

1979

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Social Studies

USING THE U.N. SYSTEM: A WEALTH OF CLASSROOM RESOURCES

by Leonard S. Kenworthy

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A much neglected part of the curriculum in many schools and colleges is the broad-based and far-flung United Nations system, which includes the U.N. itself, its specialized agencies, and its programs, commissions, and committees, which cover almost every aspect of our turbulent and changing world. This subject is neglected, too, in collections of materials in libraries, media centers, and curriculum centers of schools and colleges. Because the mass media concentrate on the controversial aspects of that worldwide organization, too few people realize the many fronts on which the total U.N. system is constantly and quietly working and the many achievements it has accomplished.

Likewise, few people realize the enormous output of publications by the various components of the U.N. system, or the tremendous range of topics and problems they represent. There are scores of books and hundreds of useful booklets published by the U.N. and its agencies. In addition, there are a good many materials produced by non-governmental organizations and private publishers.

Hence, this essay can cover only a sample of such materials, selected on the basis of their value to school and college libraries, curriculum specialists, and classroom teachers and professors. It will also refer the reader to resources that can serve as possible "leads" to other materials.

Overall Outlets for U.N. Materials

Unfortunately there is no single source where all or even most of these publications may be purchased. For example, each of the specialized agencies of the U.N. has its own publication program and its own sales outlets.

The two places where the most publications may be obtained are the **Sales Section of the United Nations** (United Nations, New York, NY 10017) and **UNIPUB** (345 Park Ave. S., New York, NY 10010). This latter group handles most of the publications of UNESCO, the Food and Agriculture Organization, the International Labor Organization, and the International

Atomic Energy Agency, plus several lesser known parts of the U.N. In addition, the **United Nations Association-USA** (300 E. 42nd St., New York, NY 10017) handles a great many items from the entire U.N. system.

Persons interested in a wide range of topics would do well to obtain the publications lists from those three places and ask to be placed on their regular mailing lists.

Librarians should remember that there are many **Documentation Centers** in college libraries and public libraries in various parts of the United States where large collections of U.N. materials are sent regularly.

Probably the best single collection of materials on the broad-based U.N. system is **The U.N. Everything Kit** which the UNA-USA sells for \$3.50. It contains a booklet on *Basics Facts About the United Nations*, several *Fact Sheets* (on food, the law of the sea, etc.), several leaflets (on such themes as The Third World Coalition, the U.N. and the Middle East, etc.), a booklet on *The "You" in the U.N.*, a *Film Catalog* and a list of recommended films, plus a general *Publications List*.

The U.N. itself has no such kit, oddly enough, although a letter to the **Public Inquiries Unit, Office of Information**, United Nations, New York, NY 10017, will bring a small collection of fairly useful materials free of charge.

Inquirers to these and other places should be as specific as possible on the types of materials they want. They will not receive copies for every member of a class unless it is a group of current teachers or prospective teachers in a teacher education program, since budgets do not permit such free distribution.

U.N. Background

Where does one start a collection on the U.N.? Possibly with a lively account by Winthrop and Frances Neilson in their paperback on **The United Nations: The World's Last Chance for Peace** (Mentor Books-New American Library, 1975, 276 pp., \$1.75). This splendid volume is arranged by global themes or problems, such as energy, development, family planning, and oceans, and covers the main organs of the U.N. system.

In his book on **The United Nations in a Changing World** (Columbia University Press, 1974, 280 pp., \$15.00 hard cover, \$6.00 paperback) Leland M. Goodrich approaches the U.N. more from an historic viewpoint, with sections on such topics as "Monitoring Peace and Security," "The Changing Structure of Power and Influence," and "The Passing of Colonialism." This is a more difficult book to read and not recommended for beginners.

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biographical materials. Several biographies of Dag Hammarskjöld are available. Of special interest is a volume of his speeches and statements which provide an idea of the period and problems when he was Secretary General of the U.N. That book is entitled **Dag Hammarskjöld: Servant of Peace** (Harper and Row, 1962, 388 pp., \$6.00). It was edited by Wilder Foote, for years a close associate of Hammarskjöld.

A volume by U Thant, Hammarskjöld's successor, has just appeared, bearing the title **View from the U.N.: The Memoirs of U Thant** (Doubleday, 1978, 508 pp., \$10.00). It gives considerable insight into the man and the centrality of Buddhism in his life, as well as into the U.N., which he considered a "realistic and indispensable framework for world management" as we begin to shape "the future global society."

A book by the current Secretary General, Kurt Waldheim, has already appeared in a French edition and an English edition is awaited momentarily.

For those who are interested in looking ahead, there is a volume on **The United Nations and the Future** (Sales Section, U.N., 1976, 463 pp., \$15.00), based on the proceedings of the UNITAR conference on that topic, held by the U.N. in Moscow in 1974. It contains papers by several eminent speakers regarding future resources and long-range planning. It is a book for serious students of the U.N. system.

A few educational institutions, particularly those of higher learning, will want to obtain the **Yearbook of the United Nations** (Sales Section, U.N., annually, each volume \$35.00). Some libraries may wish to avail themselves of **The Standing Order Service for Libraries** by inquiring of the U.N. Department of Public Information, United Nations, New York, NY 10017.

Across the street from the U.N. Headquarters, at 799 United Nations Plaza, New York, NY 10017, is the **U.S. Mission to the United Nations**, the office of the U.S. Ambassador to the U.N. and his staff. They answer requests for information with a small packet of materials which varies from year to year but includes at the present time a list of the *Member States of the U.N.*, and several bulletins based on speeches by high-rank-

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ing State Department officials on international foreign policy topics. These are all free.

Beginning a U.N. Collection

For a basic beginning collection of booklets on the U.N. as a whole, for any level from seventh grade through adult, we suggest **Basic Facts About the United Nations** (1977, 115 pp., \$1.50); **The United Nations Around the World** (1976, 166 pp., \$4.95) largely a pictorial account with many color photos; **World Statistics in Brief** (1977, 251 pp., \$4.95), and a beautiful booklet on **Your United Nations: The Official Guidebook** (96 pp., \$3.95) enhanced by several pictures in color. This last booklet sketches in broad outline the work of the U.N., with emphasis upon the Headquarters in NYC. All of these are available from the Sales Section of the U.N.

An excellent analysis of the U.N. is contained in a hard-hitting pamphlet by Henry C. Beerits, **The United Nations and Human Survival** (American Friends Service Committee, 1501 Cherry St., Philadelphia, PA 19102; 1975, 85 pp., \$1.50). He is favorable to the U.N. but not without criticisms. A fairly recent *Headline Book* of the Foreign Policy Association (345 E. 46th St., New York, NY 10017) by Lincoln and Irangi Bloomfield is called **The United States, Interdependence, and World Order** (1975, 63 pp., \$1.40). It is more objective and less on the cutting edge than the Beerits booklet but very readable.

Two popular accounts of the U.N. in booklet form are sold by the UNA-USA. They are **The U.N. at 30**, a reprint of material from the *New York Times* (25¢), and **The U.N. in the '70s** by Nicholas B. Katzenbach (\$1.00).

In recent years there has been a tendency to publish booklets on single issues, topics, or problems. Some of them will be mentioned in other parts of this essay.

For more information about model assemblies, there is a **Model U.N. Survival Kit** published by the UNA-USA for \$7.50 which contains many valuable materials, including a booklet on **Delegate Preparation for a Model U.N.: Suggested Guidelines**.

Periodicals on the U.N. System

Probably the most lively and popular account of the work of the entire U.N. system is **the inter dependent** which is produced 11 times a year by the UNA-USA for \$6.00 a year, \$5.00 for students. It is an eight-page magazine with many short features and no advertising.

Every secondary school and college library should also subscribe to the **UNESCO Courier**, a beautiful magazine issued monthly except August and September, at an annual rate of \$9.00. Most of the issues are on a single theme, such as the May 1978 issue on "Before We Are Six." Some are on art, some on science, some on famous personalities. It appears now in 16 languages, and many schools could use it profitably in language classes. Some people will want an extra subscription in order to cut and mount some of its extraordinary color photos. Write to UNIPUB.

Two other popular magazines are **Ceres**, put out by the Food and Agriculture Organization (a bimonthly, available from UNIPUB for \$8.00 a year) and **World Health**, a house organ of the World Health Organization (Box 5284, Church St. Station, New York, NY 10249; \$10.00 a year; make checks payable to the Chemical Bank, New York—World Health Organization Account).

For those who want a detailed account of the ongoing activities of the U.N., there is the **United Nations Monthly Chronicle**, issued 11 times a year and available from the Office of Public Information, United Nations, New York, NY 10017, for \$9.50.

UNESCO issues several outstanding publications in addition to the **UNESCO Courier**, already mentioned. The **UNESCO Chronicle** is its official journal on the general work of the organization (\$9.50 per year). Other journals on more specific topics are **Museum** (quarterly, \$22.00 a year); **Cultures** (quarterly, \$22.00 a year); **Impact of Science on Society** (quarterly \$12.50 a year); the **International Social Science Journal** (quarterly, \$20.50 a year); **Prospects** (quarterly, \$12.50 a year) emphasizing new ideas in education; and the **UNESCO Bulletin for Libraries** (six issues a year, \$13.00). All of these can be obtained through UNIPUB.

Children's Books

Many books on the U.N. system have been published over the years for boys and girls, but only seven of them are now available. Two are for young children in grades 1-4. Alike Rabe's **United Nations Day** (Crowell [now Harper and Row], 1965, 38 pp., \$5.95) features colored drawings which enhance a good, simple account of the U.N. Margaret and John T. Moore have a lively little book, **Pepito's Speech at the United Nations** (Minneapolis, Carolrhoda Books, 1971, 47

pp., \$3.95), which tells about the speech a lad dreams he would like to make to the General Assembly.

For grades 4-6 there are also two books, Edna Epstein's **The First Book of the U.N.** (Watts, 1973, 94 pp. \$4.90), a good general account, and M.Sasek's **This Is the United Nations** (Macmillan, 1968, 60 pp., \$5.95), done in his inimitable whimsical style.

Three books are suitable for grades 5 and up: Lavina Dobler's **Arrow Book of the United Nations** (Scholastic, 1965, 80 pp., 85¢), a good overview; Peter Larsen's **The United Nations at Work Throughout the World** (Lothrop, Lee & Shepard, 1971, 127 pp., \$6.00); and Jean Speiser's **UNICEF and the World** (John Day [now Harper and Row], 1965, 96 pp., \$5.79), the story of schools in the developing countries.

Audiovisual Materials

Hundreds of films, filmstrips, records, tapes, and other materials are available from the United Nations. Over 200 films are listed in the **United Nations Film Catalogue**, available free from the Radio and Visual Services Division, Office of Public Information, United Nations, NY 10017. It should be stressed, however, that the U.N. does not sell or rent these materials.

There are several wall charts and sets of posters which are highly recommended for display purposes and study (all below available from the Sales Section of the U.N.). One is a most attractive chart of the U.N. system in full color with pictures illustrating each of the main organs. This \$1.25 item is far superior to the black and white organizational chart used for many years. There is also a large full-color chart of the flags of the member nations of the U.N. for \$1.25.

Sets of display posters are likewise available on **Habitat: How and Where People Live**, **The Second United Nations Development Decade (1970-1980)**, **Southern Rhodesia**, **The Struggle for Independence in Namibia**, and **World Population Year-1974**. Each costs \$2.00; a similar set of photos on **Water** costs \$2.75. Six large colored pictures of the various chambers in the U.N., the U.N. buildings, and some of the art works sells for \$2.50. A set of postcards of the flags of each of the member nations is \$11.50. Other sets of pictures will be mentioned in the sections of this essay on UNESCO and UNICEF.

Guides for Classroom Study

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Elementary and middle school teachers should consult a very recent pamphlet entitled **Helping Boys and Girls Discover the World**, (ed. Leonard S. Kenworthy, UNA-USA, 1978, \$2.50) in which 11 experts on international education answer the 40 questions most commonly asked by teachers of those levels. Several of the questions deal directly with the U.N., most indirectly.

In 1979 UNESCO will issue a revised edition of Herbert Abraham's extremely useful book, **World Problems in the Classroom**, largely written for secondary school teachers. Meanwhile, the 1973 edition is available from UNIPUB for \$5.30. UNESCO is also printing a new book entitled **Studying the World and the United Nations System** (Kenworthy, 1979) which will replace the author's former volume, **Telling the U.N. Story**, still available in paperback from UNIPUB for \$2.00.

The UNA-USA has a good bibliography on **Learning About Global Cooperation and the United Nations System** (28 pp., \$3.50), produced by the faculty of the United Nations School. The UNA also sells **A Portfolio of Projects on the United Nations and Its Agencies** (1971, \$1.50) and **A Portfolio of Promising Practices** (1974, \$2.50).

A report from the U.S. Office of Education, **Teaching About the United Nations 1970-1974**, is distributed free by the Department of Health, Education and Welfare, 400 Maryland Ave. S.W., Washington, DC 20202.

UNICEF and the U.S. Committee for UNICEF

Although it is not a specialized agency, UNICEF is an integral and important part of the total U.N. system and of special interest to school people.

Fortunately there are several pamphlets and leaflets available from UNICEF (United Nations, NY 10017). They include **UNICEF: Facts About UNICEF**; the **UNICEF Annual Report**; the **Declaration of the Rights of a Child** (one copy free, \$5.00 for 100 copies); **Children, Water and UNICEF: Strategy for Basic Services**; and their **Film Catalogue**.

The U.S. Committee for UNICEF (331 E. 38th St.,

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New York, NY 10016) is a separate organization and has a wide range of books, booklets, kits, posters, cards, calendars and other material for sale, as well as some free materials.

The U.S. Committee for UNICEF sends out a small collection of materials free, and will gladly place you on their free mailing list for the publication **UNICEF's World**, a four-page leaflet with many interesting, brief articles, especially for elementary schools.

Extremely useful are their kits for teachers on **Our Restless Earth** (\$1.50), **Teaching About the Child and the World Environment** (\$3.00), **Teaching About Interdependence in a Peaceful World** (\$3.00), **Teaching About the Rights of the Child** (\$2.00), **Nutrition** (\$3.00), and **Population** (\$2.00).

For display and teaching purposes there is a photo set of 12 large black and white pictures of **UNICEF's Children in Schools** (\$1.00), a set of 10 photos in color on children around the world called **Color Pictorial Exhibit** (\$1.50), and a poster with the text of the **Declaration of the Rights of a Child** (50¢).

An important part of the U.S. Committee for UNICEF is their **Children's Cultures Center**, which offers many mimeographed sheets on world topics and countries. A set of over 100 such bibliographies is available for \$2.25. They also have free special "country project kits" on Bolivia, Guatemala, Kenya, Senegal, Sri Lanka, and Thailand. Slides and other materials on these countries are sold by the Committee.

UNESCO and the UNESCO National Commission

Glancing through the **Publications Catalogue** of UNESCO is an education in itself, revealing the wide range of problems and issues in which that agency is involved—literacy, higher education, science, race, the salvaging of historic monuments, ecology, educational planning, communications, and scores of others.

That catalog and a leaflet called **UNESCO: What It Is and Does** are available free from UNIPUB, but specify that you want both items. UNIPUB sells most

of UNESCO's publications.

One of the finest UNESCO publications in years is a relatively recent paperback, **Learning To Be: The World of Education Today and Tomorrow** (1972, 515 pp., \$9.00). It was the work of an international commission which Edgar Faure of France chaired.

Two of UNESCO's all-time best sellers are the **New UNESCO Source Book for Science Teaching** (1973 edition, 270 pp., \$10.50), with suggestions for a wide variety of the sciences; and **Study Abroad** (1978 edition, 552 pp., \$7.50).

Many libraries will want to subscribe to the **UNESCO Chronicle**, and the **UNESCO Courier**, as well as to such lesser known journals as **Cultures**, **Museums**, **The Social Science Journal**, and the **UNESCO Bulletin for Libraries**, all mentioned above.

The United States Commission for UNESCO, with offices in the Department of State, Washington, DC 20520, is the official clearinghouse for U.S. relations with UNESCO. It has a small staff and issues some publications free. At the present time they include leaflets on **Man and the Biosphere**; **A Fact Sheet**; **UNESCO and the U.S. National Commission for UNESCO: Basic Documents**; **United States Participation in UNESCO**; and **UNESCO and the National Interest**. Persons especially interested may receive free of charge the National Commission's newsletter, **Update**.

Specialized Organizations

The Food and Agriculture Organization, based in Rome, uses UNIPUB (address above) as its sales agent. It provides a few leaflets and booklets free to inquirers; they include **The World Food Program: What It Is, What It Does, and How It Works**; **Seeds of Progress**; and **Billions More to Feed**. Its general magazine is **Ceres**, mentioned earlier. A free catalog is also available.

Two kits on food and hunger should be of special interest to teachers, librarians, and curriculum planners. One by Don Morris, **Teaching About World Hunger**, is a very useful compendium for secondary schools which sells for \$2.00 from the U.S. Committee for UNICEF (address above). The other is **World Hunger Crisis Kit** (90 pp., \$1.50) prepared by the World Without War Council (67 E. Madison St., Chicago, IL 60603) chiefly for high schools and colleges.

The World Bank group includes three organizations: the World Bank (formerly the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development) and its two affiliates, the International Development Association and the International Finance Corporation. Two booklets on the work of these groups are available free from the

World Bank Publications Unit, 1818 H St. N.W., Washington, DC 20433. They are **The World Bank** and an unusual pamphlet called the **World Bank Atlas**. Their catalog of publications is also available free.

Although the World Health Organization's headquarters are in Geneva, Switzerland, their publications are available from the WHO Publications Center-USA, 49 Sheridan Ave., Albany, NY 12210. A few of their offerings which should interest school people are **Guidelines for Evaluating a Training Program for Health Personnel** (1978, \$3.00), **Competency-Based Curriculum Development in Medical Education** (1978, \$4.50), and **The Primary Health Worker** (1977, \$10.00). Most of their publications, however, are highly specialized. The best bet for students and teachers is their very interesting popular magazine, **World Health**, described earlier under "Periodicals."

The Universal Postal Union (3000, Berne 15, Switzerland) sends a few basic items upon request, such as stamp catalogs for collectors. The U.N. Post Office in New York City also sells U.N. stamps.

A few materials of interest to schools are available from four very specialized U.N. agencies: the International Atomic Energy Agency (United Nations, New York, NY 10017); the International Civil Aviation Organization (Box 400, Montreal, Quebec, Canada H3A, 2R2); the International Labor Organization (1750 New York Ave. N.W., Washington, DC 20006); and the International Telecommunications Union (Palais des Nations, 1211 Geneva 20, Switzerland). These organizations will gladly provide a free list of all their available publications.

New Programs

Since a large proportion of the personnel and funds of the U.N. is now devoted to the **U.N. Development Program**, librarians, curriculum workers, and teachers should be interested in this very important area. Fortunately an interesting packet of materials will be sent free upon request to their headquarters at UNDP, Division of Information, One United Nations Plaza, New York, NY 10017. At the moment the kit includes a four-page booklet on the **U.N. Development Program** which opens into a wall chart highlighting the report of the administrator for 1977, a 67-page booklet on the **U.N. Development Program: Why, What, How, Where?**, and a leaflet on **United Nations Volunteers**. A large number of other items in their publications list may be purchased.

The headquarters for the **U.N. Environment Program** is in Nairobi, Kenya, the only part of the U.N. system located outside Europe or North America. There is, however, a liaison office in New York City. Inquirers will receive a small packet of materials by

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writing the UNEP, Alcoa Building, 866 United Nations Plaza, Third Fl., New York, NY 10017.

The packet contains such materials as **The State of the World Environment-1978, Suggestions for Celebrating World Environment Day** (June 5), and a few current mimeographed sheets. Librarians may ask to be placed on the free mailing list for their eight- to twelve-page publication **UNITERRA**.

In addition, teachers should be especially interested in the kit, **Teaching About the Child and the World Environment**, prepared by Don Morris for the U.S. Committee for UNICEF for \$2.00.

Since the United Nations has designated 1979 as **The International Year of the Child**, teachers will certainly want to begin now to collect materials suitable for study and for various types of meetings and celebrations of that theme. Some of the materials already cited in this essay should be helpful. In addition, you may want to contact some of the organizations which are paying special attention to that year.

By writing UNICEF, International Year of the Child Secretariat, United Nations, NY 10017, you will receive free a few items already prepared. Others will certainly appear in the coming months. A much more elaborate packet is available free from The International Year of the Child, U.S. Committee for UNICEF, 331 E. 38th St., New York, NY 10016.

As the year progresses, other groups will certainly be producing appropriate materials for parents, teachers, and children.

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