. A timetable is needed for reporting on country action, regional reviews and global meetings in 2018 and 2021

for heads of state, following the lead Grant established in monitoring the goals for children and mobilizing further action.

There are at least three major challenges which will need to be overcome. First is the willingness of the World Bank and all the UN agencies to work together at country level towards the implementation of the SDGs. This will require strong leadership from within the Bank and within all the UN funds and specialized agencies.

Second, is the need to strengthen the professional capacity in several parts of the UN in order that they are able to work together with other parts of the UN and with the World Bank. This will be far from easy. The Bank usually has many more staff, much greater resources and much greater economic expertise. Intellectually Bank economists often find difficulty in recognizing that the UN also has considerable expertise, though usually of a more multi-disciplinary nature and often based on richer and more detailed local experience.

The leadership of Jim Grant provides a relevant example in these areas. Early on, Grant worked closely with Robert McNamara, former President of the World Bank to create a Child Survival task force, to bring together the Bank, USAID, UNICEF and WHO. Jim Grant also persuaded the Managing Director of the IMF to reassess its approach to structural adjustment. This led to UNICEF proposals for Adjustment with a Human Face, challenging the World Bank and the IMF to consider policies to preserve the most essential social services, even in times of austerity. Later, in 1989, Jim Grant brought together the Bank, UNDP, UNESCO and UNICEF to mobilize international action towards goals for education. This led to the world conference on education in Thailand which set goals for educational expansion over the 1990s.

Today, cooperation between the UN and the Bank should be easier, since the Bank and the IMF have both signed on to the SDGs and the UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-Moon and the President of the World Bank, Jim Yong Kim, have worked towards closer relations between their own institutions. Both the Bank and IMF have also published research findings showing how extremes of inequality have slowed growth and development.

Third, and perhaps most difficult, is to mobilize action in fragile and conflict-ridden states. For these, there is no one simple answer, though again Jim Grant demonstrated fresh thinking and bold initiatives. He pioneered Zones of Peace for immunizing children in Ecuador, then Uganda and later Lebanon, Sudan and Iraq. This progress for children helped lay the foundations for broader actions for peace, in Central America and other countries.

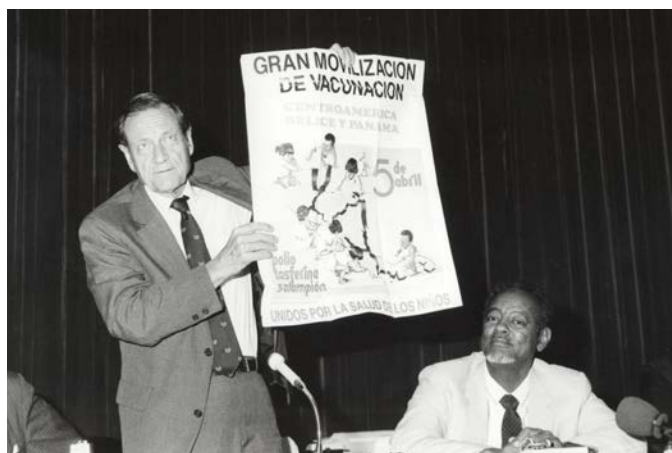
Could all this happen? Yes, it is possible. Will it happen? This is more debatable. But implementing the SDGs shows the magnitude of the prize –for tackling climate change, eco-destruction, for improving human conditions throughout the world and for ending the worst of poverty. Together, the SDGs point the way to a world of greater equity living at peace. Leadership from governments in their support of strengthening leadership within the UN is a vital first step.

Jim Grant's leadership shows the possibilities of dramatic progress by beginning in smaller steps and initially focused on more limited goals. Action should not wait until every piece of action or agency is agreed. Accelerated advance in any one of the SDG goals can demonstrate the possibilities of progress in other areas. As Jim Grant demonstrated, momentum is built, step by step. Leadership is needed to get started, in each and every part of the UN, not waiting for all the others. Now is the time to begin.

**Sir Richard Jolly is Honorary Professor and Research Associate of the Institute of Development Studies at the University of Sussex. Richard Jolly is a trustee of OXFAM, a director of the Overseas Development Institute and Chairman of the UN Association of the United Kingdom. From 1982-2000 he was an Assistant Secretary-General of the UN, first as Deputy Executive Director of UNICEF and from 1996 as Coordinator of the UNDP's Human Development Report.*

[1] The Sustainable Development Goals

- 1. Poverty – End poverty in all its forms everywhere[21]*
- 2. Food – End hunger, achieve food security and improved nutrition and promote sustainable agriculture[22]*
- 3. Health – Ensure healthy lives and promote well-being for all at all ages[23]*
- 4. Education – Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all[24]*
- 5. Women – Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls[25]*
- 6. Water – Ensure availability and sustainable management of water and sanitation for all[26]*
- 7. Energy – Ensure access to affordable, reliable, sustainable and modern energy for all[27]*
- 8. Economy – Promote sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all[28]*
- 9. Inequality – Reduce inequality within and among countries[30]*
- 10. Habitation – Make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable[31]*
- 11. Consumption – Ensure sustainable consumption and production patterns[32]*
- 12. Climate – Take urgent action to combat climate change and its impacts[33]*
- 13. Marine-ecosystems – Conserve and sustainably use the oceans, seas and marine resources for sustainable development[34]*
- 14. Ecosystems – Protect, restore and promote sustainable use of terrestrial ecosystems, sustainably manage forests, combat desertification, and halt and reverse land degradation and halt biodiversity loss[35]*
- 15. Infrastructure – Build resilient infrastructure, promote inclusive and sustainable industrialization and foster innovation[29]*
- 16. Promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all and build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels[36]*
- 17. Sustainability – Strengthen the means of implementation and revitalize the global partnership for sustainable development[37]*



UNICEF Executive Director James Grant holding a placard on polio immunization and sitting next to Ahmed Abdel-Rahaman, who was responsible for relief and rehabilitating programmes in the Sudan. | © UNICEF/UNI16504/UNICEF Photographer



UNICEF Executive Director James Grant shows a chart measuring individual countries' progress toward achieving the 1995 'mid-decade' goals during his address to open the exhibition 'Reaching Goals and Keeping Promises'. | © UNICEF/UNI49578/Mera1994

Remembering J.P. Grant

By Adhiratha Keefe*

In 1985, after I had completed a solo swim across the English Channel between Britain and France for the 40th anniversary of the United Nations, the New York Times reported the "gift" and noted that I worked for UNICEF. Back at work a few days later, the editor of Staff News requested that I come to the Executive Director's office and bring a pair of swimming goggles with me. It turned out that Jim had asked if he could wear the goggles. When I reached the office, Jim put the goggles on and then produced the award that UNICEF had received a few months earlier from the Club of Rome for its "Water" projects, asking for a photograph to be taken. Jim's spontaneity and his linking of the two things simply cracked me up.

On another occasion, I met Jim early one early morning in September 1988 coming out of the UNICEF building on his way to a breakfast meeting with an ambassador in a hotel across the road. He inquired what I was doing at that hour and I told him that this was the day for the seven-mile peace walk of delegates and staff around the UN community in Manhattan to mark the opening of the General Assembly. I added that this year, Sri Chinmoy, the leader of peace meditations at the UN, would be lifting individuals up on a special apparatus as part of the "Lifting up the world with a oneness heart" initiative. Jim wanted to know more about how the lifting worked and expressed an interest in participating if the timing worked out.

When he came out of the breakfast meeting and escorted his guests across the street, he gave me the thumbs up sign, went through the revolving door to the UNICEF lobby, excused himself for a few minutes and popped back out saying that he wished to be lifted. The timing was impeccable, because Sri Chinmoy had been tipped off to Jim's plan and was waiting to greet him. As he came down from the lifting platform, Jim bowed them and exclaimed: "Now that peace is breaking out everywhere, we have to help push it up!"

** Adhiratha Keefe joined the UN Secretariat in 1973 and UNICEF in 1974. From 2005 to 2006 was on loan from UNICEF to the UN Secretariat for special information management and archives projects. Left UNICEF in 2007 and until 2010 was a records, archives and information management consultant specialist for UNFPA. In 2015, served in a similar capacity for the UN Secretariat, Counter Terrorism Implementation Task Force.*

Jim Grant: A Model for Future Generations

By Agop Kayayan*

I remember a staff meeting in Guatemala where Tony Kennedy as Representative made a briefing about the event in New York where the Child Survival Revolution was discussed. I was all excited. Finally, the top leadership of the organisation wanted to give a clear and worthy direction. I was on board.

In 1983, the UNICEF office for Central America prepared an ambitious Child Survival Project for Central America. We only asked for US\$ 30 million. We got it quickly funded thanks to Jim's enthusiastic support, Teresa Albanez' close participation in the negotiations with the Italian Government and the European Union. Marco [Vianello Chiodo] provided that gentle and effective poking which resulted in a commitment for US\$ 15 million from the Italian Government, with a phone call to the Commissioner for Development of the EU asking for another 15 million. You can imagine the rest.

While in UNICEF I was very enthusiastic about its direction. When I retired, I had time to think about Jim's actions and it was then that I realised how effective he was as a social activist. He is a model for future generations!

* Agop Kayayan, officer with UNICEF in Brazil Office and Guatemala Area Office from 1978 to 1998.

One of the 10 Greatest Men of the Last Century

By Akram Piracha*

In my view, Grant was one of the 10 greatest men of the last century.

He inherited a great organisation, UNICEF, and took it to newer heights.

We said our last goodbye to him on that December 1994 afternoon on the 13th floor of UNICEF House as he went to the Northern Westchester Hospital Centre from where he went to his maker.

I first met him in the 1970s in Washington DC when I was sent from New York Headquarters to attend his ODC Conference and heard his analysis of the oil crisis. On my return and sharing the thrilling experience of listening to Grant, with Perry Hanson, Newton Bowles – old China hands – and Dick Heyward, they all commented “Oh Jim, we know him.”

Then he came to head UNICEF and I met him in Bangkok where I was working. We had closer working relations during my assignments in New York starting in 1984, including a number of years when I had the good fortune of being a few doors away from his office.

Grant had enormous energy and very limited time to do do all that he was determined to do. He was always in a rush, always working. To brief him for his meetings with Asian Heads of State during the UN General Assembly, he was literally running between UNICEF office and the GA Hall. Although younger, I followed him out of breath as I briefed him. I have never forgotten that.

His commitment to what he was going to do was unique and unfailing, whether walking around Manhattan looking for “air space” above buildings to build his nest or the direction he could give to

his work for UNICEF. He built his glass house in the UNICEF Greetings Cards building and gifted us the UNICEF House, as well as packaging new ways of doing women's and children's immunisation work, the GOBI-FFF program and the like.

There were people who shared their ideas with him, like Lou Shapiro who dug out the idea of ORS from The Lancet. There were also people who had their own personal agendas to pursue with him and personally benefited. He listened to both and everyone for ideas that he could shape into actions.

While we have to remember him for the great things he accomplished, we must also remember that his achievements were not without paying the price of hardship and turmoil. His faith and single-mindedness for the causes he embraced also resulted in creating the elements of staff uprisings, Executive Board demands and battles and audit issues pointing to mismanagement by some staff members. These were the people who, in pursuit of personal benefit, tried to tarnish the work of a great man whose heart and mind was in the right place.

That is my Jim Grant whom, because of my cultural upbringing, I always addressed as Mr. Grant but professionally seldom failed to say the things that had to be said in privacy as his special assistant.

**Akram Piracha is a former Senior Assistant to the UNICEF Executive Director for global operations. Over a career with UNICEF lasting over 30 years, also served as Head of Mission in Laos and Thailand, and undertook country assignments in Indonesia, China, Yugoslavia, Sweden, Iraq, Pakistan, Somalia, Romania, Angola, Denmark, Sudan, Namibia and Ethiopia.*

Delivering BFHI (Grant's Way)

By Alan Brody*

In mid-May 1991, my UNICEF Representative in Turkey called me into his office. Jim Grant had just promised WHO's Dr. Nakajima in Geneva that Turkey would organise the launch of a global Baby Friendly Hospital Initiative before the end of June. Grant hoped this new "BFHI" campaign could give some mass mobilisation pizzazz to breastfeeding promotion work that was faltering badly around the globe.

We had six weeks to put together (from scratch) an international meeting opened by top politicians; make arrangements for top scientists to speak; inveigle over 200 of Turkey's top obstetricians and paediatricians to interrupt holidays to come to Ankara that week for a workshop; and make sure that Ankara's top Government maternity hospital would be ready to be certified as "baby friendly" by some very uncompromising international breastfeeding activists.

The Representative knew all this was impossible, but also that Jim Grant never took no for an answer. "You're the Health Officer, Alan," he told me. "I make you fully responsible."

In the end, my job was mainly to ensure a timely delivery of the world's first accredited Baby Friendly Hospital. The rest was Jim Grant's magic. And six weeks later, his old friend Prime Minister Turgut Ozal, with 15 mustachioed members of a newly installed Cabinet by his side, stood before 300 distinguished national and international dignitaries of the health world. There, Ozal delivered the world's first (but not its last) public speech by a head of state talking exclusively about breastfeeding!

**Alan Brody joined UNICEF Nigeria in 1984 as ORT Promotion Officer. Subsequent postings in health, emergency work, and planning took him to Turkey, Afghanistan (Pakistan), China, and from 2000 to 2006 he was Representative in Swaziland.*



UNICEF Executive Director James Grant raises the UN flag on one of the 30 relief trucks leaving Nairobi, Kenya on 3 April 1989, two days after the official launch of Operation Lifeline Sudan. As Personal Representative of the Secretary-General, Mr. Grant led the inter-agency Operation Lifeline Sudan to bring food and relief supplies to non-combatants on both side of the civil conflict in Sudan.

Mr. James P. Grant served as UNICEF's third Executive Director with the rank of Under-Secretary-General of the United Nations from 1980-1995. His unflagging commitment and rare capacity to translate his vision into concrete global actions for children contributed to saving millions of children suffering from the "silent emergencies," caused by poverty and preventable illnesses. Highlights of his work include the Child Survival and Development Revolution, emphasizing low cost, practical methods - immunization, oral rehydration, etc. - to improve child welfare; implementing "corridors of peace" in warring countries to reach children affected by war; launching the 1990 World Summit for Children, committing countries to concrete goals for children; and promotion of the Convention on the Rights of the Child, the most widely ratified human rights treaty to-date. © UNICEF/UNI98144/James1989

Jim Grant's Vatican Meeting

By Allegra Morelli*

At two o'clock one Saturday morning the phone woke me up. It was Jim Grant with an urgent request that I arrange a meeting for him with the Pope. He was coming to Rome with a member of the US Congress for a trilateral meeting later that day and was leaving on Monday evening. He said he had heard that a certain Monsignor Gallina could help me organise this.

This was typical of Jim, he just believed that anything could be done! As a member of UNICEF's Italian Committee and in charge of External Relations I knew him well by then. It was my duty to take care of his visits, accompanying him and act as interpreter for him in his meetings and press conferences.

As soon as it was decently possible, I called the Vatican and asked to speak with Monsignor Gallina. When he answered, I relayed Jim's message to him. He recognised Jim's name immediately, but he told me that that protocol called for requests to be submitted through the Mission in New York. However, he told me that he himself could meet Jim and would be happy to see him on Monday at noon.

I spent a terrible weekend, worrying that Monsignor Gallina would not be important enough for Jim.

At the airport, waiting to receive Jim with full VIP honours, I had to run after him in the arrival area because, as usual, he was so fast and travelling with no luggage. He was in his normal pleasant mood and accepted the news that he would only meet someone from the Secretariat of State with a smile.

At the Vatican on Monday, we were escorted through the magnificent "Stanze di Raffaello" to the

Secretariat of State and our meeting with Monsignor Gallina. In this impressive setting, these two completely different but interesting personalities animatedly discussed the banning of UNICEF from all news reported by the Vatican because of its support for birth control.

As Jim enthusiastically explained how important UNICEF's role was for children and that the organisation was approaching its 40th anniversary, Monsignor Gallina listened very seriously with great interest and then said: "You said, forty years – well, the Catholic Church is two thousand years old." Jim was left speechless!

Nevertheless, the visit was a great success, Jim was asked to write an article for the next issue of the Vatican newspaper L'Osservatore Romano, which is distributed throughout the world to all parishes. He wrote the article in the VIP Lounge at the airport and we had to keep the Swissair flight waiting for him to finish it. The article was published in full the following Sunday, thus starting a completely new relationship between UNICEF and the Holy See.

**Allegra Morelli ended her career in UNICEF as Deputy Director of the Division of Information in charge of Public Affairs, which included relations with NGOs, Special Events, Good will Ambassadors and the Holy See.*

Jim and the World

By Augustine Veliath*

The world said "Children have needs"
And Jim said "Children's needs are their rights"

The world said "We all love children"
And Jim asked "How much are you investing in them?"

The world said "We have these wonderful projects for children"
And Jim said "Wonderful, let us go to scale. Let us reach every child"

The world said, "There are thousands of organisations working for children"
Jim said "Let us have tens of thousands"

The world said "But there are already tens of thousands of doctors, nurses and teachers working for children"
And Jim said "Let us have millions"

The world agreed and said "Education for All", "Health for All"
Jim said "All for Health", "All for Education"

The world said "Universities"
Jim said "Primary Schools"

The World said "Airports"
Jim said "Public Buses"

The world said "Adjustment"
Jim said "With a human face"

The world said "A good teaching hospital in every district"
Jim said "A teaching district for every hospital"

The world said "It is sad that so many children die"
Jim said "It is unethical and obscene"

The world said "Let us teach the mother"
Jim said "Does she have a little more say? And does she have a little more time she can call her own?"

The world said "Look, apartheid has ended"
Jim said "What about the apartheid of gender?"

The world said, "The Cold War has ended"
Jim said "Has the peace dividend gone to children?"

The world said "How sad, Jim is no more"
Jim must be saying "Long live the children"

(A tribute paid to James Grant at a prayer meeting soon after his death by the author, the then UNICEF Communications Officer at Lucknow, India).

**Augustine Veliath served for 23 years as a UNICEF Communication Specialist, working in Uttar Pradesh and Bihar, India. He also worked on the India National Mission on Immunisation.*

Jim Grant, a Man of Vision and Commitment

By Baquer Namazi*

I was with UNICEF as Planning Officer in Bangkok for two years (1968–70) and returned in 1984. In March that year, I first met Jim Grant and we had an exciting exchange on the enormous transformations that had taken place, particularly under his leadership. UNICEF had moved forward from a service delivery body to an entity of ideas and action.

At one stage, I was given the task of writing up the UNICEF Board paper on children in situations of armed conflict and, during a series of meetings in a number of European countries to consult with many champions of children, I was roped into a meeting of European NGOs promoting the cause of the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC). After being well tutored by these friends and listening to their complaint that UNICEF was not taking work on drafting the convention seriously, I soon realised – with the help of an outstanding international lawyer, Philip Alston – the potential of the Convention as an advocacy tool for promoting basic services for children in programmatic terms.

I spoke to Jim and stressed the need for UNICEF to be engaged in the drafting process, which had been going on for nearly ten years. While at first he did not appear enthusiastic, he encouraged us to do more work on this subject. With help of senior colleagues, including Richard Jolly, a panel was set up to discuss the links with UNICEF programmes. We brought children from war zones to a consultative meeting and policy-makers were able to listen to these pained voices. Every leading expert on child-related issues, especially health and education, was consulted. As a result, UNICEF's position on the Convention was formally outlined for the first time in the 1986 Board paper on Children in Armed Conflict.

Once Jim saw the great advantages of the Convention, especially the article on the child's rights to peace and safety, he promptly used the concept of 'children as zones of peace' – a theme which had been promoted by the late Nils Thedin – to launch the initiative in a number of countries, starting with need to reach all children for immunisation against child-killer diseases. He brought his vision and commitment to the cause and gave a much needed boost to speeding up the drafting process.

I also recall that during my brief term as Representative in Somalia, our team on the ground concluded that the overriding priority was education, especially for girls. This met with some resistance by those in New York who felt that immunisation was priority number one. I met Jim in his house and he assured me that applying the country-based approach was correct, saying that by taking up the cause of education we had an early start up on the next "revolution": Education for All. We did so, without neglecting immunisation.

On another occasion, when we were striving to scale up the partnership and parallel funding system in an innovative way in Egypt, colleagues in the Programme Funding Office (PFO) reminded us that we were working for UNICEF, while I stressed that we were working for children and that UNICEF was the vehicle for serving children. I took this up with Jim and once again he assured us that the paramount cause was the well-being of underserved children and not necessarily raising the UNICEF flag.

**Baquer Namazi retired UNICEF Country Representative and civil society activist.*

A Lamp and an Engine

By Belisario Betancur*

Responding to a UNICEF initiative, the Ministry of Health of Colombia decided in 1983 to organise mass vaccination days for children under five. With James Grant at the head as visionary, the preparations and technical capacity-building by health officials, logistics organisation and widespread social mobilisation, including the country's major mass media, were a huge success, with levels of coverage never before achieved.

In late 1984, Colombia defined the guidelines of its National Plan for Child Survival and Development as a strategy to reduce mortality and morbidity among children under five due to diarrhoeal diseases, acute respiratory infections, perinatal causes, communicable diseases preventable with vaccines, malnutrition and psycho-affective deprivation. This Plan was inspired by the success of vaccination and lessons learned about social mobilisation, and was supported by UNICEF, with Grant enlightening and encouraging as always.

The Deputy Minister of Education, Vicky Colbert, mobilised the entire educational system for preventive health education, and through this initiative the education sector contributed to the achievement of health goals.

Due to these initiatives and results, Grant visited Colombia on several occasions, accompanied by Teresa Albáñez and Fritz Lehrisson, UNICEF Director for Latin America and the Caribbean, and they showed how Colombia was an example for the world in achieving health goals, in close cooperation between the health and education ministries.

The Plan, which remained in force until 1989, dramatically reduced the mortality rates of children under five.

This was achieved with Grant at the head, lighting up like a huge lamp and driving like a powerful engine. He was undoubtedly an apostle.

Praise be to James Grant, beacon and guide for the children of the world! For the children of all worlds!

**Belisario Betancour is a former President of Colombia.*



On 20 November 1989, Under-Secretary-General for Human Rights Jan Martenson, UNICEF Goodwill Ambassador Audrey Hepburn and UNICEF Executive-Director James Grant celebrate UN General Assembly adoption of the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC). The CRC, the first legally binding code of child rights, turns 25 in 2014. Its four guiding principles are non-discrimination, best interest of the child, survival and development, and respect for the views of the child. | © UNICEF/UNI174734/Isaac1989



The appointment of international entertainer Harry Belafonte as a Goodwill Ambassador for UNICEF was announced by UNICEF's Executive Director James P. Grant (right) at a press conference, 4 March 1987m United Nations, New York. Mr.Belafonte will carry out his first mission (20-30 March) to Dakar, Senegal, as chairman of a symposium to enlist the support of African artists, writers and educationalists in mobilizing people behind child survival and development. | © UNICEF/UNI24027/Solmssen

Jim Grant and Audrey Hepburn

By Boudewijn Mohr*

When I was head of the Programme Funding Section in Geneva, I accompanied Jim Grant to the Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the National Committee. On the spur of the moment he then asked me to accompany him by car to Brussels to a meeting with the then European Commissioner for Humanitarian Aid and Development, Lorenzo Natali.

Sitting side by side in the back of the car, he told me he would travel on to the home of Audrey Hepburn in Geneva to ask her to become UNICEF Goodwill Ambassador. Grant seemed happy as a child about meeting her shortly. And then out of the blue he asked me what I thought about it all. Me? I was astounded, why ask me? It was typical for Grant to spring such surprise questions, it had happened to me before. Then it dawned on me that it was perhaps because of Hepburn's Dutch connection, which he knew certainly something about.

I said we in Holland were proud of her Dutch past. I remembered very well how she often recalled the famine of winter 1944–1945 in Holland and how she had benefited from food and medical relief through UNICEF as a child after the war. I had myself benefited from the very same program as a five-year-old. Although much younger than Audrey Hepburn, I also had a vivid memory of the famine which we, as a family, had to endure for many months. Dutch people had exactly that in common with her. I was therefore genuinely thrilled – and it showed on my face – to see her join UNICEF.

I was one of very few who was in on the secret, but not for long. Jim appointed Audrey Hepburn Goodwill Ambassador for UNICEF on 8 March 1988.

**Boudewijn Mohr joined UNICEF in 1985 after a career in corporate banking in London and New York, with a first assignment in Programme Funding in Geneva. He worked briefly in PFO at Headquarters and subsequently accepted an assignment as West and Central Africa Regional Adviser for Monitoring and Evaluation with special responsibilities for relations with the African Development Bank. After retirement, he carried out consultancies for over 10 years, all of them for UNICEF in Africa.*

Jim Grant, the Leader

By Claudio Sepulveda Alvarez*

It is an October morning in 1994 at Esenboga airport in Ankara as I wait for my boss, UNICEF's Executive Director Jim Grant, whom I have been representing in Turkey for the previous five years. Rumours are already circulating within the agency of his evolving illness, although 15 years at the helm had not dented his iron character, his fierce resolve to carry forward his task on behalf of the world's children. Then Jim appears and the 70-plus years he had always carried well are suddenly there before me.

My untrained 'clinical eye' is struck by his ashen face, by an off-focus gaze that had never been his. His well-known blue suit hangs over a body incapable of filling it.

Behind him looms Ihsan Dogramaci, his personality enveloping the figure preceding him, some 10 years Jim's senior, with all the appearance of protecting the protector of the world's children. They have been friends for 30 years now, since Jim's tenure as USAID Country Office chief in Turkey in the early '60s. Some would also say that Jim had been appointed UNICEF's chief through Dogramaci's connections in the United States ... but that is a different story.

I had requested Jim to come when we met in May at the Convention on the Rights of the Child evaluation meeting in New York. Despite five years of unrelenting pressure, the Convention had failed to get through the Grand National Assembly, Turkey's unicameral parliament.

Today, I regret having asked Jim to come. No one has the right to ask such an effort from a terminally-ill man. Jim has arrived in Turkey hard on the heels of a meeting of education ministers in Geneva, just after another one in London whose purpose I do not remember. This three-legged journey will be Jim's last, if one discounts a short visit to Mexico, which is "just next door" if one lives in Manhattan.

"Here I am, Claudio," says a voice much less firm than he would have liked, than I want to hear. "Ready for any meeting you may arrange; Ihsan has briefed me where we stand." Nothing changes. I may be Jim's representative; in Turkey, but that is only possible in partnership with Ihsan Dogramaci, former minister, founder of more than one university, industrial entrepreneur, millionaire,

politician without par, executive international bodies such as UNICEF, WHO, the International Paediatric Society ... and personal friend of all Turkey's presidents since Ataturk.

Ihsan 'bey' knows that this is Jim's last visit, and I also suspect it,. Jim hasn't come only to obtain final approval for the Convention. He has come to say farewell to Turkey and to his friend Ihsan. Three days of intense work will follow. Meetings with the President and members of the Grand National Assembly – from all parties, Social-Democrats to Muslim fundamentalists – all of whom promise their support, their vote, that is. Dinner with the President at his residence. Jim – global magician of unlikely scenarios and presidential audiences – will pull a chemical test out of his pocket and demonstrate to the President that the table salt is not iodated.

I attend a public evaluation of children policies, led by President Suleyman Demirel (nominated after Turgut Ozal's untimely death), with a panel of five ministers and chaired by Ihsan. The diplomatic corps attends in full. The Convention must be ratified. And so it will, two months later. Jim's charisma has done it once again. I was right to call him.

Ihsan Dogramaci's farewell party for Jim is an apotheosis, but the air is pregnant with another silent farewell. The gestures of the protagonists acquire a different, transcendent, meaning. The ritual words as glasses are raised have a different ring, telling the guests more than their face value. For some of those present, there is a sense of foreboding ... this time, there will be no return.

It's five o'clock in the morning and Ihsan and I are at the airport again, waiting for Jim. As we wait, we exchange impressions, not about the visit, which is a foregone success, but about its protagonist, Jim. We agree: Jim is dying, and he knows it. He wants to die in the line of duty as he has always lived.

But this IS the end; it makes no sense.

"Jim, don't go to the Philippines, please. That's all your friends ask of you."

There is visible exhaustion on Jim's face illuminated by the lights in the VIP lounge, which is empty at this early hour – a prelude to the advancing solitude that awaits us all without distinction. Suddenly, unexpectedly, like a reflection, betrayal even, of a man whose mettle can no longer be the same, Jim answers: "Ihsan, if it is you who ask, I won't go."

The embraces are tighter than usual. As we walk to the plane, the sun has not yet come out. The breeze is cold, announcing winter ... in more than one sense. As he starts out on the steps up to the plane, Jim turns towards me and says simply: "Well done, Claudio."

I wasn't to see him again..

**Claudio Sepulveda Alvarez is a former UNICEF Turkey Representative. This contribution was written in October 1997 and a version has been published in Ambra (Contra el Olvido) [Amber: Against Forgetfulness], LOM Ed., Santiago, Chile, 2010.*

James Grant, the Super-Salesman for Children and Women

By Devinder das Chopra*

True ... where the child and the mother were concerned, Jim Grant knew or dealt with the concerned (or the unconcerned) people in his lifetime with great élan. He became a super-salesman for every child and every mother, worldwide.

Taking on the mantle of UNICEF's chief, he saw the field as part of his top-most priority, and advocated and converted political will at national level throughout the world in favour of UNICEF's massive constituency. For more than half of the world which did not know what the agency stood for – or only knew of it through its greeting cards – he personalised the agency's goals in millions of homes. By transforming these goals into everyone's concern, he led UNICEF towards becoming a billion dollar agency for the first time ever.

Two decades later, after Jim Grant's demise, UNICEF has tended to sink into oblivion, like the UNICEF cards! Why did that happen? Is it that UNICEF has once again to relive and go from one emergency to the next and, in the process, no longer be the universal appendage of an effective, viable UN development forum? Have we lost today what Jim Grant created with such dynamism to take on the problems that poor children and women suffer, or is it that UNICEF has not received the support to obtain the sort of leadership that James Grant personified?

**Devinder das Chopra, Regional Director of UNICEF SEIO (Andhra & Orissa) from 1984 to 1990, and International Officer and Assistant Chief of UNICEF Yemen from 1990 to 1994.*



UNICEF Executive Director James Grant and UNICEF Goodwill Ambassador Liv Ullman wave amid rising balloons during an event promoting child survival and development, at Demba Diop National Stadium in Dakar, the capital. | © UNICEF/UNI124853/Isaac1987



Executive Director James Grant claps hands with a crowd of children who are greeting him on his arrival to the village of Blablata. | © UNICEF/UNI50269/Pirozzi1994

The Human and Child-Friendly Side of James Grant

By Dorothy Rozga*

In late December 1985, Jim and his wife Ethel arrived in Belize to spend the holidays on the island of San Pedro Ambergris Caye. He knew that I was in an advanced stage of pregnancy and insisted that I not meet them at the airport. Maria Colton of the small Belize team thus met them on their arrival. Maria was very worried when she learned that the Executive Director's luggage had not arrived and reluctantly broke the bad news to him. Jim's simple response was: "No problem – Ethel has our swim suits in her purse and I have her Christmas gift in my pocket. We don't need our luggage. Go home and enjoy the holidays with your family."

After Christmas, I arrived to accompany Mr. Grant on his official visit to Belize – 34 weeks pregnant and accompanied by my 15-month-old son Camilo. On taking his first look at Camilo, Grant's face lit up with a warm smile. He took Camilo from my arms and for the next two days he carried him to every one of our official meetings – rarely putting him down. Afterwards Belize's Prime Minister, Ministers, Permanent Secretaries, and other officials often recounted the image of Camilo in one of Grant's arm, while his other arm fished in his pocket for oral rehydration salts to help tell his story to whomever he thought could help bring about a child survival revolution.

**Dorothy Rozga is a child's rights professional with a background in public health and over 40 years of experience in the non-profit sector, the last 30 years being served with UNICEF. A former UNICEF Representative in Tanzania, she was appointed Executive Director of ECPAT in 2013.*

Two Powerful Memories of Jim Grant

By Eimi Watanabe*

I recall that, during a stay in New Delhi, we had a particularly difficult meeting with a senior minister who was totally unreceptive to Jim's messages, despite Jim's mastery of Indian facts and figures and his charm, and despite all the efforts the country office had made to prepare the ground. We were basically roundly "dismissed" after some 15 minutes. On coming out, I was devastated, but Jim turned to me and said: "That was a great meeting, Eimi!" with that unforgettable smile. I couldn't believe my ears! Later on, I came to understand that this was Jim's way of encouraging and supporting his front-line soldiers.

On another occasion, a rare experience took place one Saturday afternoon in JPG's office, when Pratima Kale, then representative in the Philippines, and I (then Chief of the Asia Section) joined him for a meeting. We finished whatever business we had gathered to discuss, and then Jim launched into a long, captivating and incisive discourse on the different paths of land reform East Asian countries had taken and their impact on later developments. Later, I mulled over Jim's intent. Certainly not idle chatter nor showing off his superior knowledge, which would have been totally uncharacteristic. I believe he was imparting the importance of a deeper and broader understanding of development issues for us to be effective development workers, and demonstrating that his choice of focused strategies for UNICEF was very much grounded on such knowledge.

**Eimi Watanabe is a former Chief of UNICEF's Asia Section and Representative for India. Served with UNICEF from 1977 to 1989.*



President Bill Clinton and UNICEF Executive Director James Grant, holding a copy of the 1994 SOWC before presenting it to the President, sit together at the rostrum during the White House ceremony. | © UNICEF/UNI29060/Isaac1993



UNICEF Executive Director James Grant speaks at a UNICEF/Overseas Development Council sponsored luncheon at the National Press Club. | © UNICEF/UNI29094/Isaac1993

How Jim Grant Put Africa on the UNICEF Map

By Fouad Kronfol*

In the early 1980s, almost half of Africa's countries were suffering from a terrible drought. UNICEF's Africa Section had no capacity to serve the continent's 50 states as well as deal with the drought, and Jacques Beaumont in the Emergency Section was overwhelmed. With the Executive Board grumbling that UNICEF was not active in the poorest continent, Jim Grant was asked to submit a management report on what UNICEF would do.

I was transferred from Hanoi to HQ and Jim told me: " you will head Africa Section, you will prepare the report for the Board and I want to see things happen in Africa ASAP. " Although UNICEF had two regions, East and West Africa, I decided to research all aspects related to both regions together. This study brought out a number of issues and forced us to new thinking about Sub-Saharan Africa as a whole. The main recommendation was to upgrade some 25 country offices to fully-fledged Representative status, as well as provide adequate staffing and funding for substantially increased programs.

Meanwhile I asked Jim and obtained his support to strengthen the Africa Section, to give us responsibility for emergency and regular activities and authority to handle All-Africa issues. Luckily both Regional Directors, Mary Racelis and Bertram Collins, were most cooperative. The sticky point became my recommendation for the upgrading of Country Offices. Many senior colleagues thought that it was risky to confront the Executive Board with yet another large staffing increase. The draft document was discussed at an Africa Representatives meeting in Nairobi, where I impressed upon Jim that the political winds were in his favour and that we should take the risk

of proceeding with the strategy we had outlined.... Jim finally agreed, literally on his way to the airport leaving Nairobi!!!

The Executive Board not only approved the document enthusiastically, but Jim was commended for this approach. Within a short time, UNICEF staffing and programs in Africa grew from less than 12 percent to more than 40 percent of the worldwide budget and field capacity. The makeup of the two regions was dramatically changed to reflect better management. Marco Vianello Chiodo managed to get us the bulk of Italy's US\$ 100 million contribution, and many other donors joined in this expanded program.

Meanwhile, the Africa Section grew to become by far the largest geographical section under Manou Assadi's Programme Field Service Division. We also adopted the first open-space office setup in New York HQ, which proved a great success.

Grant realised that to attain the goals of the Child Survival Revolution, and those of the Universal Child Immunisation campaign, he needed to bring Africa "up to speed". While China, India and other Asian countries had the large populations, Africa's 50 plus countries represented a sizable share of the world and had to be given special attention. He built up close relations with WHO's Regional Director, Dr. Monekosso, which later led to their launching the "Bamako Initiative" for primary health care in Africa.

In more ways than one, Jim Grant managed to place Africa at the centre of UNICEF's global efforts in the child survival and development domain.

**Fouad Kronfol served UNICEF (from 1959 to 1995) in various capacities under four Executive Directors – Maurice Pate, Henry Labouisse, Jim Grant and Carol Bellamy.*

Jim Grant, a Special Man

By George Kassis*

It was already common knowledge that Jim Grant's health was rapidly deteriorating.

For the previous nine years, UNICEF had been promoting the concept of a "Change for Good" program whereby airline passengers on international flights would donate foreign coins and notes to benefit children's programs worldwide. Finally, the long awaited and lobbied for breakthrough happened. The U.K. Committee for UNICEF had convinced British Airways to partner with UNICEF on "Change for Good". BA's Chief Executive Officer asked that Jim Grant join him at the press conference in London announcing the partnership the very next day. Reluctantly, we contacted Mary Cahill with this request.

That same evening, Jim Grant was on the red-eye flight to London's Heathrow Airport. The press conference took place the next morning, and Jim was on his way back within three hours of arrival. You would think he would have gone home for some rest having travelled all night and criss-crossed the Atlantic. Not Jim: he was back at his desk by mid-afternoon.

The "Change for Good" partnership went on for over a decade. It generated millions of dollars each year to support children's programs, not counting the priceless exposure it gave to UNICEF and the plight of children worldwide on every BA international flight, day in and day out. Talk of a special man!

**George Kassis joined UNICEF in 1980 as Deputy Representative at UNICEF Sanaa. Served as Africa Section Programme Officer at HQ from 1984 to 1987, Senior Programme Funding Officer at HQ from 1987 to 1990, and Deputy Director, Private Sector Fundraising, from 1990 to 1994.*

Jim Grant and Operation Lifeline Sudan

By Horst Cerni*

I first met Jim Grant in Vienna on 28 August 1979. He and his wife Ethel visited the UNICEF exhibit on Appropriate Technologies as part of the UN Conference on Science and Technology for Development. Grant introduced himself as the newly-appointed Executive Director of UNICEF. He liked our exhibit (pumps, solar cookers, etc.) and the fact that UNICEF was promoting low-cost technologies.

Almost ten years later (I had meanwhile been transferred to HQ in 1983 and was managing our Goodwill Ambassadors program), Grant called me one evening and said he would like Audrey Hepburn to go to Sudan for Operation Lifeline Sudan. I tried to convince him that this would be a perfect assignment for Harry Belafonte. But Grant didn't like to be argued with and said: "Didn't you hear me, I want Audrey Hepburn to go." And so she went and did a great job promoting child survival.

At the Memorial Tribute for Audrey Hepburn, Mr. Grant was already noticeably sick, but he valiantly continued leading UNICEF for another twenty months.

I retired from UNICEF a month after Grant's death in February 1995.

**Horst Cerni worked as Film Officer at HQ until 1973, when he was transferred to Santiago, Chile, and became Regional Information Officer for Latin America. From 1978 until 1983, he was stationed in Geneva, Switzerland and worked with European National Committees. From 1983 until retirement in 1995, he returned to HQ in charge of Special Events and Goodwill Ambassadors.*

James P. Grant, A Man in Perpetual Motion

By Jack Ling*

James P. Grant, the legendary third Executive Director of UNICEF, was a man in perpetual motion with a sharp intellect in identifying problems and choosing achievable targets. He was widely admired as an icon in international development circles, and had a messianic streak in going for what he dubbed "doable" goals, overcoming seemingly insurmountable obstacles.

Jim galvanised the international community for the global Child Survival and Development Revolution that reached thousands of millions of children, saved undernourished children from early deaths, prevented untold deaths of infants as a result of diarrhoea-induced dehydration, and stopped deadly infections and improved the development of many millions more by encouraging breastfeeding instead of infant formula bottle feeding.

I met Jim Grant in 1978 when he was the US member of UNICEF's Executive Board and founder and President of the Overseas Development Council. A year later he was appointed UNICEF's third Executive Director, starting on January 1, 1980. I worked for Jim for a little over two years as his Director of Communication and Chief of Protocol until my secondment to the World Health Organisation in June 1982.

The transition from UNICEF's first Executive Director, Maurice Pate, who launched and nurtured the agency's first 18 years, to Henry R. Labouisse was very smooth. Pate and Labouisse were both cautious and deliberate in their approach to work. Grant, on the other hand, was supercharged, in a hurry to get UNICEF to "shift gear" to a higher speed, which implied a mild rebuke to the steady but not quite up-to-speed record of his predecessors. Not surprisingly, in the initial months of his arrival at UNICEF, the team which worked closely with Labouisse greeted him with some trepidation.

His disastrous first meeting with the UNICEF Executive Board, which voted down his proposed new budget lines for two deputies at the Assistant Secretary General level, added to the malaise at HQ.

Within the year, Grant proved that he was a fast learner. He persisted with his gear-shifting approach, introduced a sense of urgency among the staff, galvanised the field offices for speedier implementation and made peace with the board.

He wanted to transform UNICEF from a respected and steady organisation for children into an aggressive advocate agency with a mandate that demanded attention at the highest political level. He was an excellent fundraiser and masterful in handling mass media. He often carried newspaper clippings of favourable reports about UNICEF and did not hesitate to show them to government leaders to press for increased contributions. He embraced UNICEF's pioneering role in enlisting well-known personalities as goodwill ambassadors to speak up for children. He was full of enthusiasm when I contracted Liv Ullmann, the Norwegian actress, and personally accompanied her on a visit to Bangladesh. In the 1990s, he went out of his way to work with Audrey Hepburn and Roger Moore; he even conspired to get a seat on the same plane as Nelson Mandela so that he could get Mandela to be a spokesperson for UNICEF.

In 1982, the year I was transferred to WHO in Geneva, Jim convened a meeting of top specialists in child health and welfare to review the various opportunities for expanded action. That meeting gave birth to the Child Survival and Development Revolution focusing on four specific interventions: Growth monitoring to fight malnutrition, Oral rehydration to stop children dying of diarrhoea, Breastfeeding to prevent infections that kill babies and allow them to benefit from better immunity and mother-child bonding, and Immunisation against six preventable infant-killing diseases. The global GOBI campaign was thus launched.

The intensity of the GOBI drive clashed with the approach that WHO had adopted for its Primary Health Care (PHC) drive which, in fact, followed the historic Alma Ata PHC Conference in 1978, jointly sponsored by UNICEF and WHO. WHO favoured a more system-wide attack on various health fronts. GOBI was considered by some in WHO as a vertical approach that could siphon human and financial resources away from efforts to build up basic health systems, while PHC as agreed at Alma Ata aimed at a horizontal approach.

For a while there was real tension between UNICEF and WHO over the different approaches. In 1983, during a conference on oral rehydration in Washington DC, I played a minor role in getting Grant and WHO Director-General Dr Halfdan Mahler together to discuss the differences. It was difficult to challenge the validity of the horizontal approach but in real life disease-specific interventions were able to catch the interests of political leaders who wanted quick results and the imagination of people whose involvement was critical. In the end, Grant and Mahler agreed that GOBI interventions should provide entry points for PHC. Indeed, I believe, Jim's approach was more practical and probably saved more lives and helped more children than WHO's horizontal approach.

In the GOBI campaigns, Jim broadened the project communication effort which I had started in the 1970s and turned it into an effort to mobilise all relevant elements of society for a specific development objective, not only at policy level but also at community level. "Going to scale" was the buzz term and Jim made "social mobilisation" a key element for UNICEF's programme implementation. In hindsight, I wish Jim had called it "societal mobilisation" because some development organisations, including NGOs, have since adopted that term to mean "community mobilisation".

Jim's crowning achievement was, of course, the 1990 UN Summit for Children, an unprecedented event for international development. When he first broached the subject, not many outside his close entourage gave him a 50/50 chance of bringing such an ambitious plan to fruition. Until then, the term 'summit' had been associated only with political summits, like the Reykjavik Summit in 1986 between Ronald Reagan and Mikhail Gorbachev. Summits were for political and security issues, not economic, and even less so, social issues.

With single-mindedness, Jim Grant pursued his goal of a summit for children. Beginning in 1988, he travelled to many capitals to enlist support from leaders, he set out a clear strategy to capture the attention of key governments, and he pursued his plan. Despite many obstacles, he prevailed. Some 95 heads of state and government came to New York for the Summit and unanimously signed a Declaration and a set of measurable objectives ranging from the reduction of infant mortality and malnutrition to primary education for all and massive immunisation programmes. Specific national programmes of action were subsequently adopted by governments and measurable targets were set.

In addition to the Summit goals which virtually set the agenda of international health for the last decade of the 20th century, a convention for children's rights was later adopted by nearly all countries.

I only worked with Jim at UNICEF for a little over two years, and I even disagreed with him over a number of personnel decisions. Indeed, some detractors faulted him for crossing the line of a purely non-political mandate by taking sides in the Kampuchea situation and for weakening field level decision-making power for which UNICEF was unique in the UN system. However, I learned to respect and admire his work in the years following my transfer to WHO.

After I joined the faculty at Tulane University's School of Public Health and Tropical Medicine, I nominated him for an honorary doctorate and invited him as a commencement speaker. Jim and his second wife, Ellen, came for the May 1994 ceremonies to receive his doctorate and spent some time in New Orleans with me and my wife. However, by the time he came to Tulane, he was already a sick man. He had been diagnosed with cancer but continued to work. On his death bed he phoned President Bill Clinton asking him to try to get the United States to adopt the child rights document. Clinton obliged by signing the document but he failed to get Congressional approval, so the United States and Somalia remain the two non-signatories of the document.

Tulane also honoured him by establishing the James P. Grant Child Survival Award for international health students in the School of Public Health and Tropical Medicine.

When he died, condolences poured in from all corners of the earth hailing him as a saviour of children. He was certainly a maverick and without a doubt a superb policy entrepreneur willing to take risks and chart new territories. Hillary Rodham Clinton, then US First Lady, eulogised Jim at his funeral service in 1995 and called him one of the greatest Americans of the 20th century. Former President Jimmy Carter, an admirer, said that Jim Grant had done more for children than anyone in our history. This may sound a bit hyperbolic for those who have not had the privilege of knowing him but if one counts the number of children he touched in his life time he certainly deserves that designation.

**Jack Ling is a former Director of UNICEF's Information Division.*

Flashbacks of a Visit to Bolivia

By Jim Mayrides*

Breakfast briefings, midnight notes. JPG visited Bolivia for 11 exhausting 18-hour days. Four meetings with President (Jaime) Paz Zamora; two in the field, one with entire cabinet. Sessions with social sector ministers; address to joint Congress. Day-long Child Survival and Development Revolution (CSDR) seminar with Vice President, UN and multilateral agencies, donor ambassadors, national and international NGOs, civil society representatives and PHC workers. Jim listening and sharing his passion for CSD advances under Jaime's leadership.

Two helicopter visits to PROANDES inaugurations. Big Jaime and little Jim 13,000 feet above sea level throwing water on one another at WATSAN sites. Gleeful smiles of small children. Grown men crying – had never seen clean water. Women dancing around us, refilling our gourds with chicha.

Jim using top of Foreign Minister's Ming vase to test iodine. We managed to clean the purple stain off. Jim pulling endless samples of ORS from his jacket. Jim touting the magic of Universal Child Immunisation (UCI). All CSD components addressed, with the emphasis on community participation and women's equality. Jim's energy keeping us awake until midnight dictating letters reconfirming daily agreements, while having the time to inquire about the well-being of our children by name.

Airport departure, more letters dictated. Team standing mutely awestruck watching the AA flight take to the Andean air.

Great fun. Great memories. Great people. Jim Grant was so special.

**Jim Mayrides joined UNICEF in 1973 in the Americas Section at HQ (3 years), before working as Programme Officer in Bogota, Colombia (4 years), Programme Officer in the Africa Section at HQ (4 years), Deputy Regional Director in Nairobi, Kenya (3 years), Representative in Bolivia (5 years), Representative in Pakistan (4 years), and Area Representative in Guatemala (3 years).*



A child at a community centre in the town of Grand Bassam near Abidjan, shares a book with UNICEF Executive Director James Grant. | Côte d'Ivoire | © UNICEF/UNI49615/Pirozzi1994



Surrounded by children, UNICEF Executive Director James Grant signs the guest book of a non-formal school created by BRAC, outside Dhaka, the capital. | Bangladesh | © UNICEF/UNI52616/Noorani1990

The Promise Mr Grant Kept

By Jim Mohan*

In early 1989, Mr Grant was asked to lead the UN response to the humanitarian emergency in Sudan and Operation Lifeline Sudan was established.

Because I had served earlier in both Khartoum and Juba, Sudan, I suspected that he would probably be asking me for help. However, at the time, I was then serving in a new challenging post in Beijing and had found a Chinese girlfriend.

Fearing that Mr Grant would track me down, I tried to avoid answering my telephone. But in the middle of one night in early spring, the phone suddenly rang and, unconsciously, I answered. It was Mr Grant calling me from the bedroom shower of his flat on 38th Street in New York, saying that he wanted me to go to Sudan for 6 months to help him. Given his many years in China and his dedication to children in the world, I was too embarrassed to express my hesitancy of serving such a long period. He then asked me how much time I could give him and I said 6 weeks. Mr Grant said fine and added : "Now go tell that lucky young lady and the UNICEF Representative Manzoor Ahmed that you will be back in 6 weeks and meet me and Richard Reed for an inter-agency meeting at the Hilton hotel in Addis Ababa next Friday night." The meeting was held on time in Addis.

Soon after I was on a small UN plane flying to Nairobi with Mr Grant sleeping face down exhausted on the narrow floor of the plane, and shortly thereafter I found myself living in a tent in the small village of Akon in Southern Sudan. My job was to receive on a small grass runway the regular flights of emergency supplies to be delivered to the local villages that were suffering from the lack of food in the civil war.

Six weeks later, Mr Grant had kept his earlier promise to me and I was back in Beijing in the first days of June 1989 to find a city and Tiananmen Square that had been peacefully taken over by students. When I and my girlfriend assisted the students secretly at night with food and water, my car was damaged by the local authorities and my girlfriend was jailed. Fortunately she was eventually released thanks to the efforts of Manzoor Ahmed.

In retrospect, in his final days I would have given Mr Grant my own life so that he could have lived longer and done more. But I am sure that he would have refused my offer. He was totally unselfish and dedicated to saving the lives of others.

I miss him terribly.

**Jim Mohan had a long, successful career in UNICEF. He served in Afghanistan, China, Sudan as well as many countries in Latin America and Africa. At HQ he was desk officer for CEE/CIS region and also senior programme funding officer.*

Jim Grant, a Source of Inspiration and Admiration

By Karsten A. H. Sohns*

When I joined the UNICEF Regional Office in Geneva in 1991 as Chief of Operations for what was then called the Greeting Card Operation (GCO), I met Jim Grant there in a staff meeting for the first time and thinking about him now, there are two aspects about him that have stuck in my mind.

One: I was very much impressed about his ability to motivate the staff in the room with his enthusiasm talking about UNICEF, the programmes he had visited, the people he had met. Leaving the room after an hour, I felt really energised/inspired to be part of this great organisation in a way I had never felt before.

Two: He commented once that advertising UNICEF and/or GCO in a certain way in a country would work there fine, maybe even in the region, but adjusting/compromising it to try to fit it other countries or regions would lead to a form of advertising which would not fit anywhere at all in the end! I admired him for making this important point about global advertising.

**Karsten A. H. Sohns joined the UNICEF Greeting Card Operation (GCO) in Rio de Janeiro in 1983. He was Head of the Singapore Office from 1988 to 1991, GCO/Chief of Operations in Geneva from 1991 to 1998, and Senior Technical Officer at the UNICEF Supply Division in Copenhagen until retirement in 2000.*



UNICEF Executive Director James Grant joins a smiling boy to raise a flag high with other children during an event promoting child survival and development, at Demba Diop National Stadium in Dakar, the capital. The children's flags bear the UNICEF logo, and their T-shirts bear the slogan 'An immunized child – a saved adult' in French. | Senegal | © UNICEF/UNI124850/Isaac1987



Mr. James P. Grant receiving IGMT Award from the President Of India – Mr. R. Venkataraman. New Delhi, India, 1990. The Indira Gandhi Memorial Trust (IGMT) organizes the award, which is accorded annually to individuals or organizations in recognition of creative efforts toward promoting international peace, development and a new international economic order. | © UNICEF/UNI94288/Sharma1990

James Grant Opened Worlds of the Possible

By Leila T. Bisharat*

Exhilarating and exhausting for mere mortals, James Grant reshaped the lives of many, their way of thinking, their daily tempos, and their moral commitments. He did mine. He opened whole new worlds of the possible; through example, he challenged everyone he touched to step out of the shadows and make a difference.

In 1985, he sent a message to my office in Amman, Jordan, inviting me to speak to the representatives of the Middle East and North Africa Region on the determinants of child mortality. I gathered up some offprints of an article and went to the hotel, expecting to be back in a few hours after a pleasant, relaxed academic discussion. Instead, Jim swept me up into an exhilarating tempo of ideas and calculations that had me doing estimates of lives lost across the region on the back of an envelope, while he ran them through his head and questioned the equations.

Little did I know that this was his ammunition for confronting heads of state and for forging alliances. These were not just numbers; they were the lives of tiny citizens of the world that he held dear. His vision, energy and moral commitment were infectious. One question came after another. I left the hotel, but the questions kept reappearing, his and my own, and then those of others advising him.

The Population Council had me posted as its representative but my mind kept, turning to his questions – non-stop – not just the losses but what would make a real difference, everywhere. And there was the fun of it, too – he introduced me to his companion, the rolling suitcase he had discovered outside Grand Central Station; a revolutionary invention deserving proper recognition, he said.

Months later, I was at Harvard's School of Public Health, comfortably working on research findings, and found Jim Grant's voice piercing the quiet. What was I doing there? Yes, I was pregnant but the message came that this was "just a temporary condition". A year later my infant, Nora, and I were travelling together, in and out of Istanbul, Cairo, Rabat, Tunis, with our own lives on rollers and Jim's determination reaching us as we met with health workers and dignitaries. Mr. Grant had gained carte blanche for children to enter those corridors of power, and be heard. He needed no Internet to press his case.

But he did want those numbers of lives lost, and lives saved to stand up to international scrutiny and he wanted them for every country of the world to hold heads of state accountable.

"Children love New York," he said. "All those fire engines and ambulances going night and day. It's time to come." He inspired and mobilised with the tiny score cards he tucked in his pocket, turning improbable scorekeepers into proud allies. One morning he swept up a few six- and seven-year-olds who had gone to UNICEF House with their parents for "take-your daughter-to-work day". "I have a job for you," he told them. Off they raced behind him, parents in tow, to the ECOSOC chambers. My daughter, Nora, was among the youngest. "Just make a tick any time a delegate mentions the word 'child' or 'children'". Proud of their task, they sat quietly just below the ceiling listening and making ticks. At the end of the day he called them to the dais. "My young friends here have given me a report," he said. "You have mentioned 'children' only seven times today. They wonder why we are here."

**Leila T. Bisharat served as UNICEF's Director of Planning and Coordination at New York HQ, and as UNICEF Representative to Egypt and Chief of Programmes for the Middle East and North Africa Region from 1986 to 2002.*

Jim Grant, a True Gandhian

By Madan Arora*

Jim Grant was the BEST and MOST active Executive Director UNICEF has ever had – it was through his passion and efforts that people everywhere, both inside and outside UNICEF, really became aware of what UNICEF stands for.

I was posted in Copenhagen and had just completed about four years there, when Jim visited the UNICEF office. He asked me how I was and I noticed that he was looking at the poster of Indian guru Sai Baba on my office wall. I said "with his (Baba's) blessings and your kindness I am OK", to which Jim replied: "You seem to be well established here."

A week later, I received a long telex from New York saying that the post of Supply Officer in Beijing had been vacant for about two years and that, after extensive research, I had been identified as the best candidate for the post. This telex was the best compliment one could receive, but after checking schooling conditions in Beijing I declined the offer. I then received a call from New York telling me that the Executive Director had personally selected me and that there was no way I could decline.

The posting in China brought me closer to Jim because he paid a visit at least once a year. He was a true Gandhian and believed that only true and sincere efforts by everyone within UNICEF and by respective government officials could bring about the desired change for the world's children.

Alas, he has left for the heavenly abode and I hope his efforts will not go waste – let everyone keep the light burning and see how soon we can fulfil his dreams.

**Madan Arora had a long career in UNICEF, worked in several countries around the world, at HQ he was Supply and Logistics and Contracts Officer. He retired after 43 years of service.*



A health workers stands with UNICEF's Executive Director James Grant who is carrying a little boy in the Ndoshu camp for unaccompanied children near the town of Goma. | © UNICEF/UNI19889/Press



UNICEF Executive Director James Grant visits a wounded boy tended by a UNICEF-trained nurse, at Medina Hospital in Mogadiscio. UNICEF also provides medical supplies and equipment to this hospital. | © UNICEF/UNI29015/Maina1992

Mr Grant, a Powerful Advocate and Leader

By Malika Abrous*

In mid-1994, Mr. Grant participated in the Regional All-Africa Representatives Meeting which took place in Abidjan. I was at the time serving as Programme Coordinator in the UNICEF Office for Cote d'Ivoire. Mary Cahill and Helen Grant (who was also a photographer) accompanied him. At the end of the meeting, Mr Grant made a field visit to Cote d'Ivoire, which was to be his last field visit as UNICEF Executive Director.

The two days I spent at his side as his interpreter/translator were every bit a concentrate of what we may call the Grant 'brand' (or 'legend'). We knew that Mr Grant was sick and probably under strong medication, but his amazing energy was contagious.

Strong advocacy efforts by the Cote d'Ivoire Office had brought the Minister of Health to adopt the "Bamako Initiative" as the official National Health Programme for Cote d'Ivoire, including the Essential Drugs component. Most of all, the Ministry of Health and UNICEF had been working hard on the "Baby-Friendly Hospitals" Initiative and tangible results had been achieved by the time of Mr Grant's visit.

At the project site to be visited, close to Yamoussoukro, birthplace of Cote d'Ivoire's first President, Houphouet Boigny, we were greeted by the village chief, children with bouquets of flowers and music. Mr Grant accepted a bouquet that he passed on to Mrs Grant and executed a few dance steps "à la Mandela". After visiting one health centre equipped with material provided by UNICEF, we proceeded to the esplanade for the speeches and a ceremony organised by the Ministry of Health to hand over plaques to the directors of the hospitals that had met the 10 steps required to be declared "baby-friendly".

Mr Grant was very happy, but a bit surprised. He later said that a doctor friend of his at the Boston Children's Hospital had told him that it was practically impossible for a hospital to be totally "baby-friendly" and on a sustainable basis. Mr Grant added, however, that what counted was to try and that achieving some, if not all, of the requisites should be good enough for a hospital. I continue asking myself: "Was the strategy to ask for the impossible in order to reach some results?"

The trip to the project site, by presidential plane, was very productive and the Minister later said he felt that he had been standing alongside greatness.

When the time came for departure, Mr Grant was scheduled to leave on a late flight after midnight. After a two-hour nap at his hotel, we took him to the airport. It had been a very long day and we knew that Mr Grant was more tired than he let it appear. I noticed that his skin was yellowish. After thanking us all, he climbed the steps to his plane with such resolve, as if his age and physical condition were no problems. He still had things to do. His courage and attitude were larger than life.

**Malika Abrous worked in various capacities for UNICEF between 1984 and 2006, including in the Emergency Operations Unit and subsequently Africa Section (1984-1985), Programme Funding Office (1986-1993), in the field from 1993 to 2000 as Programme Coordinator, at the Asia Desk (Field Support and Inter-agency Collaboration Section) in New York from 2001 to 2005, and at the Evaluation Office in New York until retirement.*

The Underrated Contribution of Jim Grant to Education

By Manzoor Ahmed*

I first met Grant in 1977 at a conference on universal primary education that he hosted as the head of the Overseas Development Council. Soon afterwards, in 1978 I was recruited by UNICEF and sent as the representative to Ethiopia. After he took the reins of UNICEF, one of Jim Grant's first missions was to UNESCO in Paris in early 1981 to visit Amadou-Mahtar M'Bow, the Director General of UNESCO. Richard Jolly and Nyi Nyi accompanied him and I was summoned from Addis Ababa to join the delegation.

The aim was to mobilise support for an international drive on "Education for All" fashioned after the global "Health for All" agenda proclaimed in 1978 at Alma Ata. However, UNESCO colleagues failed to grasp the scope and significance of Grant's bold vision and quibbled about modalities and procedures of collaboration between the two organisations. Jim Grant returned sorely disappointed from Paris.

However, Jim Grant did not forget that survival of children was not enough without development – with the assurance of full flourishing of their human potential. He established the position of Education Adviser in UNICEF in 1981. Until then, UNESCO had had the task of advising what UNICEF should do in respect of children's education. I was moved from Ethiopia to be appointed as the first Senior Adviser for Education in UNICEF. My brief from Grant was to develop strategies and plans for collaboration with other UN and bilateral agencies, including UNESCO, on universal primary and basic education for children and women through formal and non-formal modes. One outcome was to turn the table and create a unit for collaboration with UNICEF at UNESCO in Paris on children's basic education.

It is not well-known that the first World Conference on Education for All held in Jomtien, Thailand, in 1990 was the brain child of Jim Grant, who persuaded Bradford Morse, the head of UNDP, and Barber Conable, President of the World Bank, of the need for a global initiative to undo the denial of basic education opportunities to the majority of children in the developing world. He found kindred spirit in Federico Mayor, a Spanish scientist, at the helm of UNESCO, and Nafis Sadiq of UNFPA.

Jim's concern was to initiate practical action to ensure learning outcome for children rather than a global declaration of aspiration. To this end, he figured that it was necessary to find a simple way of assessing what children learned and how schools and teachers performed, in preparation for the world conference. The education measurement specialists were sceptical of any simple approach. Not satisfied with the ideal and the best to be the enemy of the good and the practical, Grant invited a dozen education practitioners and pragmatists from NGOs and academia to UNICEF in New York (probably in 1986) to address the challenge of determining whether children had acquired basic competencies in primary education. However, once people from different parts of the world had arrived at UNICEF, Jim was struck by severe back pain and the doctor ordered him total bed rest. Hardly to be deterred by a bout of back pain, Jim lay down on his back on the floor in the centre of the circle of people and conducted the meeting from that position.

I subsequently went on to China as the UNICEF Representative in late 1986. I was also put on the inter-agency planning committee for the World Conference on Education for All (EFA) in Jomtien, Thailand, on behalf of UNICEF along with Nyi Nyi. The Jomtien EFA declaration of 1990 was followed by the Dakar EFA Framework for Action for 2015 adopted in 2000, which has now been replaced by the Education 2030 Agenda as part of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) for 2030.

It all began with the vision that drove Jim Grant.

**Manzoor Ahmed served for over two decades in senior UNICEF positions, including Senior Education Adviser, and Country Director in China, Ethiopia and Japan. He helped in shaping UNICEF's education strategy in the 1980s and 1990s and was involved in planning the World Conference on Education for All in 1990 in Jomtien and the launch of the global EFA movement.*

Jim Grant, Ready For Another Wonderful Battle

By Marco Vianello-Chiodo*

In 1985, when I was Director of the Programme Funding Office at UNICEF, I managed to obtain a pledge of 100 million dollars from the Italian government for child immunisation in 30 African countries. It was the first such pledge we had received, and it was huge one, but it also had many strings attached.

I phoned Jim Grant, who was in Boston, and he called me back in Rome in the middle of the night. I explained the pledge and the conditions, and there was silence on the other end of the phone.

"Jim, are you there?"

"Yes."

"So?"

Silence.

"Are you there?"

"Yes."

"So?"

Silence.

I broke the silence, saying that I knew it was going to be difficult, but asking if he was he going to refuse 100 million dollars with which we could launch the programme, save many lives and possibly bring the rest of the world behind us.

Then a voice said "Holy shit", and I knew that Jim was on board, ready for another wonderful battle.

*Marco Vianello-Chiodo is a former Deputy Executive Director, External Relations, UNICEF.

Shared Candles and Birthday Cakes

By Mariangela Bavicchi*

I joined UNICEF in New York in 1987 as a Programme Officer working on Universal Child Immunisation (UCI), one of Jim Grant's and UNICEF's historic successes.

I still remember the first time I met the famous Mr Grant, just a few months after I arrived in HQ. I was called to a meeting on UCI on the 13th floor with him and a few other people. I was both anxious and excited as I introduced myself and remember his smile and poignant look. I had heard that in meetings he always presented his argument in 3 points and that day, for the first time, I heard him brilliantly summarise his UCI priorities in three points!

Not long afterwards, I learned by accident we shared the same birthday – May 12. My future husband sent me a bouquet of flowers for my birthday, which somehow mistakenly ended up in Jim Grant's office. Someone from his office called to apologise for the mistake and invite me to share a birthday cake with him. Subsequently, the annual meeting of National Committees held regularly in May became the occasion for shared candles and birthday cakes in Lisbon, Geneva and New York.

On another occasion I was in Rome with him for a meeting with hundreds of volunteers of the UNICEF Italian national committee. He was tired and most probably already ill, but he still had the willpower and stamina for an after-dinner dance with the admiring elder lady volunteers who adored him.

As usual, he gave one of his famous motivating speeches, taking an ORS sachet from his pocket. I offered to be his interpreter, so I stood next to him and plucked the famous ORS sachet from his pocket! I remember that he was surprised and amused by my gesture.

I left UNICEF in 2002, but I am still working with the UN, now at UNAIDS with other Jim Grant disciples. Many of us still remember his unique vision and still regularly quote him. We were fortunate to work under his leadership, during UNICEF's golden age! Many of us are still hoping that, some day, someone with a similar passion and vision will come along again.

**Mariangela Bavicchi worked for UNICEF from 1987 to 2002, first in New York in the Universal Child Immunisation Programme and later in Geneva with responsibility for relations with UNICEF National Committees.*

"I Only Need a Few More Minutes"

By Nancy Andrade Castro*

In the mid 80s, at the peak of the internal conflict in El Salvador, Jim Grant was adamant about the need to have children protected. After stressful negotiations and with the assistance of the Catholic Church, UNICEF negotiated peace corridors ("Days of Tranquillity" as we called them).

Jim Grant came down personally to persuade President Duarte about the need to have the vaccination campaign move forward. His meeting with Duarte was scheduled to last a matter of minutes because the tireless Executive Director was supposed to fly back to New York the very same day. However, the conversation went on and on, and the flight that Grant was supposed to take – having delayed its departure for almost an hour – had no alternative but to take off.

Whenever communication was established with Jim Grant alerting him of his imminent departure, his answer was: "I need only a few more minutes."

When the meeting was finally over, and with his flight having already left, President Duarte offered Grant a fighter jet to catch his flight in Guatemala, which he accepted. It was surrealistic to see him climbing into such a small machine of war!

**Nancy Andrade Castro was UNICEF Representative in Panama, she was also Human Affairs officer in NY before serving in Africa. She was then appointed UN AIDS Regional Director for Latin America and the Caribbean.*

A Timeless Letter from JPG

By Norma H. Tulio*

It goes without saying that Mr. James P. Grant had the passion and drive to change the world. With that, of course, comes a very busy and demanding schedule.

So I was very surprised on June 12, 1985, when I received a letter from Mr. Grant addressed to my then 22-month-old son Wayne Joseph. At the time, the UNICEF Philippines Country Office was promoting breastfeeding under the leadership of its Representative Steve Umemoto. I had written an article in UNICEF Staff News about Wayne's experiences in the UNICEF Breastfeeding Nursery and the activities he participated in as part of the advocacy programme.

In response to the article, Mr. Grant's letter talked about his appreciation for Wayne's contribution to the advocacy and his wishes for my son to continue leading a healthy life. It's no small feat when you think about it – the UNICEF Executive Director, one of the world's leading social advocates, taking time out from his busy schedule to personally reach out to a child.

It was unbelievable to consider just how much Mr. Grant valued a child's contribution to the world. This gesture demonstrated the inner core of his being. For all the millions of children he helped throughout his life, he genuinely cared about each and every one of them.

These days, both Wayne and Mr. Grant's letter are a little over 30 years' old. As a mother and now-retired staff member, I still greatly admire and respect Mr. Grant not only for his achievements in children's advocacies but also for being a caring and genuine human being.

**Norma H. Tulio retired in October 2009 as Chief of Operations in UNICEF Myanmar. Prior to this, she served in Timor-Leste, Papua New Guinea and the Philippines. Post-retirement assignments include consultancies with UNICEF Offices in EAPRO, Philippines, Fiji, Vietnam and DPRK. She currently serves as Chief Operating Officer of Alcanz Consulting Group, Inc., a consulting firm formed by a group of retired UNICEF and UN staff in 2010.*



On 20 January (left-to-right) UNICEF Deputy Executive Director for Programmes Richard Jolly, Senior Intersectoral Advisor R. Padmini and UNICEF Executive Director James Grant have a farewell meeting prior to Ms. Padmini's retirement. | UNICEF/94-0015/Ruby Mera. Courtesy of R. Padmini



A UNICEF education co-ordinator and UNICEF Executive Director James Grant present a 'school-in-a-box' kit during a press conference held in Kigali, the capital. The kit is part of a UNESCO/ UNICEF-sponsored Teachers Emergency Package (TEP). This is one of the first boxes to be distributed. The campaign intends to supply 9,000 boxes to Rwandan schools and refugee camps by the beginning of 1995.

The King and Jim

By R. Padmini*

In the 1980s, when Jim came to Morocco to meet the King as part of his campaign for the twin thrusts of Immunisation and Oral Rehydration Therapy, Richard Reid, the MENA Regional Director and I (as Chief of the MENA section) joined Alan Everest, the Representative, and his Health Programme Officer for the audience. After the initial courtesies, the King asked Jim what he could do for UNICEF.

Jim began to voice his concerns about the health of Moroccan children but the translator was haughtily interrupted, "Mr Grant, Morocco is the equal of France; we do not have the health problems of a developing country!" the diminutive King said, drawing himself up to his full height.

Undeterred, Jim soothingly replied, "Of course, your Majesty," but quickly continued recounting the telling statistics on IMR and so on.

The King turned to his Health Minister and asked, "Is this true?"

The Minister hesitatingly muttered, "Yes, your Majesty".

After a moment's pause, the King told Jim to proceed. Immediately, out came the ubiquitous syringe and ORS packet from each of his pockets, and the campaign was sealed!

**R. Padmini joined UNICEF 1974 as Planning Officer, SCARO, New Delhi, then served as Planning Officer in Addis Ababa (1981) and Ethiopia Representative in 1983. From 1986 to 1990 was Chief of the MENA section at HQ, and Chief of the Urban and CEDC section at HQ from 1990 to 1994.*

A Measure of Progress

By Peter Adamson*

Amid all the other achievements, it is easily forgotten that Jim Grant was also a pioneer in the use of statistics.

On taking over UNICEF, he began to think about changes in the way the organisation presented its statistics to the world. Until that time, almost all UN statistical tables ranked countries either alphabetically or in descending order of per capita GNP. In his first State of the Children report (1980-81), Grant decided that UNICEF's 'lead indicator' – and the one by which all countries would be ranked in all future statistical tables – would be the Infant Mortality Rate (IMR). In 1975, the IMR gave way to the Under-Five Mortality Rate (U5MR), but the principle and purpose remained the same.

Today, there is perhaps nothing surprising about this. But at the time, it was a radical change. Outside professional circles, child survival rates were little-known and there were formidable problems of data availability. Grant nonetheless made the change as a bold public statement of UNICEF's commitment to reducing the appalling rate of child deaths across the developing world.

Throughout the 1980s and 1990s, Grant showed that social indicators were essential to the task of galvanising and sustaining large-scale national action for children. In doing so, he breathed new life into the almost moribund idea of UN goals which, in the 1970s, were always being proclaimed and rarely attained. Today, social indicators such as the IMR, child malnutrition rate, immunisation rate or school completion rate are the very language in which the majority of global development goals are expressed.

This too is part of Jim Grant's extraordinary legacy.

In February 1995, at the memorial service held for Jim Grant in New York's Cathedral of St. John the Divine, I was asked to say a few words about Jim Grant's vision. It was not the time or the place to introduce controversial ideas, but it would have felt like letting Jim Grant down not to mention that his vision did not end with child survival. So I concluded by saying that Jim also had a vision for the next century and the shorthand name he gave to that vision was 'equity'. "This century's struggle," he would say, "is to meet basic needs. The struggle of the next century will be for equity."

Twenty years ago, equity was not a fashionable topic. Indeed it had barely begun to be realised even in the developed world that a 50-year trend towards slowly decreasing inequality was being thrown into reverse. But Jim was aware that even as great progress was being made and average levels of child health, nutrition and education were on the rise worldwide, many were being left behind. He also knew that national averages failed to reveal the concentration of health or nutrition problems among the poorest and least served communities.

Today, it would be the children who have been left behind by the progress of recent decades that would be at the centre of Jim's concern.

As always, he would have approached this issue with the maxim "If you want to change something, first measure it". And for this purpose he would, I believe, have looked for an equivalent statistical revolution to the one that he so successfully pioneered in the early 1980s when he nailed UNICEF's colours to the child survival rate. Today he would be asking himself and others: "What statistical measure, what change in monitoring and measurement, would make the clearest possible underlying statement that the children left behind should now be the priority? What indicators are required to advocate and monitor progress towards that goal?" My guess is that Jim Grant would have decided that the key indicator should be a measure of what is happening to the poorest 20% of the population in any given country.

Just as in the 1980s, there would be formidable difficulties. And much work would be required to refocus the basic statistics of development on the poorest. But making commitments and then finding the ways and means to fulfil them is what Jim Grant's leadership was all about (or as he would have said – "first build castles in the sky, then work to put foundations under them").

To Jim Grant, statistics were not abstract, lifeless things. They were an essential part of the tool kit for getting the job done. It is measurement and monitoring that informs and guides policy, facilitates accountability, fuels advocacy, encourages success, reveals failure, helps make good use of scarce resources, and helps galvanise and sustain large-scale action on the ground. Over and above all of this, it is the choice of the measures used that reveals and reinforces real aims and priorities.

For those who share the vision of greater equity, new measures are needed to reflect that vision. Placing 'what is happening to the poorest 20%' as the first and most important consideration of developmental progress would send out the clearest of messages and one that Jim Grant would surely have endorsed: that in the years ahead, progress that leaves the poorest behind is not to be considered progress at all.

**Peter Adamson is a founder of the monthly New Internationalist magazine, was Senior Adviser to UNICEF Executive Director James P. Grant and was responsible for UNICEF's annual State of the World's Children report from 1981 to 1996 and The Progress of Nations (1990 to 1996). He also created the publication Facts for Life – 'the health information that every family has a right to know', co-published by seven United Nations agencies. From 2000 to 2012, he was editor of the UNICEF Report Card series on problems facing children in OECD countries.*

JPG – A Tiny Vignette

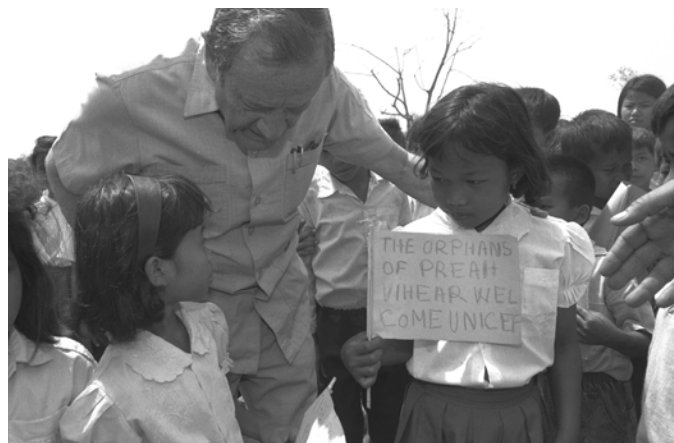
By Peter Greaves*

It was a Saturday morning in New York, and a WHO colleague from Geneva and I were in the office discussing the evaluation of a programme in which we were both involved. Jim happened to come down the corridor, saw a light on and looked in: "Hello, Peter, good to see you working. Are you going to introduce me to your friend?" After a brief exchange he left, and my friend, who had leapt to his feet, looked at me and said: "Wow! That would never have happened with my boss..."

**Peter Greaves joined UNICEF as Senior Programme Officer in an inter-agency transfer in 1976. Appointed UNICEF Representative in Brasilia in 1980 and Senior Nutritionist at HQ in 1983, before retirement in 1992.*



Sitting on the floor amidst girl students, UNICEF Executive Director James Grant visits a classroom of a non-formal BRAC school, outside Dhaka, the capital. | © UNICEF/UNI52617/Noorani1990



UNICEF Executive Director James Grant speaks with children at an orphanage in Preah Vihear Province, Cambodia. | © UNICEF/UNI50037/Isaac1993

James Grant, Sent From Above

By Roger Moore*

Audrey Hepburn revered James Grant almost as though he were a god and I later discovered so many other UNICEF representatives and workers, and many others, who did so too – and, I must admit, I also came to regard him as someone who was sent to us from above.

We first met in Geneva, thanks to Audrey, and then again in New York when I said I wished to learn more about the working of UNICEF in the field because Audrey's passion was beginning to rub off on me and I wanted to get involved.

James said OK, and had me join him at an event where he was delivering a keynote speech – a fundraising message really – to a number of people. At a certain point, and this is a moment that I treasure and still use myself in talks, James took out a little ORS (Oral Rehydration Salts) packet and said: "Four of these cost one dollar. You can save a child's life for a quarter." What a mantra.

Ever since, my wife Kristina makes sure she has one in her bag in case I have forgotten mine and it remains a powerful and emotive fundraising item.

Jim had the reputation of almost always missing every plane he was due to travel on because he was always so busy on the ground spelling out the message of UNICEF – time, travel, and appointments seemed to almost slip his mind because he was so passionate about using every minute to talk about UNICEF.

I miss him greatly, but somewhere else is now a richer place with his presence.

**Roger Moore is a British actor (Sir) Roger Moore is best known for his role as secret agent 007 in the James Bond movie series. His friendship with actress Audrey Hepburn steered him towards becoming a UNICEF Goodwill Ambassador in 1991.*

The Time I Had to Refuse Jim's Offer

By Sally Fegan-Wyles*

Jim Grant was a huge inspiration to me, as he was for so many others. He was head of UNICEF when I joined as an L2 in Liberia in 1980, and so I had heard about him for many years before I had the privilege of hosting him in Uganda in 1987.

The AIDS epidemic was just becoming understood as something that could undo all of the gains we were making with the Child Survival Revolution. Uganda was the first country in Africa where the government acknowledged the epidemic, putting some of the first national prevention strategies in place, with support from UNICEF.

I remember that on one occasion Jim was leaving Uganda after a very successful visit, flying to Nairobi accompanied by the Minister for Health, Dr Ruhukana Rugunda, Mary Racelis and myself. He invited the Minister and me to participate in a discussion on HIV/AIDS at the UNICEF Board meeting three weeks later, on October 27. Very reluctantly, I explained to him that I could not attend because I was getting married that day. As someone who never saw obstacles, only opportunities, Jim immediately suggested that I move my wedding from Ireland to New York, and said that he and his wife Ellen would host our wedding breakfast! He was quite serious, and I did actually think how I could possibly do it without ending my marriage before it began.

I was so sorry to have to refuse his kind offer, but I am still happily married.

**Sally Fegan-Wyles served with UNICEF from 1980 to 1998, first as Health Economist, then Programme Officer and finally as Representative in Uganda (1986-1991) and Zimbabwe (1991-1995). In 1995, she joined the Change Management Team in UNICEF New York, where she was responsible for field management effectiveness.*



UNI16302LONG DESCRIPTION:James Grant, UNICEF Executive Director, on board a relief train heading for the war-affected southern sudan region. | © UNICEF/UNI16302/UNICEF Photographer



James P. Grant and a UN team of Operation Lifeline Sudan review the plan of action with members of the SPLA in Akon Sudan. | © UNICEF/UNI23839/Hartley

'Deep Advocacy' the Key to Achieving Social Goals

By Sam Daley-Harris and Frederick Mulder*

If political will is a key ingredient for achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), how are we doing? As it turns out, we're doing quite well with grass-tops advocacy, things like Bono meeting British President David Cameron or US President Barack Obama and doing well with on-line advocacy, or 'clicktivism'. Where we're falling short is with the missing middle, deep advocacy, citizens getting educated and empowered to create champions in government and the media for achieving the SDGs. But where does Jim Grant come in?

Well, Jim Grant was ahead of his time in pioneering 'deep advocacy' and after US volunteers with the anti-poverty lobby RESULTS generated 90 editorials in a successful 1986 campaign to triple the Child Survival Fund, Grant sent RESULTS a handwritten note saying, "I thank you in my mind weekly, if not more often, for what you and your colleagues are accomplishing – but I thought I should do it at least once this year in writing."

Grant was responding to the grassroots breakthrough achieved by RESULT, which had been coached by the Center for Citizen Empowerment and Transformation (CCET) whose mission is to help NGOs train their members to create champions in Congress and the media for their cause.

CCET's theory of change includes a challenge to the traditional way of working with members of Congress or Parliament, where we typically find a supporter and think we're done or find an opponent and throw in the towel. Instead, we need to find ways to move elected officials up "the champion scale". CCET promotes moving opponents up to neutral, moving those who are

neutral up to being supporters, those who are supporters up to being advocates, those who are advocates up to being leaders and spokespersons, and moving leaders and spokespersons up to being champions for the SDGs.

Of course the staff has to move itself up that scale and build a deep structure of support that will help volunteers move up that scale themselves. But too many group shy away from creating the kind of deep structure of support for their activists that makes deep advocacy work and, instead, take the easier 'clicktivist' route. When we look back from the year 2030, will the SDGs have been achieved? If not, will one of the reasons be because we didn't create sufficient political will? Now is the time to redouble those efforts to make sure we do.

**Sam Daley-Harris founded the anti-poverty lobby RESULTS, co-founded the Microcredit Summit Campaign, and founded the Center for Citizen Empowerment and Transformation <http://www.citizenempowermentandtransformation.org>.*

Frederick Mulder, CBE, is Chair of the Frederick Mulder Foundation and founder of The Funding Network <http://www.thefundingnetwork.org.uk/>.

Jim Grant, a Believer in Independence

By Samir Basta*

Ever since I had heard about Jim Grant when I was Nutrition Specialist at the World Bank, and he was still heading the Overseas Development Council (ODC) in Washington, I had felt that I would like to work for him. Before his time, UNICEF made several offers to hire me, but it was only when Jim became Executive Director that things took off.

One of my conditions was that I be allowed to continue to record and publish some of the research (my own and by others) on the results of programmes to improve the health and nutrition status of children. Jim agreed, and after he insisted that I head the Evaluation Department at UNICEF HQ in New York (which came about after my initial five-year posting as UNICEF Representative in Sudan), he and Richard Jolly agreed to give me a degree of independence to hire staff and consultants in order to revamp the department. So, thanks to an excellent team and the Executive Board's strong encouragement, we carried out several surveys using independent consultants and some field and HQ staff. The result of some of these evaluations did not always please Jim and other senior staff, but Jim never tried to interfere with the information that we discovered or published.

UNICEF's independence and the quality and methodologies of its evaluation became admired by several UN organisations, NGOs and some university departments. Without JPG, it would never have happened!

On the lighter side, I recall having lunch with him on a very hot day on the porch of my house in Geneva. We were discussing how to better reach Heads of Governments in Europe,

when he suddenly looked down at my new dog, Quickie, and then, without a word, got up and went to the kitchen. He came back and sat down, but before we resumed our conversation, I asked him what he was looking for in the kitchen. "Just to see if you had put enough water for the dog," Jim replied, giving me a soft pat on my shoulder, "and you passed the test!" Jim was not only concerned about children in difficult situations ... he also cared for animals!

**Samir Basta joined UNICEF in 1982 as Representative in Sudan where he served until 1986, then moved to New York as Director of the Evaluation Office. He was Director of the UNICEF Geneva Office from 1990 to 1995, and a Senior Advisor to UNICEF before early retirement in 1998.*

A Tribute to Mr Grant

By Satish Khorana*

The limited interaction I had with Mr Grant left a lifelong impression on me. His ability to motivate people and caring for staff in the best interest of UNICEF will always be remembered.

I joined UNICEF in 1982 in Greeting Cards Operations (GCO) and on a few occasions I would run into Jim walking down to UNICEF House after lunch. He seemed surprisingly accessible and forthcoming. He would constantly talk about the challenges faced in reducing infant mortality and how inexpensive it was to save millions of children if we put our minds to it. He was an amazing leader dedicated to the children of the world and would spare no effort to use any and all instruments available to him to align any one he could with the mission, mandate and values of the organisation he headed.

Then, in 1988, someone from DHR called me to inform that my case for promotion and transfer was going to the APC the following day even though I had not applied or been consulted. I asked at DHR about the rushed process and lack of consultation and was informed that the "organisation needs you there and it has been decided." I considered leaving UNICEF there and then and informed my supervisor. The next day, the Director of Supply Division, David Halliday, called me and explained the assignment, its scope, the challenges, creativity, his vision and how he saw Supply Centre which was created in 1987. He asked me to visit Copenhagen before resigning from UNICEF and I went there for a short visit. He won me over and I began my new life in Copenhagen.

I still remember very vividly my very first week in Copenhagen. My wife Shashi and I were invited to a cocktail reception hosted by the Foreign Affairs Ministry of Denmark at the end of a multi-donor sectoral review. The invitees were donors and recipients: foreign ministers, senior government staff, ambassadors and senior staff from UNICEF and other UN agencies. The reception was hosted in the open area in Supply Division. Having just moved to this new duty station, Shashi and I did not know anyone and we were trying to figure out how to begin our conversation with someone when I saw

Mr Grant at the other end of the hallway. He waved at me. I hesitatingly waved back, not sure if it was for us or someone behind us. And then I saw Mr Grant walk towards us, cutting through the crowd of dignitaries- "Hello, how are you? Have you settled in?" And then he started to talk to my wife, whom he had previously met for just a few minutes in New York. "Have you found a house? How are the children? Which school are they going to? Yes, CIJS is a very good school. I'm happy to hear that" and so it went for 10 minutes. My wife expressed her condolences for the death of his wife, Ethel Grant, who had died in Agra, India, of a heart attack while visiting the Taj Mahal. He stayed on and spoke to us for another 5 minutes.

His warmth, welcoming and caring message, and his ability to genuinely care for the staff and their families stayed with me for ever and that evening we decided that I would continue to work for UNICEF. I finally retired in 2013.

I only wish there were more gems like Mr Grant in UNICEF ... or in the world for that matter.

**Satish Khorana worked for UNICEF from 1982 to 2013 in various capacities, including Deputy Director, Information Technology Solution and Services Division (ITSS) in New York (2008-13).*

Jim Grant, the Ultimate Warrior for Children

By Shahida Azfar*

For Jim Grant, every problem was a challenge which had to be overcome, come what may.

As a Programme Officer for Southern Africa in the Africa Section at HQ from 1983 to 1989, there was the opportunity to be present at Jim Grant's meetings with many Heads of State.

The most memorable for me was his meeting with President Nujoma of Namibia who came to see him in New York as President of the South West Africa People's Organisation (SWAPO), a year before Namibia's independence. Nujoma asked for UNICEF to be present in Namibia from the first day of transition towards independence, not the first day of independence, stating that he wanted UNICEF to take care of the children of Namibia during transition when SWAPO was not in power to do so. Not deterred by the fact that only UNHCR and WFP were mandated by UN Resolution 435 to be in Namibia during transition as part of the UN-led election process, Grant promised to do so. Later, after discussing the how, Jim Grant took my hand, looked me deep in the eyes and said, "Good luck to you." UNICEF was present in Namibia on the first day of transition!

**Shahida Azfar served UNICEF in various capacities, including Representative to Namibia, Regional Director for East and Southern Africa (ESARO) in Nairobi and Interim Director for the Global Child Survival Partnership based in UNICEF HQ.*



UNICEF Executive Director James Grant prepares to administer a dose of oral polio vaccine to a baby held by a nurse, at Hacettepe University in Ankara, the capital, during the final round of the UNICEF-supported immunization campaign. | © UNICEF/UNI124762/Isaac1985



Executive Director James Grant watches a woman health worker feed a high protein biscuit to an unaccompanied Rwandan refugee baby, his head and foot bandaged, on the porch of a feeding centre in the UNICEF-assisted Ndoshoh camp for children separated from their parents, near the town of Goma. | © UNICEF/UNI50634/Press1994

JPG, a Man of Energy

By Sreelakshmi Gururaja*

JPG's visits to India were always filled with briefings, presentations and meetings with counterparts and staff. We were overawed by his energy and his capacity to go full steam for the whole day, interacting with the staff, asking questions and listening to our concerns.

But it was when I moved to HQ in 1993 that I personally experienced the inspiration from JPG's convictions. I recollect the meeting on the 13th floor to discuss the draft 1994 Board paper on Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment. With trepidation and armed with evidence from South Asia, it was my turn to convince Mr Grant and Dr Nyi Nyi on how discrimination was affecting the survival and development of girls, particularly in Asia and the Middle East.

Another treasured memory is when Mr. Grant came to Padmini's retirement party at Dag Hammarskjöld Plaza. He apologised for being late and thanked us for waiting. He was excited because he was leaving later that night to attend the presentation of the Nobel Peace Prizes to Nelson Mandela and Frederik de Klerk and he explained that this would be a perfect opportunity for child survival and development in the new South Africa.

**Sreelakshmi Gururaja joined UNICEF in the Middle and North India Office in New Delhi in 1982, moved to the India Country Office and thereafter to HQ in 1993. She was appointed Representative in Guyana in 2001 and retired in 2005.*

Jim Grant: A Model of Simplicity and Self-Disciplined Life Style

By Venkatarama Muthuswami*

In a world of eternal sycophancy, Jim Grant was a model of simplicity and highly self-disciplined life style.

I recall Grant coming to Thailand in the early '80s to inaugurate the first Education For All conference at the Pattaya/Jamtien Beach Resort, sponsored by the World Bank, UNESCO and UNICEF. The late Khun Parady (Senior Administrative Assistant at UNICEF EAPRO in charge of hospitality) and I accompanied the senior official team to receive him in the middle of night at Bangkok Airport. Grant arrived full of life, upbeat as usual, carrying his usual soft briefcase/suitcase. He looked uneasy as he was taken to the VIP lounge/reception, obviously eager to go straight to his hotel.

Once he reached the VIP suite that had been reserved him, his first request (at about 2:30 in the middle of the night) was to play the video on UNICEF projects prepared by the Bangkok office. As we Khun Parady and I prepared the video, Grant disappeared. He was found in the bathroom busy washing his clothes. In no time at all, his special purpose (wrinkle-free) suit, plus shirt and tie were hanging in the wardrobe ready for the next day's assignment.

The next morning, I learnt that Grant slept for no more than three hours, waking up fresh as a flower ready to travel to Pattaya/Jamtien (a distance of some 165 km from Bangkok) and for the next 12-16 hours he was the epitome of positive intellectual energy radiating throughout the conference and meetings.

**Venkatarama Muthuswami joined UNICEF New Delhi in 1963 and over a period of 34 years served in various positions from Afghanistan to Zambia, working under three Executive Directors – Maurice Pate, Henry Labouisse and Jim Grant.*



UNICEF Executive Director James Grant speaks to a smiling child wearing an over-sized shirt, in a health centre at a UNICEF-assisted camp for the displaced, run by the NGO Trocaire, in Cyanika, a village near the southwestern town of Gikongoro. | © UNICEF/UNI50608/Press1994



Executive Director James Grant sits in a row boat on Possum Pond with his wife Ellan Young, and their dog Basil, at their home in Croton-on-Hudson, New York state. | © UNICEF/UNI52643/Young1990