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Some aspects of personnel policy and administration in the United Nations secretariat.

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ABSTRACT

The paper deals with certain aspects of the classification and recruitment policies of the United Nations Secretariat. After an introductory discussion of the place of these two functions within the aegis of modern international personnel administration, there is a general outline of the theory of recruitment in organizations, accompanied by a specific outline of a theory of international recruitment. This is followed by a theoretical discussion of classification.

Following the theoretical orientation of the paper, there is a discussion of the historical precedents for modern U.N. recruitment policies, initially in connection with the League of Nations; in addition, there is a detailed description of the origins of the present United Nations system.

The paper includes a lengthy discussion of the structures and methods of recruitment within the Secretariat, in conjunction with the various problems faced by Secretariat recruiters. Of these problems, that discussed most fully is the geographical distribution situation.

There is an outline of the background to classification systems as they are presently employed within the Secretariat, also including the League of Nations experience with regard to this function. In particular, there is much discussion of the changes which have taken place in classifying staff since 1946.

Throughout the paper, there is considerable emphasis upon the unity of theory and practice. Likewise, the linkages are emphasised as between classification and recruitment, as two steps in the one process of absorption into the organization. The conclusion attempts to evaluate the extent to which theoretical premises were considered by the personnel sections of the Secretariat and by the
General Assembly in evolving present practices vis-à-vis classification and recruitment. In addition, the paper refers at length to documents put out by the United Nations, and to the critical and descriptive literature on the subject of International Personnel Administration.
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SOME ASPECTS OF PERSONNEL POLICY AND ADMINISTRATION
IN THE UNITED NATIONS SECRETARIAT

Ian Silver, University of Windsor

INTRODUCTION

An organization is at its most simple level just a body of people interacting according to certain patterns and rules. The organization of these people - their intake, processing and eventual rejection by the organization - is the function of personnel administration. To a great extent, personnel administration is organization theory, yet on the other hand, so pragmatic a problem as the selection and processing of staff can almost divorce itself from the theories which are so crucial to other aspects of organization theory.

Personnel administration, then, is the organization of staff within the wider organization. It is the selection and processing of staff in response to two series of questions:

(1) Where do the component members of an organization come from? How are they taken into the organization? How does the process of attraction work?

(2) What happens to the individual once he is an organization component? How is he fitted into the organization? How is he adapted, and how does the organization adapt to him?

The answers to these various questions will differ considerably from organization to organization, and to this extent, personnel administration has a pragmatic orientation. Until recently, there was little that one might describe as literature of the theory of personnel administration, while even now, the question is one of relevance to
the needs of the organization. A theoretical construct may seem applicable to one organization but because of the differing orientations of the various organizations, there are no universal principles upon which all personnel administration is founded. Studies of personnel administration within various organizations are invariably handicapped by this situation: in the end, the researcher is often forced to create his own theory, and one that is so pragmatic that its right to be known as a theoretical approach might seriously be questioned.

Within the international organization, the situation is compounded by environmental considerations. Whereas the national bureaucracy can generally depend upon a continuing environment that accepts the need for some type of systematisation, the international organization has been placed into a context of international anarchy. It is an administration without a definite substructure, and in the long run, without definite sources of support. Even the most repressive dictatorship can count on the instruments of its repression to ensure the continuity of its administration - an organization like the United Nations must rely upon the goodwill of nearly one hundred and thirty different states to survive, let alone provide a substructure. Personnel administration must answer the questions stated above, yet at the same time, there has to be a realization that the context of the organization is world-wide. An international organization is, when compared to national bureaucracies, somewhat small, yet it must placate the sum total of its member-states to ensure survival. One of the most significant areas in which the organization must please,
is that of selecting its staff. Few States will inquire into what actually happens to the staff once they are taken into the organization, but their selection has to be according to a formula that gives each member State some kind of stake in the administration. This is as much a need to relate the organization to its members as an indication of national selfishness writ large.

The purpose, then, of this thesis, is to examine the problems of the international organization in answering the two questions posed earlier. It is therefore necessary to evaluate the extent to which the international organization differs from other organizations in its response to these questions, and to the problems which they pose. Given that the international organization faces unique problems, does the personnel administration of the organization adapt accordingly? It is this question for which this thesis is searching for an answer.

Having abstracted personnel administration from organization theory as a whole, it is now necessary to abstract, further, those aspects of personnel administration which best answer the needs of the purpose of this thesis. The input aspects of personnel administration are basically covered by the recruitment process. The extent to which selection and recruitment practices provide the type of staff which the organization requires is a fair criterion for judging the effectiveness of the intake of staff, and the policies concerning it. Input and recruitment, then, are almost identical concepts in terms of personnel administration. The processing of staff once it is employed, however, can be broken down into several sub-processes. If organization theory is to be considered, then, it is necessary to
emphasize the organizational aspect of personnel administration, and
this is chiefly found in the classification of staff. The individual
within the organization is provided with a niche, a place, a bureau,
linked with his qualifications and the esteem in which the total
organization (or at least its personnel officers) holds him. To
classify staff is to make order out of chaos - it is to provide the
answers to Question 2. The adaptation of the individual via training,
and his satisfaction in terms of pay or promotion are peripheral
problems - for this reason, they are discussed only indirectly in this
paper. The notion under discussion, classification, must provide then
a rational guide to the deployment of staff. Inasmuch as this is done,
the classification plan accurately reflects the places of organization
components - the extent to which external considerations predominate
over the need of the classification and recruitment functions to
answer certain stated questions, provides a guide as to the effective-
ness of the performance of these functions within the organization it-
self.

An additional problem then, having selected the area under study,
is to find the organization which must be studied. The United Nations
has been chosen, inasmuch as it is the largest of the international
organizations, and probably the best-documented. In discussing the
experiences of the United Nations, reference will continually be made
to the experiences and problems of the organization's predecessor,
the League of Nations. This is as much to provide a form of continu-
ity to the paper as to utilise outside examples. As I have already
stated, each international organization is a ding an sich - therefore,
the only other organization clearly relevant to the United Nations is its predecessor.

The line of approach has been, firstly, to place the classification and recruitment functions into a broad theoretical base, both with reference to the organization as an abstract concept, and to the international organization. Inherent in this approach, however, has been the realization as aforementioned that personnel administration theory has a very limited area of universal applicability. For this reason, a good deal of conflict will be evident between what is done and what should be done in terms of the theoretical premises outlined. Next, the experience of the League will be discussed generally with regard to each of the two functions, with specific experiences being analyzed in terms of the U.N. experiences themselves. The experiences of the United Nations will be discussed critically, and with the intention of bringing out solutions, if any, to the problems which plague the U.N. in the administration of its staff.

The technique of research has been one of the analysis of United Nations publications on personnel administration, coupled with continuous use of the literature available on the subject. The literature on the United Nations system of personnel administration is far from extensive, and almost exclusively describes, rather than criticises. On the other hand, the secrecy with which the U.N. Secretariat (the locus of personnel within the U.N. administration) surrounds itself renders such approaches as interviewing on a first-hand basis an exercise in frustration. Even the literature produced by the Secretariat is not distributed widely, and, as a consequence,
considerable reliance has had to be placed upon the work of former or present Secretariat officials\(^1\). The literature to date has been of a general nature, and no previous attempt has been made to study classification and recruitment, as abstractions from general personnel administration. To make a critical analysis of the literature would not be profitable, then, because within it, the questions for which answers are sought in this paper could only be answered indirectly.

Certain basic assumptions have been made - for one, the need for a rational approach to international personnel administration. A classification plan which is irrational is irrelevant, and is ultimately ignored. A recruitment plan which is chaotic is also eventually bypassed by the logical processes with which an organization surrounds itself. The assumption is that it is desired that the organization be effective and efficient, and to this extent, classification and recruitment must show a good deal of response to organizational demands, if they are to be relevant to the organization itself.

The method of approach, then, has been to produce and strengthen certain linkages. The first of these is theory and practice. Since the theories of classification and recruitment are especially practice-oriented and pragmatic, it seems apparent that a theory which

bears no relationship whatsoever to practice with the organization under study is irrelevant. On the other hand, an approach that is completely piecemeal is chaotic, and can provide little in the way of continuity; and continuous existence is what makes the organization. The second linkage is between classification and recruitment. While they can be studied as two separate functions or aspects, it must be emphasized that they are just two steps in one continuous process. Classification without structured forms of staff intake is irrelevant, while recruitment into an unstructured or poorly structured organization is hardly possible. If neither of the two functions are well-structured, the organization becomes based on a muddle-through philosophy, and there can be no guarantee that it will persist in terms of crises which may be forthcoming.

The main justification of this method of approach as outlined above is that a descriptive/analytical technique would be of more value than one, say, based on interviews. The reticence of U.N. officials would render the statistically-oriented questionnaire somewhat useless, unless it is so broad that it would provide few conclusions that the astute observer might make at a distance. The descriptions, at least, are available in the literature, while the analysis is strictly a consequence of the organization of the paper. While it is possible to consider classification and recruitment together, it is felt that approaches to the two functions have been so different that the two must be considered apart, while bearing in mind their symbiotic relationship. The separate-yet-joint approach to these functions should provide certain conclusions about the effectiveness of U.N.
classification and recruitment policies. The extent to which these functions are performed effectively is at least some guide to the effectiveness of the Secretariat as an administrative (or legislative) body.

The order of the paper follows according to the principles already discussed. Initially, by way of orientation, there is a discussion of the general theory of recruitment within organizations, followed by a more specific discussion of recruitment in international organizations. Classification is discussed in a similar manner, first generally and then with emphasis on international organizations. There is a very general discussion of recruitment in the League of Nations which is continued throughout the following chapters where relevant. The fourth chapter contains a detailed discussion of the origins, structures and methods of recruitment within the United Nations Secretariat itself. Following on from this are a series of discussions of the problems which face Secretariat recruiters. The chief of these is the equitable distribution of recruits on a geographical basis, and as functions of this problem, there are several others which are discussed. Among these are the problems of loyalty, permanence and continuity of appointment, the need for a particular international "administrative personality", techniques for ranking and evaluating potential employees, the competitive nature of salaries, and the relationship between publicity and recruitment at the international level.

The discussion of classification is continued, initially concentrating on the experience of the League. The various stages through
which the United Nations Secretariat has passed since its inception are analysed and discussed in some detail, along with those problems which were encountered. Finally, there is a brief conclusion which indicates the directions in which reforms, if any, are required vis-à-vis the classification and recruitment functions of the United Nations. Throughout the paper, the emphasis will be upon the connection between classification and recruitment and the evaluation of those plans which have been advanced for these two personnel functions in terms of their rationality and their impact on the effectiveness of the Secretariat as an administrative body.
CHAPTER 1

(a)

THE RECRUITMENT FUNCTION

No amount of care in determining how a government shall be organized for the performance of its work, the manner in which the funds necessary for its support shall be raised and expended, and the particular practices and procedures that shall be employed in carrying on its activities, will give even a measurable approach to efficiency in the actual administration of public affairs unless a technically competent and loyal personnel can be secured and retained in the service and a system devised whereby this personnel may be effectively directed and controlled.¹

If it is a correct assumption that personnel administration is but an adjunct to organizational theory as a whole, it is necessary to accept the principles of rationality and purposiveness as applied to bureaucracies. The fact that the organization under discussion in this instance is an international bureaucracy should not require the abandonment or emasculation of these principles.

To analyse accurately the extent to which recruitment within the secretariat fulfils the requirements of logic and purpose, it is necessary to outline the theoretical background for personnel administration.

In a broad sense, since all administration is concerned with people and their behaviour, all administration might properly be described as personnel administration . . . In actual practice the personnel specialist is concerned with a more limited range of matters . . . principally with the recruitment of employees for organization positions (including promotions and transfers from one position to another), with the separation of employees from the organization by retirement, dismissal or resignation, with the training of employees,

It is the first part of this definition - recruitment for positions within the organization - that must be considered. In this is embodied the organizational purpose and to the extent that this is related to the classification of positions, recruitment must be given much consideration. It seems logical to assume that personnel are recruited in accordance with the needs of the organization and of the positions therein. To the extent that a stable, cohesive staff are selected by the personnel office of the organization, the recruiting function might be said to be performed adequately. Nonetheless, it is important to realize that recruiting can only be performed within the boundaries of job specifications, and at all times the wider organizational purposes must receive major consideration. Implicit in the aforementioned is a degree of conflict - desire for the best as opposed to the need to satisfy organizational aims. It will be demonstrated that within the United Nations this conflict has manifested itself so obviously, and with such unfortunate consequences at times as to jeopardize the effective functioning of the secretariat itself. The warning must be borne in mind that (in) the short run, the organization must work with the personnel it has. In the long run, the organization can change its whole character by its control over the admission of new employees and over the processes that gradually condition them during the period they are in it.3

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3 Simon, Smithburg, and Thompson, op.cit., p. 312.
The process of absorbing new employees into an organization must be considered in relation to total policy of recruitment and promotion from within. To a greater or lesser extent, all bureaucracies have a tendency to give their first preference for all positions above the very lowest intake levels to those persons who are preconditioned to accept the goals and values of the organization. The key, however, to a rational recruitment policy lies in the merit principle: the idea that the most highly qualified candidate for a position must be chosen. This principle was established as a counter to patronage and spoils systems selections processes in Western bureaucracies. The task, as Stahl pointed out, was seen more in terms of keeping out the unfit (or undesirables) rather than encouraging the best candidates to enter the bureaucracy. "It was naively assumed that if political favouratism could be excluded from the selection process, men of ability would somehow find their way into the public service." Stahl further states that this was found to be fallacious. In some way, a compromise must be established as aforementioned, between the merit principle and the requirement that the intake of staff satisfy organizational goals and (in the case of national bureaucracies) general social and economic goals. For example, the function of the lower echelons of the civil service in many countries is seen as absorbing into some form of productive labour, the unskilled and unemployables, who might otherwise become a major burden on the

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national economy. It will be shown later how the requirements associated with geographical recruitment (or geopolitical recruitment) have affected the merit principle in connection with the United Nations.

Theoretically, recruitment should be on as broad a base as possible. Salaries, fringe benefits and, above all, a well-defined, structured career pattern must be utilized to attract potential employees to the organization. Competition must be open, and based where possible on objective tests.

The recruitment process must be adapted to a greater or lesser extent to the needs of the organization. Many theorists, especially Schein\(^6\) incline towards a two-tiered selection process. Initially, a pool of qualified individuals is selected, and from them is selected the candidate who is most likely to do the job well.

Over the past fifty years, there has been increasing emphasis in national bureaucracies, on the selection at the higher echelons of the bureaucracy of so-called "administrative generalists". Many civil services, such as the British, have accentuated the need for individuals capable of developing and growing within the organization, whilst acculturating and adapting to organizational goals. "A great deal of government recruiting and selection must be fashioned to insure at least an adequate intake of the highest-calibre people at all levels so that there will be no dearth of talent when movement upward or outward in the service takes place."\(^7\)

\(^5\) See state services in New Zealand, and several developing countries - India, Iran, Cambodia, for example.


\(^7\) Stahl, op. cit.; 1962; p. 69.
At this point, the importance of adequate job-specification and classification to the recruitment process must be emphasized. An unstructured, ill-defined classification plan based on irrelevant criteria and bearing little or no relation to the actual job performed leads in the long run to administrative confusion, formalism and, in Western bureaucracies, organizational breakdown.

A recruiting plan must be linked closely with the status of the labour market. If there is a drastic shortage of highly qualified candidates for a particular position, common-sense dictates the lowering or adaptation of the standard specifications for the position. It must be borne in mind that in the long run the organization is dependent upon the labour environment for manpower, whether or not the market as such has geographical limitations. Any form of written or clinical testing must be valid inasmuch as it accurately measures what it is designed to measure objectively and reliably. In the long run, recruitment often depends on the evaluation of the hiring officer. To dehumanize recruitment is to risk alienation amongst the employees of the organization, and alienation begets formalism and "bureaucratic" behaviour. Examinations must adapt to the increasing range of education and the diversity of occupations that have developed within the bureaucracies since the beginning of the twentieth century.

Unfortunately, value judgements as such are far from reliable. For example, many theorists have tended to discredit the job-interview as a selection technique, first because of the many inaccuracies

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8 ibid. p. 70.


inherent in the characters and approaches of the two persons concerned, and second because of the general doubts as to the value thrown upon this by recent psychological research. However, there are tests, of varying accuracy, to assess

a) ability to appraise people
b) interest in theoretical and abstract matters
c) administrative judgement
d) performance or behaviour in a group
e) intelligence
f) respect for people
g) interest in, and aptitude for, the work undertaken
h) supervisory judgement in interpersonal relations.

The best means of testing available appears to be actual submission to particular work-situations, coupled with an assessment of past performance, academic and other, although the first is time-consuming and costly (as well as being deleterious to organizational efficiency) while the second, when used on its own, may have little bearing on actual aptitude. Allowance must always be made for the development potential of the prospective employee - hidden talents need not always be assumed, but they must be suspected, at least, in any candidate for a position. It has been said that

one of the difficulties of attempting to pick and choose on the basis of personality is the lack of any generally accepted measure by which administrative ability can be

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assessed particularly for younger people in whom such ability can be little more than potential.  

A conclusion might therefore be made that there is no "perfect" recruitment technique. The situation is one where environmental considerations, coupled with trial and error, seem to be deciding factors. Probation has been proven an excellent technique, inasmuch as the best guide to potential performance is still actual performance under test conditions, depending on the availability of jobs for the potential employees. This must be coupled with the resources available to off-balance possible disasters. Nonetheless, it is an important part of the selection process as it stands in most bureaucracies, and its possibilities seem rarely to have utilized to their fullest extent, save at the lower clerical levels. Dismissal of incompetent probationers, in particular, is a tactic rarely used by supervisors, as Pfiffner and Presthus point out.  

Recruitment, in the broader sense, may be viewed as "a series of inter-related steps in an overall process that begins when the personnel office becomes aware of the need to fill a vacancy, and ends only when the employee has successfully completed his probationary period."  

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13a Pfiffner and Presthus; op. cit., p. 396.  

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It is the actual process which is of greatest concern, and this in turn may be broken down to two sub-processes: attraction and selection. The former is more widely considered as "recruiting" and Stahl lists twelve basic methods whereby individuals are drawn towards an organization:

1. Advertising on the mass-media or within professional publications
2. Circularising, via mailing lists to educational institutes, vocational counselling offices and professional occupational groups and organizations
3. Building up of coded lists of individuals who have contacted the personnel office concerning employment
4. Careful development of contacts amongst teachers, editors, influential professional, technical and labour leaders
5. Wide distribution of recruiting pamphlets
6. Career directories
7. Campus recruitment
8. Exhibitions at conventions and expositions
9. Holding "open house" within the organization to outsiders
10. Personal letters to high school and college seniors
11. Use of tourist bureau type materials
12. Exploitation of contest type publicity to attract interest in public institutions and jobs

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While this list is far from exhaustive, as a takeoff point for the study of personnel attraction is extremely useful. There has been a tendency to down-play incentives for potential recruits, emphasizing rather the deterrent aspects of recruitment, such as examinations. In addition, considerable emphasis is placed upon prior experience and recruiting is linked closely with the educational system of the social environment. However, within the context of public administration, the personnel administrators must realize that they are competing against the private, or business sections or even with other governments. It is vital that they "sell" their organization via the methods outlined above, and paint the organization in glowing colours to attract the most suitable recruits. Selective recruitment, based on incentives, is the ideal; in practice, this ideal is seldom implemented satisfactorily.

It is important to note that

"individuals are willing to accept organization membership when their activity in the organization contributes, directly or indirectly, to their own personal goals . . . The characteristics of (the) three bases for participation are sufficiently distinct to make it worth while to consider them separately: personal rewards deriving directly from the accomplishment of the organization objective; personal inducement offered by the organization and closely related to its size and growth; and personal rewards derived from inducements offered by the organization but unrelated to the organizational size and growth. Organizations are ordinarily made up of three groups of individuals, in each of which one of these types of motivation prevails; and it is the presence of these three groups that gives administration its specific character."16

The public organization in its national context offers, above all, a safe, secure job, with strictly-defined spheres of duty, and perquisites of a form virtually unchanged since Weber's time. These

incentives, however, must adapt both to the new technology and the needs of specific organizations, and it is in this connection that flexibility is vital for the present-day administrative organization.

A major incentive appealing to a prospective recruit and one which must be emphasized above all, is the status of the position and of the organization. Within the organization, the individual may possess functional status, or a recognition of competence to form judgements in specialized fields, or hierarchical status, in the form of rank. Status is associated, naturally, with symbols. Simon, Smithburg and Thompson enumerate five types: induction ceremonies, badges of office, titles, monetary and other perquisites, and limitations and restrictions of calling and office. It is this fourth symbol which reflects most directly on the status of the employee with relation to the outside world, although all of these symbols must be taken into account when considering the relative status of a particular employee. An employer, be he public or business, who is held in low regard by his employees or by the community in general, can have little chance of obtaining high-calibre staff.

A public service which can offer few advantages not generally available elsewhere, except security and stability, to appeal to prospective recruits, can only expect to be landed with second-class, mediocre employees. Status is a vital motivation for individual action, inasmuch as "there is a close relationship of mutual dependence between social status in the community and occupational status".18

Such matters as nomenclature and relative salary are greatly important in the assessment and establishment of a status-position.

One consideration in recruitment is that not all new employees are taken in at a basic level and provided with a single plan for advancement. As Wilmerding points out\(^{19}\) there are three sources of manpower. Initially there is recruitment at every level, followed by recruitment at the lowest point of entry of each occupational hierarchy, and thirdly, recruitment at the lowest point of entry of the hierarchy. The point Wilmerding makes is that "one factor governing the limitation of recruitment points is the extent to which government must hold out the prospects of advancement within the service as a bait to attract competent recruits."

Recruitment, must be tailored to the needs of the organization. Coercive organizations are virtually nonselective, employing pretty well any applicants, while the normative organizations, such as religious, educational and political bodies, vary in their selectivity. It is the third type, the utilitarian organizations, which "employ formal mechanisms . . . to improve the selection of participants. All other things being equal, the higher the rank of the participant, the more carefully he is recruited and the less he is controlled once selected."\(^{20}\) On the other hand, it must be realized that the size of the organization, and the remoteness of the personnel agency from the staffing process itself will, in turn, affect the success of recruitment


methods. A small organization can and does investigate potential employees far more carefully than a large bureaucracy.

It seems necessary to consider the influence of purpose upon recruitment. If the organizational goal is merely to perpetuate a governmental policy of full employment the recruitment process will be aimed at absorbing the largest possible number of lower-echelon staff. If, on the other hand, other factors than the basic criterion of efficiency intrude into the recruitment process, it is imperative to question their viability (as criteria). Organizational purpose must, in the long run, be evaluated against organizational efficiency. All too often, it is the recruitment process which must bear the brunt of conflicting goals, and the consequences may have a disastrous effect on the standard of staff taken into the organization.

(b)

RECRUITMENT IN INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS

It is recognized by all serious students of international organization that the establishment of a keen, efficient, loyal and contented secretariat is a critical stage in the creation of an international authority.

F. W. Holden

The psychological challenge of living and working with individuals from other lands presents, as Torree points out, a universal problem, inasmuch as the international staff officer is immediately


made aware, in fact, self-conscious, of his own culture and way of life, and its differences from the other cultures. This in itself creates the need for a particular type of individual to fill staffing positions in an international organization as opposed to a national bureaucracy, and a number of different criteria must therefore be considered. It has been pointed out that

recruiting for international administration raises all the basic problems of recruiting for national administration, as, for instance, merit versus the spoils system, patronage, educational and age requirements. But the order of importance of one or the other element is changed or even reversed in the case of international administration.  

This factor is also emphasized by Mahgoub, who maintains that the normal recruiting methods, such as competitive examinations, personal interviews and the analysis of qualifications which categorize most bureaucracies are not necessarily applicable in toto in the international environment. The reason for this, undoubtedly, is to be found, as aforementioned, in the different requirements of the organizations as much as in the motivation of individuals to seek employment with such bureaucracies. There is a basic need for the type of employee who has adaptability as much as technical competence. The search for this type of adaptable man is far from easy, and the failure rate within the international staff itself must be quite high (although this is difficult to assess completely). It is impossible for the recruiter to rely on the rule of thumb that an individual who has performed a particular task well in the past will perform equally well under a different cultural environment. It must be realized that the recruit is being

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asked to develop a totally new approach to interpersonal and social conditions. For this reason, the emphasis has been on trying to obtain, for the organization, those individuals, such as diplomats, who have already shown marked ability in international work. The demand for such individuals, however, far exceeds the supply, so that eventually even the most hesitant of international recruiting agencies is forced to specify those personality characteristics for which it is looking in obtaining new staff.

High on this list of criteria will be technical competence for the particular specified position, though, as Torre, Christie and Klineberg point out\textsuperscript{24}, this is far from a sufficient single qualification. Organizational skills, such as the sense of "institution building" and the ability to carry it out, coupled with a certain degree of ability to communicate in a lucid manner, are of considerable importance. In this latter criterion, for example, is included the need to adapt one's demands to the cultural environment, existing or perceived, of the other employees. Perhaps this is as much tact as anything else, although in the world of diplomacy, it is assumed that the \textit{sine qua non} of an international personage is the ability not to antagonize those of different cultural environments.

Other social skills are of primary consideration. In the long run, they depend on the individual's ability to adapt - to social displacement, to different working conditions and to a completely different set of

\begin{footnote}
\textsuperscript{24} q.v. Torre, \textit{op. cit.}, p. 25.
\end{footnote}
interpersonal relations. An empathic person is desirable, and the ethnocentric or authoritarian personality is doomed to fail within the international bureaucratic context.

The cultural factor, of course, is among the most significant. Margaret Mead states that "the culture in which a candidate has been reared, the culture in which he will work, the cultures from which other members of the team are drawn, and the culture within which the particular bureaucratic procedure of ethic of international work originated or by which it was principally shaped, must all be considered." In this connection, three "systems of self definition and hierarchy" are important - the culture in which the official was reared, the system of the culture of the country within which the employee is working, and the cultural style peculiar to the international organization itself.

One consideration is the lack of staff trained in the areas concentrated upon by the international agency. In fact, diplomats and high-level administrators are scarce items in any country, and the acute shortage of these individuals within the bureaucracies of developing nations immediately forces the realization that at some stage, organizations such as the United Nations that operate on an international scale, must either train their own officers or put up with rejects from the various national systems, if these same organizations are to attempt to maintain some rudiments of geographical balance in their selection processes. This has in fact occurred within the United Nations.

The image of the international organization is an important

25 ibid., p. 3.
26 ibid., p. 9.
factor in recruitment. The ability of the organisation to retain its employees, and the calibre of such employees are of considerable significance in the attraction process. The ability to offer the right job to the right man is still one to be respected and considered. The organization, too, must be adaptable, especially in the type of employment it offers. Probational appointments are of considerable potential value within the international organizational context, as, when properly utilized, they minimize cost to the organization, while at the same time maximizing the field from which permanent employees may be taken. As well as the usual permanent type of employment, the international agency can and does offer temporary contracts, intermittent and part time employment, and secondment, all of which have particular merits relative to the type of position available. In addition, local recruitment at lower levels can be of great importance.

Planning is vital in the recruiting process, for "it is in the nature of things that a recruiting operation which is the subject of legislative and other scrutiny to a degree unknown in national administrations should be carefully planned in all its stages." Recruitmg within the international organization is affected primarily by the purpose of the organization. When a national Bureaucracy such as the Canadian civil service is discussed, one can specify the Service's purposes, the chief of which is to effectively administer Canada, and to put into effect the acts and decisions of the executive and legislative bodies inasmuch as they affect this administrative goal. The goal of an entity such as the Secretariat of the United Nations is to act as a servicing body to organs which have no powers to enforce

their decisions, and so this acts as a disincentive to many potential recruits.

Additional to this is continuity as a problem in the attraction of potential recruit. International organizations have a tendency to come and go as the world situation alters, and for the candidate seeking longterm employment within a stable organization, this lack of continuity can act as a severe disincentive. The corollary of this is that the organization has to attract a particular type of personality imbued with a belief in internationalism, as it were. In international as much as national bureaucracies, there is a need for staff committed to the ideals for which the organization stands.

In considering the techniques to be utilized by the international recruiting agency, there appear to be significant differences from a national bureaucracy. The job description varies according to the language in which it is advertised. A company secretary, for example, may employ a totally different approach to an American as opposed to a Nauruan. There is a need to be precise almost to the point of over-specificity, to enable candidates to comprehend the requirements of the position. An interview is not always possible, because of the worldwide recruiting base of the organization, and as often as not, there is the problem of communication. No employee can be expected to know all five of the major languages which most international organizations utilize, and interpreters do not aid in the creation of an environment within which a meaningful interview can be conducted. Psychological tests, as used in Britain or the United States, are far from applicable to the international employee. The cross-cultural differences are so great that there is very little room for the standard-
ization of test results. The problem of evaluating the academic qualifications and experience of individuals from varying countries presents an equally onerous problem. There is always a tendency for national or xenophobic feelings to creep in within the context of the recruiting process. No organization, no matter how scrupulously it enforces impartiality, can guarantee that, for example, a Turkish recruiter will hire a Greek official, or vice versa. National enmities tend to run deeply, and it takes a great deal of time to build up the necessary detachment from national policies and feelings.

The main question to be asked is, just exactly what sort of individual best fits the context of the international organization? It seems that the truly international figure, bound by no geographical or political frontiers, is a rare bird indeed, and far from fit for the international organizational context. What is required is as much a man with every evidence of stability, which includes the normal attachment to his home land, for the international agency is a crisis-ridden organization, and the unstable, incompetent or peripatetic employee can do little to further its purpose. To a certain extent, the perfect international administrator is like the charismatic leader - he must possess a considerable number of differing personality characteristics, but it is nearly impossible to establish the exact proportions in which these characteristics must appear. Among such characteristics are, as aforementioned, stability, a deep commitment to the goals of the organization, and considerable diplomatic ability. The importance of the goals of the organization cannot be overemphasized.
Writers such as Nicholaidis have asserted that within the national bureaucracies, the employee is not motivated by a commitment to the goals of the organization, but rather by the very normal desire for security, adequate pay and good fringe benefits, along with such intangibles as status and continuity. In the international organization, the prospects for security are not terribly great, while the prestige varies with the fortunes of the organization. The pay is usually appealing to those from underdeveloped States, but at the same time, separation from the individual's homeland and family can often be a considerable disincentive to offset the material advantages.

CHAPTER II

THEORY OF CLASSIFICATION

The problem of classification (is) to . . . assign servants to work which is not too difficult or too easy for them to do, and then to treat all who do equal work equally, and where there is a difference in the amount and quality of work done, to proportion reward to service. The experience of all countries shows how necessary such classification is, though it is very difficult to establish and maintain in a growing service, and practically impossible to satisfy the individual civil servant that he has been rightly placed in any particular category. For he, in company with other human beings, is like the crab which, according to William James, will very likely be filled with a sense of personal outrage at hearing itself classed as a crustacean, and would say, "I am no such thing. I am Myself, Myself Alone".

HERMAN FINER

One of the most influential individuals in the history of organizational position classification, Ismar Baruch, has stated that, within the development of humanity, classification is prominent as "one of the earliest and simplest methods by which man discovered relationships among things". He attributes this to the innate desire for the individual to convert the chaos of the world around him into some kind of digestible order, for "an environment in which each object is given a separate and distinct name and is considered individually without reference to its possible similarity to other equally familiar objects would be much too complex for the reasonable conduct of everyday affairs. Accordingly, to simplify the things with which it has to deal, mankind from earliest history has sought to group together things that are related in some essential points, and to call by the same name things


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which have attributes in common. 2

Classification in itself is a form of grouping of objects according to their similar characteristics. Inevitably, the individual lends himself to the same process. We do not see him a separate being, in an organizational context (and for many people, their entire lives are mere transfers from one organization ("The Office") to another ("The Club")), but rather as a Clerk, a typist, an "organizational component". No matter how much one might rail, as did Kafka, against the monotony and overconformity of the organizational society, with all the lack of individuality that this entails, the fact remains that in a complex, dynamic, highly specialized society individuality must be relegated to a secondary position. The sheer mass of individuals with which the bureaucratic organization must cope necessitates this state of affairs. The alternative, anarchy, is so beset with inherent disadvantages, that for sheer protection mankind is forced to submit to the Leviathan of an organizational society. The "Organization" means just that - a basic social classification.

Once the individual enters the organization, he must submit to the necessary depersonalization of having a grade, a class - in short, a niche - and these niches, in turn, must be systematized. Classification, nonetheless, must be seen in perspective, as a tool for the more streamlined operation of the Leviathan - it is not an end in itself.

It is nearly impossible to theorize (let alone idealize) classification, as it is a highly pragmatic phenomenon. Classification must be

enacted according to the needs of the organization; it is dysfunctional to establish a system of classification which subverts the organizational goals. Essentially, this must synthesise into an unending conflict between the need for placing the individual within an organizational context, and the individual’s own desire to retain at least a modicum of his personality and individuality.

Within the public organization, the methods of grouping individuals divide into classification per se and grading, of which the former shall be the main orientation within the context of this paper. The Report of the McCarthy Commission\(^3\) in New Zealand illustrates the difference between the two concepts with reference to military groupings. The distinction between cavalry and infantry, for example, presents a form of classification according to the type of work done, whereas the process of ranking the individual from Private to General is a progression of degrees of responsibility more or less equal to grading (which in turn is intrinsically connected with the promotion process). These two systems, then, relate broadly to the type and quality of organizational activity, and affect the entire efficiency of the organization.

Classification can be seen as involving "accepting or rejecting various unfilled jobs with respect to an individual who is unplaced or who is potentially a candidate for these openings. There is no concern with accepting or rejecting the individual: the task is to place each individual in the job where he can make the greatest contribution to

the organization and himself".4

As for the basis of classification, this has often been seen as the necessity to ensure public responsibility. "A classification system sets out basically to ensure public responsibility. Because duties are defined, objective criteria for entry and promotion are established and appointments made and recorded in an open manner, favouritism and nepotism can be largely excluded and a reasonable standard of competence guaranteed."5

Classification is not an end in itself so much as an analytical tool to be used as a means to an end. For this reason, the bases for classification are not so much absolute as determined by the purposes of the division concerned. As a submission to the McCarthy Commission put it, classification systems, because they deal with the rights and obligations of people, are also social systems within which a very complex set of expectations develop. These tend to be delicately balanced and any alteration in one place produces effects which are largely incalculable in others.6

Broadly speaking, the bases for classification depend upon which attributes are selected, in respect of which particular things are alike or different. Here again, purpose is most important. Baruch lists salaries, method of filling employment, organizational location, and work involved as bases,7 although in most merit-bases organizations, the most important criteria are the level of work, the range of duties and responsibilities,

6 ibid.
7 Pfiffner and Presthus, op. cit., p. 298.
and the qualifications required.

Between all these criteria, it is important that there be a great deal of relativity. Here is the classifier's great dilemma: to place the individual within the appropriate organizational context, while at the same time trying to observe adequate relativity between the various, coequal bases for classification. The problem is actually greatest with regard to salaries, and, as put by Baruch, can be seen as an "eternal triangle":

![Diagram showing the eternal triangle relationship between Standards of Qualifications, Salaries, and Seniority.]

As for the actual grading methods, these fall broadly into three groups, and can best be considered in their environmental contest.

The type used in industrial firms, factor comparison, is based on statistical methods. Positions are graded, but the system is objective and quantified, based on three steps. Initially, the factors to be used are selected (usually between three and five of them), followed by the selection of "key" jobs, which are representative jobs in the hierarchy thought to have considerable characteristics in common with other jobs, after which these same jobs are evaluated in terms of the factors selected, along with pay. Then the associated jobs are fitted into the appropriate relationship. "In a word, each factor for each job has a
money value which adds up to the total pay for the job." The classification is evaluated by line supervisors and operating personnel. A particular job might be evaluated by points or in terms of dollars for each factor. These two approaches are known respectively as factor-comparison and point-evaluation.

Notwithstanding the precision of the factor-comparison and point-evaluation systems, Pfiffner and Presthus conclude that nonquantitative classification methods seem to achieve substantially the same results as the aforementioned systems. "Even if one breaks down jobs in statistical detail, the final evaluation necessarily reflects the experienced analyst's judgement of the whole job." On the other hand, however, the quantitative approach is ideal for computer-oriented organizations, and may in future be far more common than at present.

The system used in Britain and Europe is known as rank classification. The career structure is the determinant of the salary structure, and is independent of the actual administrative structure, while the most important concept adopted is one of personal status. Purposive rather than functional divisions are affected, along with a system of classes and grades. Promotion can be either automatic or based on a combination of seniority and qualifications, although merit is of high importance in assessment.

The emphasis in this system is on career opportunities and recruitment, because of the relationship between the position and associated division. Status is associated with the individual rather than the

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7 ibid., p. 298.
8 ibid., p. 299.
organization, a valuable factor for recruitment and an encouragement to a feeling of security. The system is simple, flexible and economical, and encourages the development of the administrative generalists who are so basic for the effective functioning of the organization.

The difference between this and the American system of position-classification is that the former is more centred around the individual and his status relative to other individuals within the organization, whereas the latter is concerned more with the individual's work assignment, and the status of that assignment in relation to the other assignments within the organization. Both of these concepts accept the idea of movement of personnel, but such movement to other assignments is considered a little more flexible under the rank concept, whereby status adheres to the individual. On the other hand, the rationalization and the systematic treatment of the assignment are more characteristic of the position concept. Position-classification is based primarily on efficiency, with precise definitions of job descriptions, coupled with a corresponding increase in the emphasis upon specialised, technical qualifications of employees. Essentially, it is not quantitative, however, and it assumes that "every human organization is composed of two basic elements: people and their functional tasks".9

Position classification is divided into a general survey of all positions, and the general maintenance and revision of this by a central personnel authority. Each individual describes his duties and tasks in a questionnaire, which is then commented upon by his supervisor. This

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9 ibid., p. 285.
is then categorized in terms of an overall classification system or plan, on the basis of preponderance of duties, responsibilities, tasks, qualifications, and avenues of promotion. This can be seen as a form of "pigeonholing" - each individual occupation or position is detailed and isolated, with emphasis on the particular individuality of the position. Of necessity, the process is delegated at various levels, so that some subjectivity invariable comes into the definition and grading of positions. On the other hand personal characteristics must be ignored in the assessment. To the classifier, "a position is a combination of duties and tasks to be performed by a person having specialized qualifications", and to this effect, the type of individual or his modifications to the position are irrelevant criteria.

The position-classification system is ideal for short-term planning, because of its definitive nature and fine system of distinctions, although the rank system is preferable for longterm planning. In essence, because of the focus on the individual position, the former system is excellent for the coordination of objectives. Furthermore, under the rank concept, pay ranges are based on attributes of the service of the individual. Under the position concept, the basic pay ranges are synchronized with classes of positions. It was the quest for an objective criterion for pay that first gave the position approach its impetus (in the U.S. public service). "Equal pay for equal work" is still a meaningful slogan. The rank idea, with equal claim to objectivity, ties its compensation in with the seniority and performance (and frequently with the needs) of the individual.11

10 ibid., p. 296.
However, this distinction has been substantially modified, by virtue of the flexible nature of the rank system, and the need to provide pay incentives with position-classification.

Rather, the difference is between the allocation of status based on performance in preference to the prior organizational service of the individual, although both systems are blending into each other at every stage. For example, the division concept of the rank system has been incorporated into the position-classification theory as a means for simplifying the plethora of minuscule differentiations into which position classification had degenerated. Furthermore, the whole classification system of any one national administration has had to be adapted in accordance with the availability of recruits and, a most important consideration, relativity, both in status and pay, with outside organizations offering similar jobs.

Broadly speaking, there is a division as between the administrators at the top of the organization, the executives, the specialists, both professional and technical, and those servicing these divisions, such as tradesmen and clerical workers.

Pay relativity is the greatest problem in classification. The number of levels, the relative pay within the organization, and above all, the equalization of pay levels with their outside equivalents, are the curses of all classifiers. It has even been asserted that

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13 Donald McInnis, "Does Position-Classification Work?" Personnel Administration Vol. 10, No. 4, July, 1948; p. 29.
On the other hand, some governments have found the solution to this problem in the division into a single pay policy coupled with a multiplicity of different classification systems, although it appears that this is far too un系统atized and rigid. Baruch asserts that the classification and pay systems are distinct in basis, purpose and technique, for "a position-classification plan serves to separate positions into classes, whereas a pay plan serves to establish the pay scale for each class of positions, the pay scale for each individual position, and the pay rate for each employee at a given time".\textsuperscript{14}

Nonetheless, it is still basic to the position-classification system that there is a job hierarchy and a pay hierarchy; although (position-) classification and pay determination are a simultaneous task, their differentiation seems to arise from a "private vendetta between the budgeting and personnel authorities".\textsuperscript{15}

At this stage, the notion must be considered of career planning, which is the means whereby organizational method and employee motivation are coordinated for the ensuring of organizational efficiency "through maximum utilization, retention and development of quality employees

\textsuperscript{14} Baruch, p. 52.

\textsuperscript{15} Pfiffner and Presthus, \textit{op. cit.}, p. 300.
over a full career". Career patterns are a reflection of the classification system. The hypothesis here advanced is that the classification system must be based on a realistic utilization of the available organizational input. In other words, it is necessary to integrate the recruitment system with the classification plan within an organization. This is essentially a two-way process - the classification plan must be a temptation and an incentive to the prospective employee in that it must offer a longterm network for advancement commensurate with the recruit's desires for prestige and above all, pay. On the other hand, the prevailing policy of the organization must be so implemented as to provide a sufficient number of recruits at every level of the organization, i.e., for every division and at all stages. Where this is not so, it is a direct reflection on the quality of the classification system and the recruitment policy - the two are the bases for the whole personnel structure of the organization. Classification is the means for assessing staff requirements and developing techniques for their fulfilment.

Unfortunately, the classification system assumes, in effect that (1) a sufficient number of job applicants will be readily available in all occupational categories, and (1) the vertical and horizontal relationships established between positions, through the process of job evaluation, will not be affected by the condition of the labour market. Experience in the past decade has demonstrated these concepts to be unworkable.


The organization must be divided along career lines (except, perhaps, at the general administration level, which is a special case), each of which is integrated with the appropriate recruitment policy. Danaher divides career planning into three aspects—career staffing, which includes long-range personnel planning, career development or staff training, and career structuring, of which the latter is "the design and juxtapositioning of positions within an organization to facilitate the development, stability and utilisation of employees over a continuing period of time. It is the integration of career patterns and organizational structure," and as such, it is vitally connected with classification, for the classifier must bear the needs of the career service in mind at all times.

The classification of the elite within an organization as a separate, administrative group is a common practice in all advanced administrative organizations. Although, as has been indicated, this is creating a caste, in practice the special selection of general administrators must be integrated with a special classification policy. The tendency to rate the individual on specialized rather than general qualifications at entrance levels, coupled with the inherent rigidity of any classification system, has cut into the need for a broad policy of lateral movement (transfers) within the organization which should build up the administrative elite, with disastrous results for all public services.

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18 Danaher, op. cit., p. 35
In summary, it can be asserted that the goal of personnel administration is to provide competent administrative staff, and secondly to make sure that those individuals are allocated tasks commensurate with their abilities. Each occupation must have an adequate positional division, with internal relativity, and a strong system of in-service training to complement the whole. Classification can be seen as a basic method for the systematisation, standardization, and control of the organization - it is the organization clarifier, inasmuch as it provides the individual with a set position, and gives the organization its own system of personnel "organization".
CHAPTER III
RECRUITMENT IN THE LEAGUE OF NATIONS

The creation of staff for the League of Nations resulted in most of those problems already discussed in the previous chapter, and added several that were peculiar to this experimental talk-shop. The first crisis was a philosophical one: should the League be international or multinational in orientation? In the last analysis, the question was of national loyalties as opposed to loyalty to the organization itself. To a large extent, as Siotis indicates the loyalty that was built up to the League was rudimentary, if indeed it existed. On the other hand, there was a clear indication right from the League's inception that this organization was to be served by a permanent secretariat, rather than by a servicing agency collected together from the various Foreign Ministries of the member states. This was an original step for the League, and was opposed to the practice, originated around the time of the Congress of Vienna, of merely seconding a few diplomats to organize international agencies. The League, from an administrative standpoint, was a partial success: the proponents of a loose, multinational secretariat were forced to accede to the creation of a more or less international bureaucracy. This was particularly noticeable in the discussions attendant upon the establishment of the Office of the Secretary-General. The multinational approach favoured the rotation of the position amongst

2 ibid., p. 115.
representative bureaucrats, whilst the internationalists asserted the nonrepresentational role of the Secretariat. It must be borne in mind that there is a fine dividing-line between apportioning employees so that no country has more than its fair share of staff, and the extension which gives these bureaucrats a semi-ambassadorial role. The question may well be asked, why apportion staff at all, and this aspect will be dealt within connection with the United Nations.

From an organizational standpoint, aside from the good fortune of having a few excellent Secretaries-General, the League was a nightmare. There was no regular outflow and intake of staff, even in those branches of clerical and stenographic work where such conditions might have been expected to obtain. Few candidates could speak one of the official languages...as their mother-tongue...National traditions and educational qualifications were nearly as diverse the Member States themselves.3

In recruiting, however, the idea was to offer positive attractions, and the League Secretariat seemed to be able to do that, too. The "novel idea of international collaboration in the service of peace," alluded to by Purves4 acted as a magnet to attract staff. The salaries offered were competitive, in fact a little better than those of most national civil services, and there was an excellent pension scheme, so designed as to attract individuals who might only wish to remain in the League's employ for ten years rather than a lifetime.

The staff were classified in Divisions according to type of recruitment and function within the organization. The major rules

4 Ibid., p. 15.
for recruitment were that all staff were to be appointed by the Secretary-General, subject to Council approval, and that positions were open equally to either sex. The codicil that staff be approved by the League Council proved of considerable inconvenience, and further left positions and staff open to manipulation as political tools. The Secretariat under such a scheme lent itself to a battlefield situation in the political and ideological disputes that plagued the League's history.

The staff regulations were a little more specific. It was emphasized that, in recruitment to the First Division, the international character of the staff must be stressed, leading to the rule of geographical distribution that so plagues the United Nations nowadays. Examinations were to be the main, albeit not the only means of entry into the bureaucracy, although the Secretary-General was empowered to bypass the normal recruiting methods and offer positions to outstanding individuals notwithstanding. Promotion, rather than recruitment from outside the organization, was entrenched as a method for filling new posts. If this were not possible, then preference was to be given to employees of other international agencies. Finally, the qualifications for each division were to be no less that those required for admission to the appropriate rank in the various national civil services.

Supervising much of the recruiting function, and providing the Secretary-General with considerable assistance was the advisory Committee on Appointments and Promotions. This committee consisted of officials nominated by the Secretary-General, and, while the consultative, advisory power of such a committee was always emphasized, it still
performed a useful, delegated function by handling recruitment in the lower divisions.

Ranshofen-Wertheimer indicates\(^5\) that one of the major problems faced by League recruiters vis-a-vis the higher staff echelons, was "appointing the best qualified person and at the same time securing at least the tacit agreement of the candidate's government". Unfortunately, many of those administrators most firmly committed to internationalist philosophies were persona non grata in their homelands, so that "the appointing authority had to negotiate between the Scylla of becoming a tool of the individual governments in personnel matters and the Charybdis of antagonizing the member States".\(^6\) This problem was resolved in part by consulting the respective foreign offices before confirming various appointments, often more as a check on the background of the official than a means of gaining tacit approval for the appointment. On the other hand, there was always a good deal of barracking by various delegations on behalf of candidates from their homelands. An unresolved problem was the lack of suitability of employees from certain countries, particularly India, China and Japan. Here language and attitude played a considerable part, particularly because the Indian appointments had to receive the seal of approval of the British Government, against whom the intellectual elite was engaged in a policy of resistance. It seemed that there was no way of severing the recruit's attachment so his

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\(^5\) Ranshofen-Wertheimer, \textit{op. cit.}, p. 326.  
\(^6\) Purves, \textit{op. cit.}, p. 24.
homeland, even on a temporary basis. Inte League, above all, it was impossible to work in a political vacuum.

The apportioning of Staff on a geographical basis was neglected, in part or completely, by the League in making appointments. Most of the Second Division staff, for example, was composed of individuals from Britain, France, Belgium or Switzerland. In part, as already stated, this was necessitated because there were only two official languages within which the League operated - English and French. In addition, a small number of employees were taken from non-member States, in particular the United States. This created a somewhat embarrassing situation, inasmuch as "the staff budget of the Secretariat being strictly limited each year by the Assembly, these appointments naturally reduced pro tanto the number of posts open to citizens of member States, but the position was fully recognized and never . . . seriously questioned by any of the latter".6

The establishment of educational qualifications seemed to create few problems for the League recruiters. It seemed that conditions of admission to the various higher civil services were somewhat standard at that time, and at best only lipservice was paid to this requirement. Likewise, the language requirement that all staff be fully bilingual was relaxed for all staff below the top level. However, an employee was forced by regulation to be fully conversant in either English or French, with at least passing familiarity with French, as the language of Geneva, being an imperative. This penalized those recruits from

South America or the Soviet Union, for example, who knew or had little use for either language, and in addition, linguistic knowledge became utilized far too often as a guide to other unrelated administrative talents. One of the greatest international administrators, Albert Thomas of the I.L.O., was completely unilingual in French, and this did not impede his talents, so this rationale for acceptability seems, in retrospect, pointless.

As far as possible, the principle of a qualifying entrance examination was applied to all recruits, as much as a technique for eliminating the unfit as for precision in the recruiting function. If nothing else, this method discriminated against those candidates from countries in which nepotism was still a part of the way of life. Purves points out that examinations proved of use, despite their limitations. In positions where a vacancy was limited to candidates from a particular nationality, they were almost useless, and the main caveat was that they be considered only in conjunction with the individual's paper requirements (his *curriculum vitae*) and the personal interview which came to play such a vital role in League recruitment. The tendency arose within the League for officials to classify themselves according to whether they had received a position via the examination system or by a more direct method, and this snobbery created considerable dissension within the organization.

Additional to this was the problem of the comparison of qualifications. Even the grouping of countries into regions of similar educational orientation seemed to alleviate this problem only partially.
The types of examinations must be expected to vary according to the environment and intellectual orientation of the candidate. A good deal of the time, this was neglected, and no adequate method of comparison has been evolved, even within the U.N. At best, the examination system worked as a disincentive to government barracking on behalf of certain candidates with inferior qualifications (though by whose standards, it is difficult to state). At worst, it kept away far too many suitable employees.

The problem of publicity for new vacancies was complicated by the necessity for maintaining a register of individual applications received. On the one hand, the world-wide recruiting base for the organization left the League recruiters with considerable publicity problems. On the other hand, it is difficult to assess the number of candidates who wrote in to the League as a result of a newspaper advertisement. In general, applications received were placed on the aforementioned register, without a reason being noted for the individual's motivation to apply. Ranshofen-Wertheimer claims that he is unaware of any case of a Secretariat member "whose appointment was due to his eye catching an advertisement in a newspaper or magazine carrying a League of Nations notice of vacancy". The greatest publicity channel, and the most effective, was the academic or professional grapevine. Moreover, the League had at all times a surfeit, rather than a lack of suitable candidates for the various positions.

The basic defect of the League's recruiting system lay in the

partisan nature and shortsightedness of the appointment committees and subcommittees. At no time was a broad recruiting framework established that might apply to the entire organization. The muddle-through approach led to serious inconsistencies and a lack of coherence, resulting in a piecemeal, unstructured organization with few common purposes and considerable rifts, both of personality and as a mirror of international conflicts.

To return to chapter 1, it seems that the League recruited more from a position of availability than purpose. In other words, the question was not so much whether the incoming recruit satisfied organizational needs, but whether he was the best of a bad bunch, as it were.
CHAPTER IV
THE UNITED NATIONS SYSTEM OF RECRUITMENT - ORIGIN,
STRUCTURE, METHODS

I

If anything, it seems that the organization and recruitment of the Secretariat received far too superficial an examination at the San Francisco conference which preceded the establishment of the United Nations Organization.¹ After a little discussion of the right of the Secretary-General to make appointments, it was proposed that "an international committee, responsible to the Assembly but not to any Government in particular, be established for the purpose of recruiting officials".² However, this idea met with considerable resistance, as it was impossible to reconcile it with the notion of the Secretary-General's unimpeded right to recruit, thus leading to a kind of institutionalized dualism. In consequence, this matter was referred to a Committee. After analyzing the techniques used by recruiters, Committee Six, of the Preparation Commission, proposed that senior officials be recruited "on the evidence of their qualifications, experience and character", with lower-echelon staff being chosen by examination. It was decided by the Committee that no country had an established right to a Secretariat post, which in later experience became a most controversial problem.

With regard to the establishment, as aforementioned, of a civil service commission, this was favoured by the Committee, provided the

¹ See Alagappan, op. cit., p. 110.
² ibid., p. 111.
suggested Commission functioned in a purely advisory manner. A powerless, consultative body was to be set up as a kind of reporting agency and watchdog that would study various problems and report on them accordingly. Eventually, it was decided that, in setting up rules and in the maintenance of standards, the Secretary-General would have the assistance of the International Civil Service Advisory Board, whilst in the internal processing of candidates and the selection of officials, he would be aided by committees on appointment and promotion.

It was further decided that, where possible, permanent officials would make up the bulk of the middle and upper echelons of the Secretariat staff. A proposal was made that five-year contracts be instituted, but this was shown to be inadequate and incapable of providing the independent staff, free from national influences of an undesirable nature, that was the goal for the United Nations Secretariat. Further, it "was believed that highly qualified persons in national services might not be willing to give up their careers for international work if such work was for a limited period only".³

The quality of staff was to be safeguarded by probationary techniques, and if necessary, temporary employees were to be appointed to restore some sort of geographical balance to the organization when required. In the long run, however, the right of the Secretary-General to make appointment was to be impeded only by rules and regulations established by the General Assembly. A glance at Chapter XV of the United Nations Charter indicates that the Committee Six recommendations

³ *ibid.*, p. 114.
were implemented. National influence in the appointment of staff was to
be severely limited by article 100. Article 101, upon which the system
of recruitment is based, entrenches the importance of "the highest stan­
dards of efficiency, competence, and integrity", while still permitting
some form of geographical representation.

The Secretariat is divided into several Offices and Departments,
about fifteen in total as of October, 1966.4 The majority of these are
situated in New York, and the task of controlling the personnel func­
tions of these bureaux is vested in the Office of Personnel. This is
headed by an Under-Secretary, or Director of Personnel. There are
several sub-Offices, such as the Office of the Under-Secretary, the
Rules and Procedures Section, Staff Services, Health Service, and fi­
nally, the Technical Assistance Recruitment Service and the Secretariat
Recruitment Service. The organization of the personnel sections of the
Secretariat is outlined in the diagram overleaf. In 1969, however,
there was some degree of reorganization, and the Administrative Manage­
ment Service was created, responsible directly to an Undersecretary for
Administration and Management. This unit, known as the A.M.S., was
set up to carry out a survey of the deployment and utilization of staff.
The latter survey will be finished by 1971, after which date the A.M.S.
is to "constitute a mechanism for achieving continuing improvement in
the administration of the Secretariat".5 This unit is serviced from
within the Secretariat, from which, its staff have been chosen, des­

4 ST/SGB/31, Organization of the Secretariat. Report of the
Secretary-General, 1966.

of the Fifth Committee. 1969.
Organization of Personnel Processes within the U.N. Secretariat
pite suggestions from within the General Assembly that it be an independent research group. The whole organization of the Secretariat is presently in a state of flux, since U Thant announced in 1968 the appointment of a Committee of Seven on the Reorganization of the Secretariat, headed by Ambassador Ignacio-Pinto of Dahomey. This Committee was to investigate the organizational problems within the Secretariat and make the appropriate recommendations. So far, the Committee Report is a semi-secret document, but results are being filtered into the General Assembly by way of the Fifth Committee, and it is to be assumed that the creation of the Administrative Management Service was a result of this Report.

The Secretariat Recruitment Service, with which this paper is most concerned, is headed by a Chief Officer, Miss B.K. Whitelaw of the United States. The emphasis has been on maintaining as small a recruitment office as possible, and Miss Whitelaw's tenure has been a relatively long one, giving the Office a great deal of continuity.

To assist the Secretary-General, three bodies have been set up in addition to the Service. In fact, the Secretariat Recruitment Service, in addition to its recruiting function acts as a processing body, organizing interviews and providing secretarial and service staff for these three groups.

An Appointment and Promotion Board has been set up, consisting of seven members and seven alternates, all of Senior Officer status or above. The Director of Deputy Director of Personnel serves ex officio, as a non-voting member, while the remaining members are appointed by
the Secretary-General, in some cases after consultation with the Staff Council. A Secretary is appointed to the Board by the Secretary-General. The task of this Board is to "advise the Secretary-General on the appointment, promotion and review of staff at all levels up to and including Principle Officer (D-1)". 6

There is an Appointment and Promotion Committee, also of seven members, one of whom is ex officio, and must be an official of the Office of Personnel. To service this committee, there is an appointed secretary. The Committee is to assist the Appointment and Promotion Board in the performance of its functions by making recommendations to it with regard to the appointment and promotion of middle-echelon staff. General and other service employees are subject to review by the Appointment and Promotion Panel set up by the Secretary-General, and with a similar constitution to the Committee. There are several other groups, such as the Joint Advisory Committee, the Appeals Board, the United Nations Administrative Tribunal and the Disciplinary Committee, but their effect on actual recruitment is minimal. They function mainly as methods of appeal for disgruntled candidates for promotion and appointment.

Directors and Under-Secretaries are appointed by the Secretary-General personally. The latter official is appointed, under Article 97, by the General Assembly, with the assistance of the Security Council. The various board, panel and committee members are selected from a short-list prepared by the Staff Council, although the final composition of the bodies is considered in the long run by the Secretary

6 ST/SGB/31, op. cit., p. 16.
General. Some balance is expected to be maintained between nationalities, and between the various Offices and Departments which make up the Secretariat. The Chairmen of these groups are selected by the bodies themselves.

Looking at the overall recruiting structure it seems, as Miss Whitelaw has pointed out that within the United Nations it is a rather centralized one, in part because the exigencies of geographical distribution necessitate a unified, politically responsive recruiting agency, for better or worse. Again because of the appointment review bodies, a centralized recruiting agency is necessitated.

The International Civil Advisory Board, or ICSAB, was set up by the General Assembly under resol­ution 13(1) of 1946, to advise the Secretary-General on recruitment methods and the coordination of practices between the Secretariat and the agencies. In practice, ICSAB has played the role of an administrative Cassandra, powerless to act or take any positive step. The publications of the Board are not widely distributed, and in fact many of their activities are shrouded in secrecy.

In 1961, the Board's report asserted that

Experience in all the larger organizations since 1956 leaves no doubt that the recruiting position which was 'marginally satisfactory' in 1956 is now quite unsatisfactory. No organization has ever sought to do more than ensure that 'all the staff should be of a high level of competence' while obtaining a 'fair share of brilliant staff', but the point has been reached where even that cannot be achieved and where, all too often, the choice is between accepting unsatisfactory standards or leaving posts unfilled . . .


This would indicate a need for better integration in recruitment, although Loveday's comment that all systems of international personnel recruitment are inadequate must still stand as valid criticism.9 As long as there is no systematisation in the organization and placement of the recruiting function, the system will continue to be "amateurish, groping, dependent largely on chance, subject to political pressure which is sometimes useful and more often a menace, and . . . uncoordinated."10 The lack of coordination is as much the product of outdated approaches to administration on the part of the organization's founders, as a means whereby the old dictum of divisa et impera may be implemented by the member States. A piecemeal approach to recruitment at any level will result in the inadequately integrated career patterns that characterize most modern international secretariats. Of course, there must always be a degree of leeway for the differences in the requirements of the various agencies, but at least in the fields in which the greatest degree of uniformity is desirable - testing, for example - methods may be developed applicable to the international organization, rather than being the products of collective errors of a half-dozen national bureaucracies.

II

If one were to attempt to systematize the recruitment methods of the United Nations Secretariat, the result would be the following diagram:

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9 A. Loveday, Reflections on International Administration, Oxford, 1956, p. 64.
10 ibid.
# TABLE II

## RECRUITMENT IN THE UNITED NATIONS SECRETARIAT

### CRITERIA OF COMPETENCE AND EFFICIENCY

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>a</th>
<th>Advertising</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>b</td>
<td>Lists of vacancies sent to high-priority countries every 3 months; said countries submit lists of suitable candidates back to UN</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c</td>
<td>Applications by interested academics, etc.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>d</td>
<td>University recruitment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>e</td>
<td>Field recruitment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>f</td>
<td>Recruitment as adjunct to official trips by secretariat or other UN Officials - &quot;talent-spotting&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>g</td>
<td>Recommendations by agencies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>h</td>
<td>Secondment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>i</td>
<td>Recommendations by delegations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>j</td>
<td>Specialist recruitment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>k</td>
<td>Technical assistance recruitment - Offices - Paris &amp; Geneva</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>l</td>
<td>&quot;Old Boy Network&quot; - contacts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>m</td>
<td>Transferral from secondment to regular appointment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>n</td>
<td>Local recruitment (at lower-echelon levels)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Processing:

| a | Examination |
| b | Interview |
| c | Elimination (overqualified, or geographical considerations) |
| d | Listing of names in order of preference |
| e | SELECTION |

### APPLICATION

| BOARDS |

### RECOMMENDATION

### GEOGRAPHICAL DISTRIBUTION

### POPULATION

## ORGANIZATION

Classification via:
- a position
- b salary
- c qualifications
The first consideration in developing the recruiting methods, as outlined in the diagram, is that in fact much of the Secretariat's requirements are of a rather specialized nature, and thus might be expected to hear of vacancies via the various professional or technical organizations to which they belong. For another thing, recruitment is not mass-oriented, and there is no set time, when, for example, U.N. recruiters take to the University campuses to round up an allocation of trainees for the coming year.

The process of attraction is far from perfect, and tends to function in a piecemeal fashion. More often than not, a vacancy will occur, be filled by promotion from within the Secretariat, thus creating another vacancy, and so forth. However, at all times during this process, attempts are being made to attract the best qualified staff for the position from outside the Organization.

Advertisements are frequently placed by the Secretariat Recruitment Service in academic and professional journals, although often applications are received independently from various interested individuals. In either case, an application form must be filed. This form, called UN/P/11/rev.4 includes 33 items, of which 17 are identification data, item 18 inquires concerning other relatives within international organizations, 19 to 23 about the type of position the candidate desires, 24 to 27 for information concerning educational and employment record, and so forth. These types of applications, i.e., the result of an advertisement or a direct application to the Office of Personnel, do not usually result in a considerable staff intake, even though such applications may amount to some 20,000 in any one year.
The circulation of lists to member States is made every three month, "with particular requests to countries with high priority for information about candidates suited for these posts. The notice of vacancies circulated contains information such as the vacant position, level and grade of the post, qualifications desired and duties to be performed."

This places a good deal of reliance upon the impartiality of the member States, and permits, as a consequence, a good deal of lobbying. The same applies to the method of accepting independent suggestions from the various U.N. delegations. This leads to a type of competition between member States that is neither healthy nor functional, and can only result in bad feeling, coupled with a certain degree of organization inefficiency.

Many of the other recruiting methods appear standard. It is doubtful whether the United Nations can follow a programme of University recruitment, as there are simply too many Universities to consider. Technical recruitment is well-ordered and organized on a regional basis, while specialist recruitment is maintained via contacts with professional organizations.

Talent-spotting seems to be an adjunct to overseas trips by Secretariat officials. Whether or not these officials have the technical competence or discriminatory abilities demanded of a regular recruiter is questionable. Likewise, the "old boy network" of former colleagues and contacts of employees seems to contribute in some degree to the recruiting processes. The problems of transferal and secondment will be dealt with at a later stage, but they are normal recruiting methods. Recommendations are made by the various specialized agencies attached to the

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11 Alagappan, op. cit., p. 121.
United Nations, and this source can be quite profitable. To a large extent, recruitment at the base-levels is performed locally, through agencies or advertisements.

The overall image of the talent-scouting process of canvassing, therefore, seems to be one of incoherence, with very little coordination or integration of the various approaches. To date, there has been no breakdown as to the numbers of applications that may be attributed to the various sources, nor is there an estimation of the ratio of applications to actual employment. Even if the so-called "higher" criteria of efficiency are ignored, it is impossible to estimate the effectiveness of the hodgepodge of recruiting methods utilized by the Office of Personnel. The wasteage, in terms of either attracting incompetents or rejecting potentially excellent staff cannot fail to be high. There is little evidence that such superficial methods as are followed are integrated into any programme as such. A rigid recruitment plan is probably harmful, inasmuch as it does not allow for the accidental or spur-of-the-moment recruit - but the complete absence of a plan of systematization of the various methods places the Office of Personnel back in the pre-Weberian era. Admittedly, as the preceding discussion has shown, the United Nations is faced with recruitment problems that require special consideration and techniques of a kind that need not be used by the normal national bureaucracies, but in their over-concern for geographical representation, the Founding Fathers of the United Nations appear to have assumed that a piecemeal approach would suffice. An organization needs consistency in its
staff if it is to continue: the recruitment techniques indicate that little faith has been placed in the ability of this organization to persist. Lengyel, in a statement that does not lack bathos, asserted that "on the whole, it may be said that recruitment policies for the various international organizations have erred on the side of unimaginativeness and have leaned excessively on certain existing national models".¹² This lack of creativity and foresight seems out of place in a city which has spawned Madison Avenue. In a sense, the penny-pinching attitude of the member States can accept the blame for this situation. About that, there is little that an astute, modern recruiter can do. As the magnetism of the U.N. Secretariat has declined, the Office of Personnel have had to search, so far without success, for new canvassing techniques.

Overseeing the entire process is the Secretary-General. There has been on occasion attempts by member-States to hamper him in his constitutionally unfettered right of appointment, but the response to this has, depending upon the calibre of the Secretary-General, been strongly defensive. Much of the organization of personnel recruitment was devised by the late Dag Hammarskjold, although he tended to avoid interference in the actual processes where possible.

Once an application is received, it is processed. The first step in this is some type of examination. In 1921, the League of Nations recommended that, with few exceptions, staff be selected on the basis of

"competitive selections". This was also acknowledged by the General Assembly of the United Nations, but nonetheless, "the use of competitive examinations in international organizations has been limited principally to positions requiring language ability and to clerical and secretarial jobs".\(^\text{13}\) The problems are many. Firstly, there has been an overemphasis within the recruitment processes of experience and education as criteria for entrance. Merit \textit{per se} has not been considered as the main recruitment criterion, and in addition, the problem of comparing the various educational systems from which candidates are drawn in such that there is little possibility of developing examinations that will cross over the divisions and be completely comparative. Mahgoub argues thusly for the use of competitive examinations.

From the standpoint of an international organization such as the United Nations, an examination gives ample publicity to the work of the Organization and makes people all over the world realize that the standards of the Organization are comparable to those of national services. It also provides a way for the United Nations to evade undue pressure exerted by Member States to have their Nationals employed by the Secretariat.\(^\text{14}\)

On the other hand, unless the area of examination is extremely broad - literacy, for example - or restricted to a particular type of occupation of a specialized nature, such as interpreting, there would be a tendency for a bias to develop in favour of a particular academic system. Perhaps, by conducting examinations on a regional or national basis, this problem could be overcome, but this in itself would merely duplicate the existing examination structures of the various national bureaucracies, while providing no real basis for adequate comparison as between systems. It would be relatively easy to evaluate the relative abilities of two Frenchmen, but a Frenchman as opposed to an Indonesian would create demands...


\(^{14}\) Mahgoub, \textit{op. cit.} p. 143.
upon the testing systems that psychologists and educators have yet to satisfy. The need for competition is recognized, but is perhaps better satisfied by the present system of interviewing potential applicants outside of the aforementioned exceptions.

There are presently three types of examinations used in the U.N. Secretariat. Twice weekly, there are examinations for applicants to the General Service class. These examinations consist of a general clerical test in the major U.N. languages, accompanied by similar typing and shorthand tests. Interpreters and translators are examined on an individual basis, either orally or in written form, and are rated by a three-man Examination Board, which rates the candidates according to their linguistic priorities. Generally, the applicants must be proficient in at least three U.N. languages. Finally, there is a language proficiency examination, which is linked more to salary increments than to recruitments, and provides an incentive to study, amongst the General Service, Field and Manual employees.

Within the United Nations, the interview has to play a role usually reserved for examinations, and it appears that, in many cases, interviews are conducted on the spot, by individuals who in many cases are not sufficiently qualified to evaluate the potential of the candidates. Ideally, there is an interviewing committee in the Head Office to fulfill this interviewing function, but geographical problems hamper this somewhat. For this reason, the probationary period is of great importance, as a means of weeding out the less competent recruits. "It gives the opportunity to

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15 ibid., p. 145.
judge those intangible factors not assayed by formal selection procedures.¹⁶ This probationary period usually lasts for two years, and must be seen both as a period of induction as well as an integral part of the recruitment process. During the probationary period, the recruit's performance is reviewed by the Appointment and Promotion Board via reports and oral testimony of the various supervisors and personnel officers. According to Mahgoub,¹⁷ only 3% of recruits have their positions terminated because of poor performance during probation, while another 3% have their probationary terms extended pending a definite decision. There is a definite need for an increase in the discriminatory powers of the Appointment and Promotion Board, to enable the probationary period to fulfill a genuine recruiting function, albeit a negative one.

The recruitment process has a number of institutionalized conflicts, and one of these is a direct consequence of internationalism as an approach to staffing. The question of degree is a problematic one - to what extent must recruitment be on international, rather than national lines? "It is obviously desirable that the staff should be as international as possible from top to bottom,"¹⁸ and the recruitment of lower-echelon staff from within the host-nation may create national blocs within the organization, resulting in a divided staff and an unhealthy psychological atmosphere. The locally-recruited, American staff might feel themselves relegated to second-class role, as they are not integrated into the promotional systems of the international recruits. On the other hand, it is wasteful and unnecessary to import workers who can more profitably be obtained from the

¹⁶ ibid., p. 157
¹⁷ ibid., p. 159
¹⁸ Loveday, op. cit. p. 62
local market. In many cases, however, even "local" recruits tend to be foreign nationals already resident in New York, thus preserving some form of internationalism within the organization. The United Nations Secretariat has always emphasized, moreover, that once an individual becomes a United Nations official, he is in the same position, constitutionally, as the imported recruit. Both individuals are international civil servants, and are expected to provide organizational loyalty accordingly. In terms of tax treatment and U.N. benefits, no discrimination is allowed between the two types of recruits.

Evident in the recruitment process is the conflict between outside recruitment and promotion from within. If the Secretariat is to provide a structured, integrated, career system, it seems essential to place considerable emphasis upon "internal" recruitment, or promotion from within. "It is, in the long run, cheaper and more effective to promote personnel (from) within than to hire talent outside", but, on the other hand, the Secretariat requires considerable leeway to recruit specialists from outside to reflect the growth of diversification within the organization. Where qualifications are equal between outside and internal candidates, the recruiter must logically choose the internal candidate for the position. Unfortunately, the Secretariat has chosen to ignore this somewhat, and consequently, there are large numbers of high-echelon employees with little chance for advancement within the organization. The staff member who is recruited at the top of the classification ladder can hardly go up - the best he can hope for is a

19 Alagappan, op. cit., p. 129.
good system of incremental increases. Promotions, it seems, have been "limited to the vacancies which are left after such other needs as outside recruitment have been met", although theoretically, this situation should be reversed. Once more, this can be attributed to shortsightedness, and a lack of planning on the parts of the recruiters.

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20 Ibid., p. 134.
CHAPTER V

GEOGRAPHICAL DISTRIBUTION

The paramount consideration in the employment of the staff and in the determination of conditions of service shall be the necessity of securing the highest standards of efficiency, competence and integrity. Due regard shall be paid to the importance of recruiting the staff on as wide a geographical basis as possible.

Article 101, Charter of the United Nations

Within the United Nations, recruitment is subjected to various complexities inherent in the very nature of the Organization. The following two chapters are an attempt to isolate and analyze these problems. The best-known, most often-discussed and least soluble of these problems is geographical distribution, or the selection of staff from the member-States of the organization according to a representational ratio.

It is recognized that recruitment is complicated by qualities far more significant, at times, than the mere capability of the candidate. There is clear evidence of this recognition in Article 101 of the Charter, and, as Bailey puts it, "an international organization should be staffed on an international basis. This is not simply a matter of equity; it is necessary for effective administration".1 The intention, therefore is to represent, within the organization, the population that are served by the staff. Given an exercise of regularity within the administration, and provided that the recruiters are determined not to be "stampeded by external pressures",2 there is no reason why geographical

2 Lengyel, op. cit., p. 521.
distribution should be thrust into the foreground of current preoccupation. Where a weak organization is present, this problem becomes of considerable significance. The lack of sovereignty of the organization itself renders geographical representation of great importance.

A partial reason for geographical representation is the need to involve all the respective member-States. "Representation of Member States is desirable in itself, both for the contacts it establishes and because it satisfies the legitimate desires of governments".\(^3\) To this extent, it can be seen as an element of strength within the United Nations. The we-feeling created is the positive output, and may compensate for the intricacy of the representational procedures and the corresponding drop in efficiency. Perhaps efficiency is a purely western criterion, and if the U.N. is to reflect truly the constituency it serves, those concepts prevalent in less "progressive" states must receive consideration too.

The experience of the League gives little enlightenment on the problem. The Covenant did not state outright what the desirable position was, although the five top posts were divided equally amongst the leading powers within the organization. The assumption was that the Secretariat would likewise be drawn from amongst the major powers.\(^4\) In the end, however, it was realized that the best recruiting methods, and those best designed to placate middle and smaller powers would be those based upon a broad multinational approach. The variety of approaches to administrative problems were seen as strong arguments for geographical representation.

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\(^3\) Mahgoub, op. cit., p. 38.

a type of "unity in diversity" - and whole principle was embodied in the
Balfour Report as adopted by the League Council in 1920. The broadening
of the scope of recruitment was accomplished very slowly in the ensuing
twenty years, although by 1933, 80% of member States were in some way
represented in the Secretariat. Exact criteria for representation were
never set, as the top officials felt that the more nebulous the regulations
were, the less opportunity there would be that the administration be turned
into a mirror of the political battlefield. In fact, representation on
the Secretariat of the League was basically European or Western, with
those remaining states receiving token representation at best. Ranshofen-
Wertheimer felt that

Any international Secretariat of the future, fulfilling
exclusively or partially political functions, will have
to be more representative of the different nationalities,
cultures and regions than was the League Secretariat. 5

The reasons for European predominance stemmed from the restricted number
of official languages, a western orientation vis-a-vis educational and
social background, and the factor of geographical distance, which
the jet age has placed firmly into the background. At some stage, an
attempt was made to link representation on the staff of the League with
the member State's financial contributions, but this was never institu-
tionalized.

In the San Francisco discussions which preceded the establishment
of the United Nations, a number of States came out strongly in favour of
establishing geographical recruitment as a constitutional provision.

5 Ranshofen-Wertheimer, op. cit., p. 364.
With very little discussion the principle was included into Article 101. On the other hand, it was recognized that speed was of the essence in setting up the first Secretariat. A submission by the United Kingdom delegation stated that,

in practice, a proper national distribution in the Secretariat will probably only be attainable by gradual stages. The creation of a number of competent officials trained in international affairs and the running of an international organization is a condition of the success at the outset. The United Nations Organization must show results quickly. It cannot delay in asserting its authority and competence. There are countless urgent problems with which it must be in a position to deal as soon as it is established. It is surely obvious that to find the officials capable of undertaking this work immediately rather than to add an ideal national distribution within the numerous staff should be the first and paramount consideration.

The representational factor was one reason for the selection of five official U.N. languages instead of English and French as utilised by the League. Likewise, consideration was to be given to recruitment in the regional offices of the Secretariat of persons from those areas, as a sop to 101. The right of the Secretary-General to make temporary appointments from underrepresented States was upheld. Notwithstanding, in the first few years, as the British paper suggested, the Secretary-General relied upon a mixture of former League and San Francisco conference officials, and locally-recruited Americans, with a generous sprinkling of Europeans. To the new officials, recruiting from afar seemed "difficult, expensive, and often uncertain," so the principle of representation was left in abeyance, as it were. The twin criteria of efficiency and representation presented too much of a contrast for the

6 Quoted in Alagappan, op. cit. p. 346.
7 Howe, op. cit., p. 49
new officials, though later writers\textsuperscript{8} emphasize the lack of conflict inherent in Article 101.\textsuperscript{3} Over the past quarter of a century, the situation has altered substantially, but progress has been slow. The reasons for this are functions, in essence, of the size of the organization. In any one year, there may be less than two hundred new appointments, and it is difficult to reflect the geography of the entire world in such a small number of officials. Further, there are not too many people with either the temperament or the qualifications necessary for employment with an international organization. The U.N. cannot pick and choose—often, if the right man from the wrong country comes along, he may still get the job. In addition, the attitude of the member states has been far from cooperative, and often has seemed blatantly dysfunctional. Each state attempts to maximize the number of its nationals on staff, and often smaller powers get less consideration than the vested interests of the Great Powers.

The States most consistently underrepresented have been those of the Communist persuasion, while there was very poor representation in the initial organizational stages on the part of the African and Asian States. From 1960 on, the Soviet Union became very keen on a more equitable representational system than had been her lot hitherto, and began to request additional posts. The main handicap to this was that the Soviets only permitted their nationals to occupy positions for two years at a time, although language problems (employees must be at least bilingual) did not help the situation.

\textsuperscript{8} Especially see Bailey, \textit{op. cit.}, pp. 78-80.
A policy has developed of limiting recruitment from over-represented States, although actual recruitment has tended to be somewhat flexible on this point. In 1969, it was suggested by some member-States that a two-year limit be placed on fixed-term appointments granted to over-represented countries until the overrepresentation of these States had been cut down. To bypass this, however, many nationals of overrepresented countries have, in fact, been recruited from inadequately represented States: Americans, for example, are being recruited from Japan, and so forth. In many instances, the lack of suitably qualified staff from certain countries can be compensated for by the establishment of sophisticated training schemes. This, however, would lessen the importance of normal criteria for recruitment, such as qualifications and expertise, although if the probationary system were strengthened, such a training programme might be advisable.

The importance of geographical distribution must be seen in proportion to the number of individuals subject to the system. Of approximately 5,000 employees of the Secretariat in 1969, only 2,031 were in the higher level or professional categories, and thus subject to geographical distribution, while another 624 were in posts with special language requirements. Of these, a steadily increasing proportion are on fixed-term appointments as opposed to career officials. The fixed-term set-up is a relatively new compromise, designed to remedy the more extreme geographical inbalances via the appointment of staff for periods of two to five years at a time. The ratio of fixed-term to career staff

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has increased from roughly thirty per cent in 1968 to more than one
third, or 695 individuals, in 1969.  

Of the 126 member States, as of December 1969, only ten has no
representation at all on the Secretariat - seven in Africa, two in Asia
and one from Eastern Europe. As well, four non-member States were re­
presented - West Germany, South Korea, South Vietnam and Switzerland.
In addition, four employees were stateless.

10 All of these figures are from A/7745. Personnel Questions.
### TABLE III

**TOTAL STAFF IN INTERNATIONALLY RECRUITED POSITIONS SUBJECT TO GEOGRAPHICAL DISTRIBUTION**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>1955</th>
<th>1959</th>
<th>1965</th>
<th>1969</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Career Staff</strong></td>
<td>953</td>
<td>958</td>
<td>1,772</td>
<td>1,314</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Fixed-term</strong></td>
<td>121</td>
<td>171</td>
<td>419</td>
<td>679</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL</strong></td>
<td>1,074</td>
<td>1,129</td>
<td>1,691</td>
<td>1,993</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Fixed-term staff as percentage of total**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>1955</th>
<th>1959</th>
<th>1965</th>
<th>1969</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>11.3</td>
<td>15.1</td>
<td>28.1</td>
<td>34.1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Sources:** A. Alagappan, *op. cit.* p. 370.  
A/7745, p. 12.

### TABLE IV

**NUMBER OF STAFF BY REGION (As of August 31, each year) (Percentages in brackets)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Region</th>
<th>1959</th>
<th>1962</th>
<th>1965</th>
<th>1969</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Africa</td>
<td>36(3)</td>
<td>81(6)</td>
<td>124(8)</td>
<td>217(11)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asia and the</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Far East</td>
<td>204(18)</td>
<td>215(17)</td>
<td>236(16)</td>
<td>324(16)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eastern Europe</td>
<td>68(6)</td>
<td>144(11)</td>
<td>167(11)</td>
<td>259(13)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Western Europe</td>
<td>364(32)</td>
<td>341(27)</td>
<td>343(23)</td>
<td>477(23)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Latin America</td>
<td>101(9)</td>
<td>117(9)</td>
<td>159(11)</td>
<td>187(9)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Middle East</td>
<td>41(4)</td>
<td>51(4)</td>
<td>67(4)</td>
<td>95(5)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>North America and The Caribbean</td>
<td>295(26)</td>
<td>283(23)</td>
<td>352(24)</td>
<td>434(21)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Sub-total</strong></td>
<td>1,109(98)</td>
<td>1,232(97)</td>
<td>1,443(97)</td>
<td>1,993(98)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-member States</td>
<td>25(2)</td>
<td>35(3)</td>
<td>43(3)</td>
<td>38(2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL</strong></td>
<td>1,132(100)</td>
<td>1,267(100)</td>
<td>1,491(100)</td>
<td>2,031(100)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Sources:** Alagappan, *op. cit.*, p. 369, and A/7745, p. 9.

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TABLE V
MEMBERSHIP, BY REGION - NUMBERS OF MEMBERS, AND PERCENTAGES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Region</th>
<th>1959</th>
<th>1962</th>
<th>1965</th>
<th>1969</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Africa</td>
<td>10(11)</td>
<td>33(30)</td>
<td>37(31)</td>
<td>42(33)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asia and the</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Far East</td>
<td>15(17)</td>
<td>16(14)</td>
<td>18(15)</td>
<td>18(14)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eastern Europe</td>
<td>10(11)</td>
<td>10(9 )</td>
<td>10(8 )</td>
<td>10(8 )</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Western Europe</td>
<td>16(19)</td>
<td>16(14)</td>
<td>17(14)</td>
<td>17(14)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Latin America</td>
<td>20(23)</td>
<td>20(18)</td>
<td>20(17)</td>
<td>20(16)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Middle East</td>
<td>11(13)</td>
<td>11(10)</td>
<td>12(11)</td>
<td>13(10)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>North America and the</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>the Caribbean</td>
<td>5(6)</td>
<td>5(5)</td>
<td>5(4)</td>
<td>6(5)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>87(100)</td>
<td>111(100)</td>
<td>119(100)</td>
<td>126(100)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(Percentages in Brackets)

Source: World Almanac

TABLE VI
DESIURABLE RANGES AS SET BY SECRETARY-GENERAL, AND ACTUAL STAFF POSITION - 1969

(in percentages)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Region</th>
<th>Mid-point of Desirable Range</th>
<th>Actual Staff Position</th>
<th>Difference</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Africa</td>
<td>9.7</td>
<td>10.7</td>
<td>1.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asia and the</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Far East</td>
<td>16.5</td>
<td>16.0</td>
<td>-0.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eastern Europe</td>
<td>17.0</td>
<td>12.7</td>
<td>-4.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Western Europe</td>
<td>19.7</td>
<td>23.5</td>
<td>3.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Latin America</td>
<td>7.6</td>
<td>9.2</td>
<td>1.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Middle East</td>
<td>3.6</td>
<td>4.7</td>
<td>1.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>North America and the</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>the Caribbean</td>
<td>25.9</td>
<td>21.3</td>
<td>-4.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-member States</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>1.9</td>
<td>1.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>100.00</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: A/7745, p. 10.

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At present, there are at least fifty countries whose nationals in the Secretariat exceed the upper limit of the desirable range. These over-represented countries are distributed among all the geographical regions - 11 in Africa, 11 in Asia, 3 in Eastern Europe, 8 in Western Europe, 9 in Latin America, 6 in the Middle East, and 2 in North America. This seems to contradict rather sharply the figures in table VI, and leaves the distinct impression that the Secretariat has been more concerned with a regional distribution than with a geographical arrangement based on member States. In fact, the rationale behind geographical distribution is deliberately vague. The International Civil Service Advisory Board maintained that "No strict quota should be adopted or recognized ... Various bases for a quota system have been advanced, but ... the fixing of any rigid quota for geographical distribution would be extremely harmful to an International Secretariat". It was felt that the correction of geographical imbalances would have to be a gradual process, lest competence be sacrificed for geography. The wording of Article 101 at no time implies a rigid quota system, for "what is stated in the Charter is that the Secretariat has an exclusively international character".

Nonetheless, the Secretary-General seems to favour some kind of establishment of priority ranges, as table VI indicates. There is a good deal of flexibility, implicit in the regional, as opposed to national orientation of the plan. By following a rather vague programme, the Secretariat officials have thus managed to placate the various member States, despite the occasional General Assembly resolution. The question

11 A/7745, p. 10.
12 COORD/Civ-Serv/2/rev. 1. pp. 7-8.
13 Bailey, op. cit., p. 76.
rather, seems to be one of whether as integral a principle as geographical representation should be handled in so offhand and piecemeal a fashion.

In 1969, the Secretary-General stated that representation is not capable of a precise method of mathematical formulation.

"The system of desirable ranges for each country and region ... is a function of three variables: membership in the Organization, population and contribution to the budget. Besides changing from year to year, individual desirable ranges differ greatly in the extent to which they allow for the latitude necessary to meet the needs of the Secretariat resulting from normal staff turnover".\(^{14}\) The setting of ranges is supposed to be, at best a guide for recruiters, and thus "its strict application as an indicator of proper 'representation', besides giving rise to questions of equity between one country and another, is therefore open to doubt both conceptually and in practice".\(^{15}\) Ranges, in fact, are set with an upward or downward variation permitted of 25%, which in fact, is too broad to be acceptable statistically. The calculation of ranges also depends upon the importance of the positions held by nationals of the various countries. Each post, according to Young,\(^{16}\) carries a certain number of points, and multiplying each post by its assigned points gives the total number of points for all geographical posts of the Secretariat. In theory, multiplying the total number of points by the percentage of the member State's contribution gives the number of points to which each State is entitled. This method seems nothing if not precise, but it seems, as aforementioned, that even when

\(^{14}\) A/7745, p. 5.

\(^{15}\) ibid.

a range is calculated, it is honoured in the breach, and, in essence, de­
spite its protestations, the Secretariat has created a definite quota
system, which is officially followed but in practice ignored to a large
degree. The practice of geographical placement is a combination of ad­
nominate sleight-of-hand, coupled with inadequate enforcement of a
very vague principle by a body (the General Assembly) which itself does
not know exactly what it wants. The resultant confusion and double-talk
seems to indicate that the Secretariat is no less capable of bureaucratic
formalism than any national administration.

It is not difficult to see the problem from the Secretariat point
of view. Faced with an administrative criterion that demands, on the
one hand, a fairly specific representational programme, while abjuring,
on the other hand, any attempts at imposing a rigid quota, the adminis­
trators have tried to formulate a method that combines both specificity
and flexibility. The net result is so Byzantine that it must cast dis­
credit upon the Office of Personnel and the General Assembly equally.
Yet by the same token it is difficult to search for an alternative ap­
proach. Possibly, the principle should merely receive lip-service, and
be replaced de facto by the more important criteria of excellence and
competence. A situation has arisen where

The best man for a job might be a New Zealander or a Frenchman,
but if Poland or Afghanistan's quota is not full while New
Zealand's or France's is, the best man must be sidestepped.17

Principles that detract from the efficiency and morale of an organization
in the was that geographical distribution has, cannot readily be excused.

17 Walter R. Crocker, "Some Notes on the United Nations Secretariat".
Certainly, many commentators have observed that once demands for national representation have been satisfied, governments set out freely to advance their political and other sympathies, frequently as a cloak for pure nepotism. It is not a far step from representation to the control of nationals by their home countries. The representational officer can and does fulfil a valuable purpose for his homeland, as a spy, even though control has to be rather discreet. On the other hand, an organization that does not represent its members may run a greater risk of alienation of national support. In its attempt to sidestep this problem, the Secretariat has in fact alienated its own employees. Geographical representation is not incompatible with efficiency if it is realized that an unrepresentative Secretariat will be dysfunctional - it is the excesses to which the representational practices have been taken that have in fact made the organization less efficient. So far, no balance-line has been drawn, and the resultant vicious circle will undoubtedly plague the recruiters for years to come.

The situation, however, has not been completely hopeless to date. The problem is more one of attitude on the part of the Secretariat, and in the coming years, as more staff members reach retirement age and are replaced on a fairly representative basis by top-calibre recruits, the circle may be broken. Young discusses the solution in some detail. Firstly, he asserts that in-service training should help reconcile the paradox, as more representative recruits are trained into their respective positions. This must, however, go in conjunction with a well-

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19 Young, op. cit., pp. 96-103.
structured career pattern. Further, as qualifications become subject to more sophisticated techniques of comparison, recruitment will become far more precise, and it will be more difficult for member States to foist incompetents upon the Office of Personnel. Language classes, as well, will help in preparing new recruits for the requirements of the multilingual Secretariat, thus reducing the organization's reliance upon staff from a few contributing States. Testing on a regional basis might assist somewhat in comparing qualifications, though as aforementioned, this is doubtful. Above all, the solution seems to be to recruit on a geographical basis at the bottom levels of the professional categories, while at the same time permitting competition from outside for higher-echelon positions. Given the organizational bias towards internal recruitment, this should protect the career staff, while at the same time permitting clearly superior candidates the right of entry into the organization. The policy that has been followed, unfortunately, has directly contradicted this. All too often, stop-gap measures such as secondment and short-term appointments have been used as temporary expedients to bring the ratio of staff up to the required representational levels. The harm that this has done to organizational morale has been considerable. Once more, an excessively myopic approach has resulted in confusion and debility within the organization. The chief apologist of this approach has attempted to justify it in a passage which deserves some consideration, if only from the standpoint of its undisguised cynicism:

... Although it should as a rule be possible to find suitable candidates from most countries, if youth and brains rather than age and experience are sought, it remains true first that there
are a considerable number of posts requiring practical experience which cannot be filled (by career appointments at trainee levels), and secondly that recruits from certain countries where the level of education is low are unlikely to make the grade even when no experience is demanded. The (recruitment official) is compelled therefore to accept the fact that he must carry a certain proportion of relatively incompetent officials. He should accept this fact with resignation and raise no complaint so long as a predetermined percentage is not exceeded. He should furthermore, in order to give satisfaction to as many claimants as possible in the course of time, allocate these officials to temporary posts. About two years is in my experience the right period. Twenty-four months is long enough for anyone to establish his incompetence on a firm basis of evidence; it is long enough in most cases to satisfy the ambitions of the person in question. Misfits are rarely happy or satisfied. At the end of the two-year period they will as a rule, if sensibly handled, contentedly return to their mother country with the glow and glory of foreign travel and experience, in a better position than when they left to obtain a job in their home town. The place can then be filled by a candidate from another country.20

This might have a certain merit, were it not that much of the dead-wood are not placed in positions suitable to their uselessness, but, in fact, are well-distributed throughout the Secretariat, from the top down. This paternalistic, cynical form of short-term recruitment detracts still further from the collective morale of the staff, and can be of little value for any organization. Perhaps, therefore, as Alagappan suggests,21 a pool should be created of fixed-term appointments, a staff section separate from the regular career organization, and this pool should perform totally separate functions.

Geographical distribution has been limited from the start to the top echelons of the organization, for reasons of economy earlier indicated. On the other hand, the classification of staff into divisions

20 Loveday, op. cit., p. 45.

is not completely exclusive, and in many cases, local recruits are performing functions as important from an authoritative viewpoint as those of professional, geographically-recruited staff. This situation is inevitable, albeit remedied somewhat by the cosmopolitan nature of most local recruits - in New York, it is possible to find individuals of any nationality.

The problem has been under more or less constant study by the Secretariat and the General Assembly. Originally, in 1953, the Secretary-General laid down the broad governing rules in regard to geographical distribution, setting the limits below which local recruitment could apply, and instituting the range approach to representation. At this stage, it was established that each State was entitled to at least three members in the Secretariat. In 1954, fixed-term appointments were recommended by the General Assembly, which also recommended priority in recruitment at all levels for candidates from inadequately-represented States. A Committee of experts was set up to study the whole concept of geographical distribution, and this developed the present complex system of creating ranges as a combination, basically, of population and budgetary contributions. Seventy-four per cent of posts were to be distributed on the basis of contributions, 12.4 on the basis of population, and 13.6 on the basis of membership.22 The ratios were altered in 1962 by the Secretary-General, whereby contributions only counted for 60 per cent; at the same time, the principle of regional recruitment was adopted by the Secretariat. It was recognized that the

22 ibid., p. 362.
The representational nature of the staff should extend right throughout the professional classes - in other words, each level should be equally representative, even though this is not really practicable in view of the limited size of the organization. Since then, there have been numerous General Assembly resolutions, basically adjusting the proportions, or changing the minimum numbers of staff from each country which would be desirable within the Secretariat. The resolutions, however, all appear to be stop-gaps, and much of the responsibility for such shortsightedness rests therefore with the various member States. A purely administrative problem has been permitted to become a political toy, with highly deleterious results. Even promotion is supposed to be based on geography, a concept difficult to accept in conjunction with efficiency criteria.
CHAPTER VI
OTHER PROBLEMS
(a)
LOYALTY, AND LACK OF OUTSIDE INTERFERENCE

To a certain extent, all of the problems which the Secretariat faces are functions of the major problem itself - geographical distribution. It is a short step from influencing the types or affiliations of the particular recruits. The loyalty which an individual feels towards his employers need not be, under normal circumstances, particularly strong. Generally, the attractions of permanent employment and fringe benefits seem to satisfy the employee, and the organization, in turn, finds a fair degree of effectiveness sufficient satisfaction. In a sensitive organization such as the United Nations, however, loyalty plays a far more significant role.

In the first place, loyalty has to be generated, in order to provide the potential employee with an impression of status. In many cases, the recruit is a potential or former diplomat, an occupation which possesses considerable prestige. He or she must enter an organization in which sufficient pride is generated to make such employment singularly attractive. The most serious threat to loyalty is interference by member States in the selection or performance of their nationals vis-a-vis the Secretariat. Dual loyalties are obviously a fact of life within the organization - a recruit cannot be expected to abandon his nationality as soon as he becomes a Secretariat official. By the same token, however, the official must not have his position abused by his
home country, and neither must he be used as an internal spy. The representative nature of the organization ends with the induction into the organization of the new recruit; once within the organization, he is expected to show a high degree of loyalty to the aims of his homeland, and to resist interference from outside in the performance of his functions.

The principle of noninterference by member States in Secretariat recruitment was first recognized by the League of Nations in the Covenant, and the United Nations Charter accepts this principle via Article 100, which states as follows:

1. in the performance of their duties the Secretary-General and the staff shall not seek or receive instructions from any government or from any other authority external to the Organization. They shall refrain from any action which might reflect on their position as international officials responsible only to the Organization.

2. Each Member of the United Nations undertakes to respect the exclusively international character of the responsibilities of the Secretary-General and the staff and not to seek to influence them in the discharge of their responsibilities.

This concept has received its most significant challenge from the United States, which "has been able almost singlehandedly to impose its definition of the problem of allegiance upon the United Nations". At heart, the American contention, which first arose during the witch-hunting era of the early 1950's, is that Americans with Communist leanings should not be eligible for recruitment or retention by the Secretariat. The conflict has been between those who feel that the United Nations Secretariat is capable of generating its own institutional

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loyalty, which must be protected by the member States, and the Commission of Jurists, appointed by the Secretary-General in 1952, which felt that it is "clear that the United Nations is in no sense a super-State. It has no sovereignty and can claim no allegiance from its own officers or employees".\(^2\) According to this latter view, then, the primary loyalty of the recruit is to his homeland, and any candidate who is not completely loyal (as defined by his homeland) to his own country places himself as subject to interference, inasmuch as his home country can veto his appointment to the United Nations Secretariat.

This latter view was strongly challenged by the General Assembly, despite the then Secretary-General's apparent willingness to cooperate with the dictates of the United States in this matter. Lie felt that a staff member should not be retained if there are reasonable grounds for believing that "the staff member is engaging or is likely to engage in subversive activities of any Member State".\(^3\) The situation was magnified beyond all rational proportions by the United States Government. It appears that, after a series of inquiries by a Federal Grand Jury and various Congressional investigating groups, about one per cent of the U.S. citizens employed by the Secretariat either admitted allegiance to the Communist party, or refused to answer when questioned concerning their political affiliations. In consequence, the McCarthyite groups charged that the United Nations was infiltrated with "an overwhelmingly large group of disloyal United States citizens".\(^4\) The United States

\(^2\) Quoted in Young, \emph{op. cit.}, pp. 24-5.

\(^3\) \textit{ibid.}, p. 28.

\(^4\) See Claude, \emph{op. cit.}, p. 186.
demanded, and obtained, the unrestricted right to investigate all potential U.N. employees with United States citizenship, even utilizing Secretariat officials to conduct this investigation. Likewise, the Secretariat was purged of all "suspects", while the hapless Lie stood by, apparently unable to countermand the orders of the United Nation's biggest contributor and most powerful member State.

The fact that investigative control was vested in Secretariat officials, however, permitted the Secretariat to exercise a good deal of restraint upon the worst excesses of the purges. It is difficult to assess the extent to which the various member States interfere in the selection processes at the present time. The United States is now far less rigid in its approach to so-called subversives. The amount of interference might conceivably have diminished, yet the fact that a precedent has been set can still demoralize employees and discourage potential officials.

(b)

PERMANENCE OF APPOINTMENT

Several times, the growth of short-term appointments and secondment has been referred to. There is, as with most problems of recruitment, a certain degree of dualism in this situation. On the one hand, the international Secretariat must provide a continuous career service as a valuable incentive to potential recruits, while on the other hand, the dictates of expediency and geographical representation tend to promote short-term recruitment. The Secretariat requires the continuous inflow of fresh talent from without to keep alive a genuinely broad and deep
outlook and to prevent what otherwise might easily develop into a parochial way of thinking, masked by superficial cosmopolitanism".5

The League approach was that the staff should be as flexible as possible, and thus that career appointments were to be avoided where possible. Minimal measures of security were grudgingly permitted, but long-term contracts were, in the main, avoided. Despite this, a remarkable degree of stability of staff crept into the league, in turn providing the organization with much administrative strength.

The United Nations founders recognized that, despite the recruiting advantages of being able to provide a secure position, it was necessary to avoid permitting the Secretariat to lose touch and get into a collective rut. Rotation of staff was regarded as a means for avoiding this position, but the price has been high. An organization with high staff turnovers, such as the Secretariat, is likely to lose a good deal of collective self-respect. The founders do not seem to have recognized that one of the significant attractions of public service is the degree to which a recruit can rely upon stable employment. A high turnover gives little opportunity to build up the necessary amount of loyalty, and officials tend to relate more to their home countries than to the organization itself. An atmosphere is built up of instability, with performance suffering accordingly. In fact, employment with the Secretariat was regarded by many member States as a form of short and cheap in-service training for foreign ministry officials.

5 Young, op. cit., p. 141.
The Preparatory Commission saw the paradox, and admitted that "unless members of staff can be offered some assurance of being able to make their careers in the Secretariat, many of the best candidates from all countries will inevitably be kept away." For this reason, a compromise was suggested, whereby top officials and directors would be offered five-year contracts, and the organizational rump would be basically a career Secretariat. Eventually, four types of appointment were considered – probationary, fixed-term indefinite and permanent.

At the same time, the opportunities for in-service promotion tend to affect the recruiting ability of the organization. The Secretariat, by not providing a sufficiently structured pattern of career appointments at trainee level, has tended to repel many good potential candidates. Far too much emphasis has been placed on the influx of new blood and fresh ideas, although the Secretariat has provided little evidence that such a turnover in fact provides the organization with more efficiency or keeps it more in touch with external demands than might otherwise be the case. If anything, morale has suffered. In 1950, the International Civil Service Advisory Board, while recognizing the need for external recruitment to placate the demands of geographical distribution and clearly superior excellence on the part of an outside individual, felt that the Office of Personnel should clearly indicate which posts could be filled by inside, and which by outside recruitment. At worst, employees must be allowed to compete equally with outside candidates for Secretariat positions.

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6 ibid., p. 146.
The solution is not easy to come by. A first move might be to limit
the number of short-term recruits to specific positions, as at present,
while at the same time avoiding the expedient of appointing, Loveday-
style, temporary incompetents to satisfy the dictates of geographical
distribution. At the same time, a slight bias in favour of internal
recruitment might benefit career patterns immeasurably. There seems to
be very little rationale for the aforementioned idea that fresh blood
would benefit the organization - at worst, this must be a highly adverse
comment upon the Office of Personnel's ability to select and attract
talented trainees, while at best, the turnover is immeasurably costly,
both in terms of efficiency and of morale. A further solution might
be a more generous sabbatical system, with, perhaps, officials being
granted one year of leave with pay for every five years of service,
thus returning the official to the outside world, as it were. It is
not inconceivable that Secretariat officials might be made to return to
employment within their national bureaucracies for one year in five -
an equally acceptable move. Both of these suggestions, however, could
prove costly, although no more so than the present fixed-term system.

(c)

FINDING THE RIGHT INTERNATIONAL PERSONALITY

A special type of person, as mentioned in Chapter 1, fits best in-
to an international organization, and it is not easy to isolate the
criteria that create a successful employee. There seems little support
for appointments of men-of-the-world, and the ideal recruit must, if
he is to be considered, demonstrate at least token support for some
state, if only to eliminate accusations of disloyalty. By the same
token he must be prepared to act in a loyal manner towards his new em­
ployers, and in this case, the ideal personality must be made, created
from within rather than found outside the U.N. It is hard to be loyal
to an organization in which one is not involved - to this extent, a
"Secretariat personality" cannot easily be sought, but has to be molded.7

The recruit must be adaptable, above all, and willing to operate
effectively in an alien environment. The absence of prejudice is a
necessity, and the need to interact well with individuals from many cul­
tures is crucial, because of the "cross-cultural atmosphere"8 that per­
vades every office. There are special problems of communication, both
of ideas and linguistically, that require considerable patience on the
part of the Secretariat official. There are special problems for the
official's family, which might or might not affect his work performance.
In short, a supremely stable individual is required. The chief compen­
sations must be a sense of security and of belonging to the organiza­
tion. The maintenance of this will tend to bring out the desirable
qualities of the international employee.

It has become a truism to assert that employment with this or that
organization provides a challenge. In this case, the challenges are
somewhat diverse, and less tangible than within, say a national bureau­
cracy. The ability, if anything, to persist in the face of strange

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7 See Ralph Townley, The United Nations: A View from Within, New

8 James M. Mitchell, "International Personnel Psychology". Public
conditions is a vital requirement towards enabling the recruit to meet whatever challenges he might face in the Secretariat.

(d)

THE EVALUATION OF QUALIFICATIONS

In certain member States, it is very difficult to spare trained bureaucrats for employment with the United Nations. By the same token, it is very hard to evaluate the training and qualifications of many recruits or applicants. This is a function of cultural and educational differences. At present, UNESCO is attempting to create a cross-national system of evaluating qualifications and standards. The chief problem in this regard lies with evaluating courses in different Universities against particular criteria. How, given cultural and educational differences, can a recruiter differentiate in qualifications between a Russian and a Bahamanian? There are attempts being made to recruit on a regional basis, to overcome this barrier, but the introduction of a regionally-oriented staff cannot but be deleterious to the integration of the already-fragmented Secretariat.

The problem is often one of intuition. Given a set of divergent qualifications, the personnel officer is forced to choose on the basis of personality or age, and at this point, national prejudices may enter the picture. It is doubtful that a truly objective method of cross-cultural evaluation can be developed - psychologists seem to be highly pessimistic - but perhaps the widening of recruiting committees should offset any biases which may creep into the evaluation process.

9 August, 1970.
Cross-cultural testing seems to depend upon a ruling-out of areas in which cultures vary. Language, tempo and reading must not be used, and this hardly provides the degree of sophistication essential to evaluating Secretariat officials. For this reason, much depends upon the skill and intuitive abilities of the interviewers. Tests can only really be used for specific, specialized occupations, such as typing or interpreting, as indicated previously.

(e) PUBLICITY

At present, the recruitment net shown in table 11 should reach most of the potential applicants. It is not deemed suitable for so august an organization as the United Nations to resort to Madison Avenue techniques in order to obtain staff. Yet there is no reason why a good advertising programme should not be implemented. The problem of finding top-line staff at higher levels is acute, and so far, advertisements placed discreetly in a few obscure academic journals have failed to secure any numbers of applicants. For many reasons, it is felt that the mere notification to governments of member States of openings is rather unsatisfactory, so that direct recruitment must be emphasized. It would, in the long run, prove less expensive to advertise more widely, and to send out persuasive recruiters, than to run the risk of accumulating


inferior staff. Nonetheless, the shortsighted budgetary provisions of the General Assembly have rendered a direct, imaginative approach to publicity all but impossible.

(f)

SALARIES

As an incentive to employment, the lure of money can seldom be bettered. In this area, the Secretariat appears to have been somewhat deficient. Salaries are usually compared to those current for the U.S. Government, the Civil Services of New York State and the city of New York itself. Likewise, a certain comparison can be made with the salaries received by permanent missions in New York of various countries.

The Fifth Committee has asserted that

Particularly in the case of senior United Nations officials, the present discrepancy between United Nations salary scales, on the one hand, and emoluments of diplomatic and other missions, on the other, is such as to create difficulties in recruiting and retaining high quality staff in the Secretariat.\textsuperscript{11}

Attempts are periodically made to link salaries with cost-of-living indices of the various centres in which Secretariat officials must serve. On the other hand, moves have been made to set a universal U.N. salary system, and merely pay all staff at the same rate. This would penalize head office personnel, while providing staff in underdeveloped countries with a great deal of economic well-being out of proportion to actual work done. The Secretariat is a few steps behind the cost-of-living index. By the same token, there have been few complaints as

\textsuperscript{11} quoted in Alagappan, \textit{op. cit.}, p. 263.
to salary schedules, and it seems, in essence, that they appeal more to individuals from poor countries than to, say, native New Yorkers.
CHAPTER VII
THE BACKGROUND TO CLASSIFICATION IN INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS

In essence, the same principles apply to classification in international or national bureaucracies. The major difference has been in the choice of approach. In a syncretic organization such as the United Nations, where a multitude of nationalities are expected to follow a particular systemic pattern, the classification system must be adaptable and acceptable to all nationals. For this reason, most international organizations have chosen to combine the rank and position approaches, albeit with varying degrees of success.

The main problem to be faced is one of structuring - to what extent is it desirable that the international organization be based on a career pattern, and, assuming such a pattern to be desirable, how is the classification system to be linked with the existing recruiting organization? Within the international organization, classification is often a problem of comparison, and, at the senior levels, problems may arise by virtue of conflicts between national and international approaches. For example, the official recruited from a prestige-oriented bureaucracy may react adversely to a form of classification equating him, by class or division, with an individual whom he feels is inferior. On the other hand, the dehumanising aspect of classification can have considerable adverse effects on an expatriat group such as exists within
any international secretariat. The central challenge, then, is to build up a cohesive group while at the same time attempting to break this group down into units which may be more easily handled than if a mass-approach were taken. Given these rather sensitive problems, it is surprising to note the lack of imagination which has characterized the handling of classification by the League of Nations and its successor-organization. 

(a)

CLASSIFICATION IN THE LEAGUE

Under Article 8 of the League of Nations Staff Regulations, the Secretariat employees were organized into three divisions, "According to the nature of the official's duties". The basis for this division was the distinctly European orientation of the original administrators, insofar as ranking and grading were concerned. These division, then, functioned as with most European classification systems, reflecting not only different levels of responsibility, rank and salary, but also differences in recruitment procedures. Each division set its own standards of qualification, and lateral recruitment between the various divisions was to be kept to a minimum. The intention was to provide three career streams.

The First Division was to comprise "the staff which directly gives effect to the resolutions of the Assembly, the Council and the organizations of the League and carries out the preparatory work on which their decisions may be based". It was not

1 see Ranshofen-Wertheimer, op. cit., p. 279
2 quoted in Young, op. cit., p. 111
intended to provide "the upper rungs of the promotional ladder for the rank and file, but, on the contrary, stands out as a separate career".\textsuperscript{3} The division was further subdivided into several categories. At the top level were Principal officers, also known as the High Directorate, consisting of Assistant and Under-Secretaries-General, the Secretary-General himself with his deputies, and all directors or chiefs of section. For these posts, a maximum period of tenure was set - ten years for the Secretary-General, eight for the Deput Secretaries-General, and seven for the remaining principal officers. "Permanent or career appointments were not given to principal officials, even though posts at these levels could be reached by staff members from the ranks".\textsuperscript{4}

The Chiefs of Section category was in a somewhat equivocal position, inasmuch as some chiefs were actually in charge of sections, whereas others worked under the supervision of a director. In fact, the position was more than a little confused, and eventually, it was decided to reserve the chief of section title to "officials who work under the supervision of an Under-Secretary-General or Director".\textsuperscript{5} Confusion still reigned, however, as the chiefs of section still remained in charge of minor sections. In fact, eventually, even lower-ranking

\textsuperscript{3} quotation from Ranshofen-Wertheimer, \textit{op.cit.} p. 279.
\textsuperscript{4} Alagappan \textit{op. cit.}, p. 204
\textsuperscript{5} Ranshofen-Wertheimer, \textit{op. cit.}, p. 280.
officials headed sections, so to all intents and purposes, the category was a holdall, and functionally useless.

In 1932, a special merit-based category of Counsellors was set up. In practice, this was the top rank of the third category, Member of Section, and was open to all those section members who had served for at least seven years, and had had maximum salaries for three years. The category carried neither extra prestige nor a raise in salary. There were never more then six of these officials all told.

The largest category within the First Division was that of Member of Section. These officials comprised what Ranshofen-Wertheimer termed "the backbone of the whole international administration. It was their morale and the quality of their works that largely determined the morale and the quality of work of the whole Secretariat". This was a career-oriented category, unlike the two superior groupings, and the section members in fact were intended to perform all the intellectual and administrative work of the Secretariat, albeit under the direction of the higher staff. Because of the career orientation of the Members of Section category, a large number of graded steps were incorporated, to "facilitate annual increments in a long career." Because of their pivotal positions, the members of section required a certain degree of security of tenure, good promotion prospects and excellent perquisites;

6 ibid., p. 281
7 Alagappan, op. cit., p. 204
thus, long-term appointments became the rule, and a genuine attempt was made to build up this grouping as a structured system of advancement. Originally, the category was divided into A and B groups, corresponding respectively to junior and senior rank. This time, four subdivisions were created in 1935. Apparently, the reasons for this change were economic, since the automatic rise from bottom to top was abolished. On the other hand, a more competitive spirit was thereby institutionalized.

The Second Division included all "personnel performing strictly secretarial and routine administrative duties".\(^8\) The chief categories were Intermediate Class, Senior Assistants, shorthand typists, copy-typists and clerks, in descending order of salary paid. These officials were not recruited locally; the division itself was only created in 1923, as it was felt that the First Division was becoming too unwieldy. In theory, employees in the Intermediate Class were in an excellent promotional position, but in practice, there was little movement into the First Division. Eventually, despite the original intentions of the founders, the bulk of Second Division employees were local recruits, and the division became the largest of the Secretariat.

The Third Division included tradespeople, chauffeurs and telephone operators. It was entirely locally-recruited, and thus completely Swiss. In essence, it functioned as a service

\(^8\) Young, \textit{op. cit.}, p. 112.
category, consisting of "Personnel engaged in manual or chiefly manual work". 9

This type of classification resulted in a form of casteism which inhibited the proper development of a career service. One problem that arose was that of titles. Initially, there was no attempt to rank individuals according to responsibilities or salaries - after all, in such a small organization, the internal hierarchical system was rather well-known. The titles actually allocated were misleading - Secretary-General, Under-Secretary-General and so forth - and did not assist outsiders or delegates in evaluating the positions of such individuals. The term "Member of Section" was completely devoid of meaning, and this, too, confused foreign nationals. At various times, attempts were made to develop a more meaningful classification system, but these received very low priority. Status is immensely important in international dealings, and the League's failure to recognize this did not lighten the work of the Secretariat officials.

Another problem was one of proportions and disproportions as between the various divisions. The following table indicates the situation as it existed:

9 ibid.
If the final set of figures is disregarded, inasmuch as the war situation was abnormal, it can be seen that, in absolute terms, the League of Nations was exceptionally top-heavey. By the same token, despite a slight increase in the number of manual workers, the ratios between the divisions remained constant, a sure sign of administrative stagnation. Nonetheless, because of the highly technical nature of much of the League's work, it was deemed necessary to build up the higher echelons of the Secretariat. This, coupled with the political exigencies of geographical representation, resulted in a highly political First Division. The maladjustment was felt by Ranshofen-Wertheimer to be highly undesirable, for "the universally recognized technical efficiency of the Secretariat was achieved at higher cost than was necessary, even on the existing salary level". On the other hand, the system was extremely flexible, if somewhat imprecise.

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Ranshofen-Wertheimer, op. cit., p. 289.
(b)

THE PREPARATORY COMMISSION
OF THE UNITED NATIONS

There appeared, from the first, to be a conflict between the approach suggested by the United States and that followed by the League, and thus, in the discussions that preceded the establishment of the United Nations in 1945, the U.S. delegation exerted enough pressure to have the old League system abandoned as unsuitable to the needs of the new organization. In its place, it was recommended that a modified divisional system be adopted. There were to be, as previously, three Divisions, known henceforth as categories, which existed immediately below the top echelons. Category I would consist of executive staff, and would be further subdivided into Directors, Deputy Directors, Assistant Directors, Counsellors and Members of Section. Category II, consisting of Administrative and clerical staff, would be divided into Head Assistants and Section Secretaries, Senior Assistant and Senior Secretary, and Junior Assistant and Junior Secretary. Category III, which would be subdivided according to local conditions, was to consist of subordinate office staff and persons engaged in manual labour. Within these divisions, some sort of grading system was to be established by the Secretary-General. The proposal, as Alagappan points out, was eminently practical,

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11 Alagappan, op. cit., p. 209

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as it could be easily linked with the qualifications required of recruits, but the rather formal, undemocratic flavour of such a system was heavily criticized. The most important career category was to be, as hitherto, Member of Section, and within this, there would be three salary scales, to correspond with the new employee's age, status, experience and responsibility. The Special Assistant/Secretary of Section grade performed the same function for the Second Category.

Eventually, two grading structures were proposed by the Executive Committee. The first went as follows:

I  Assistant Secretary-General
II  Director
III  Assistant Director
IV  Counsellor
V  Principal Secretary
VI  Assistant Principal Secretary
VII  Secretary
VIII  Head Assistant
IX  Senior Assistant
X  Junior Assistant

The second scheme, which was eventually adopted because of its seeming simplicity, was:

I  Director
II  Deputy Director
III  Assistant Director
IV  Counsellor
V  Member of Section (three salary grades)
VI Head (or Special) Assistant and Secretary of Section
VII Senior Assistant and Senior Secretary
VIII Junior Assistant and Junior Secretary

It was accepted that salary and classification lists were to be the same, so that a unified system was to be adopted, with the aim of breadth and simplicity. For this reason, there was little attention to detail, aside from a certain acceptance of the need for grading within the categories. Far more attention was paid to grading within the various posts at the top of the administrative ladder. The problem of the number and length of office of the Deputy Secretaries-General seemed particularly vexing, and the organization of the grading structures was neglected accordingly.

(c)

THE ADVISORY GROUP OF EXPERTS

In 1946, the General Assembly authorized the Secretary-General to make a provisional classification of posts other than those at the very top, on the basis of the following principles:

a) For the development of a classification plan of all posts required by the Secretariat, based upon the duties, responsibilities and authority of each post;

b) For the grouping of posts by main categories and within categories by grade;

c) For the assignment of appropriate salaries to each main category and grade therein according to the salary standards which may be established by the General Assembly;
d) For the assignment of each post in the Secretariat to its appropriate category and grade on the basis of its duties, responsibilities and authority.  

Accordingly, the Advisory Group of Experts selected to undertake this task developed a tentative classification plan, which they felt would provide:

a) a systematic method of evaluating posts in order to facilitate all phases of personnel administration;

b) a basis for uniform salary schedules for equal work among all departments and organs of the United Nations;

c) uniform salary titles which could be used for budget and payroll purposes.  

The need to categorize, then, was seen by the Advisory Group as the need to group posts by type of work, with subdivisions within each grade corresponding roughly to some degree of responsibility or difficulty. On the other hand, there was still the expressed desire of the Preparatory Commission to consider—that any classification system be both broad-based and flexible. The Group had to work completely without precedents, and in an atmosphere that was opposed to any vestiges of the League system. Little time was allowed for experimentation, and yet it was imperative that both the higher and the lower echelons of the Secretariat be balanced. Above all the immediate need for experienced staff at all levels "further made it necessary to make concessions which would be a violation of classification

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12 quoted in Young, op. cit., p. 112-3

13 Mahgoub, op. cit., p. 168-9
Eventually, a temporary classification plan was suggested to the Secretary-General by the Advisory Group of Experts. This plan, which was to achieve a great deal of infamy, was at base only a salary schedule, and nothing more. To institutionalize the principle of equal pay for equal work, it was decided that there would be no limitation upon the number of categories and grade distinctions. This, it seems, was a means of ensuring flexibility. Eventually, the provisional scheme was to be replaced by a permanent classification plan.

In the classification procedure suggested by the Advisory Group, particular attention was paid to the separation of posts and incumbents, inasmuch as classification was oriented around position, not rank. On the other hand, the rank of the individual was not entirely without influence in classifying the position - an inherent conflict - because the Secretariat was experiencing staff shortages, and so "the department heads often used their influence in securing higher ratings for particular posts in the hope of keeping certain individuals on the staff".  

The classification plan utilised the terms of post, grade and category. A post was an individual position occupied by a particular staff member, while a category consisted of a group of posts which required similar capabilities and experience.

15 ibid., p. 156
Within these categories, the posts were graded according to importance, duties and authority. Eventually, in the first classification plan, there were about forty categories and thirty-two subtitles. For the system to function, a precise description was required of each post in each grade and category. Eventually, about 150 job descriptions were used for the 72 aforementioned categories and subcategories.

The Bureau of Finance finally prepared a temporary classification plan, involving 19 categories, each corresponding to a certain salary grid, as follows:

1. **Top-Ranking Directors**, including senior officials, deputy assistant Secretaries-General and Directors of the major staff services. These officials had, *per se*, considerable personal status aside from their positions.

2. **Directors**

3. **Principal Officers**, which, in some cases, included the chiefs of divisions

4. **Professional Personnel** and specialists

5. **Information Personnel**

6. **Librarians**

7. **General Administrative Personnel**, including the old Member

8. **Special Administrative Personnel**, such as accountants and draftsmen

9. **Interpreters**

10. **Linguistic Specialists** and Translators

11. **Verbatim Reporters**
This Bureau of Finance plan was undoubtedly preferable to that which preceded it, if only because of the diminishing number of categories. In addition, the definitions of posts were not quite as precise as hitherto, so that a little room for modification was permitted. On the other hand, at no time was the actual range of qualifications for each post specified. This was to be specified by the Office of Personnel on an individual basis. This soon led to allegations of partiality, and eventually, posts were simply identified by their salary grades rather than their duties classification. In fact, the various staff members were, when the plan was initiated, requested simply to produce their own job description sheets, which were, in turn, corrected and assessed by their supervisors. Only in disputed cases were experts sought to classify posts. All of these procedures were strictly according to current United States practice.

The plan was originally administered by the Bureau of Administrative Management and the Budget, even though it was initiated by the Division of Salary Administration of the Bureau of Personnel. Eventually, this dualism was resolved,
and control was vested in a unified Bureau of Finance. The number of posts continually multiplied in the early years of the Secretariat, and the various departments were given considerable powers to establish new posts, which then had to be classified according to the Bureau of Finance's manual. A considerable amount of dissension was created by the procedure for reclassifying posts. Theoretically, it was recognized that each job evaluation programme required re-evaluation techniques because of the impossibility of permanently fixing duties and responsibilities. Personalities must at some stage affect the performance of individuals within posts, and powers can be aggrandised, even in a bureaucracy. Because of this realization, the Division of Salary Administration bent over backwards to accommodate regrading requests. At one stage, about 2% of all posts were regraded per week, so that in 1947, it was decided to limit regrading and reassessment requests to two six-monthly periods; eventually, only one period per annum was set aside for the re-evaluation of posts. Nonetheless, chaos reigned, despite the careful procedures for re-evaluation that were followed.

It was soon realized by the personnel officers how faulty the new system was. In fact, as early as 1946, a working party was set up to make recommendations as to improving the exceedingly complex procedures that were being followed. The Advisory Committee of Administrative and Budgetary Questions was con-

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16 ibid., p. 162
sistently critical of the whole operation, especially in its reports of 1947, 1948, and 1949 to the General Assembly.

Because of the complexity and inflexibility of the system, job descriptions could be drafted to fit the qualifications of almost any potential employee, whilst there was an apparent tendency to overgrade merely on account of favouritism or to attract better staff. There were far too many groups of posts - the bulk of the staff was in categories 4, 9, 10, 11, 12, and 13. On the other hand, the nineteen categories were far too heterogeneous, and no qualifications were specified for the particular categories. On the other hand, because of the precision of the job descriptions, there was an excessive specialization of posts, and consequently of staff members. "The system made flexibility impossible in the utilization and assignment of personnel, and rendered reasonable security remote and career advancement of the individual more rigid". 17 The overattention to detail led to conflicts between the Personnel Officers and the various bureaux.

Because the distinctions between posts were so minuscule, lines of demarcation became less significant, and the distinctions as between grades were often made on an arbitrary basis. This led in turn to excessive positional upgrading. Far too much of an overlap developed in salaries as between one grade and the next - there was little point in setting any positional

17 quoted in Mahgoub, op. cit., p. 171.
differentiation, as salaries were in many instances hardly
different for several ranges in either direction. Because
of the inflexibility of the system, there was little equality
of treatment of the various Secretariat employees, and morale
was decreased considerably. Energin admirably summarizes the
defects of the plan:

the lack of versatility and flexibility in the
assignment of staff members; the excessive fre­
quency of re-classification of staff; the in­
equality of treatment between comparable posts
throughout the Secretariat; the tendency to
over-grade posts and individuals both in the pro­
fessional and secretarial and clerical levels with
a somewhat disproportionate ratio of higher to
lower grades; the identification of individual
staff members with grade numbers; and the fact
that all the present scales, subject as they had
been to considerable overlapping, were extremely
wide with the result that ultimate budgetary re­
quirements for salaries had become substantially
heavier.

Add to this the problems of geographical recruitment on a world
level, and it seems apparent that the broadest, most flexible
plan possible is necessitated. The original classification
system was manifestly far from simple. Rigidity inhibited
promotion - the small numbers of employees eventually forced
the classification system to create a plan devoid of any
relevance to promotional or career possibilities. The aim
was to create a network of employees operating in virtually
watertight compartments, a form of technocratic trade unionism
that did not appear relevant to the needs of a highly trained
professional body such as the Secretariat. Above all, the

18 Energin, op. cit., p. 164
whole positional approach was a sop to the Americans who tried so hard to influence the administration at the onset into accepting what was felt to be the United States' most significant contribution to modern public administration: position-classification. Pressure was put via the Bureau of the Budget (the U.S. was the United Nations' greatest source of financial support), and via an implicit desire on the part of the other members to draw the U.S. Government into the whole functioning of the new organization. At no state was a regression to the League position to be permitted. By running scared, the General Assembly and the Secretary-General made a costly and rather ludicrous error. Eventually, however, even the U.S. joined in the collective feeling of relief when the unwieldy system was abandoned.

(d) THE REORGANIZATION OF CLASSIFICATION SINCE 1949

In 1948, it was recommended by the Advisory Committee on Budgetary Questions that a comprehensive review of classification be undertaken, and to this end, the Secretary-General appointed a committee of experts, headed by Arthur S. Flemming, a former member of the United States Civil Service Commission.

In its report, which was published in 1949, the Flemming Committee found that the existing classification scheme was, in fact, self-defeating. The classification plan would have been ideal for a large, homogeneous organization possessed of a
certain degree of stability, but its adaptation to the needs of the Secretariat seemed doubtful at first, and had in fact ended in chaos. Given the apparent inequities within the existing scheme, the Committee decided to turn back the clock, and reconsider the approach of the League of Nations. The main objectives envisaged by the Fleming Committee for a classification system were:

(i) Equality of treatment throughout the Secretariat in terms of posts and individuals;
(ii) Reasonable opportunities for promotion;
(iii) A maximum degree of security and of career prospects;
(iv) Flexibility in the use of staff and their assignment, and
(v) Simple and economical personnel and salary administration which does not impair effective budgetary control.

Bearing this in mind, the Committee decided that the number of separate classification categories should be reduced to four broad divisions.

The Director and Principal Officer Category was destined to include all the top policy-making and administrative posts which the staff members could expect to attain as a result of progressive, merit-based promotion. Within this, there would be three levels:

(a) Principal Director, confined to deputy heads of major staff services
(b) Director
(c) Principal Officer

19 Quoted in Young, op. cit., p. 115
These grades were to be allocated on the basis of the degree of supervision exercised or the range of responsibilities to be assumed.

The Substantive Service Category would include professional personnel, general administrators, language and library personnel, and would have four levels:

(a) Assistant Officer
(b) Intermediate Officer
(c) Officer
(d) Senior Officer

The classification into this category would include "those individuals whose duties clearly involve a general concern with, and a broad knowledge of, the programme and work of a major department". 20

The Special Service Category would involve all groups of special administrative personnel in posts performing basically service functions, although with recognized standards and levels of professional or technical qualifications and experience. Within this, there were three levels:

(a) Assistant Officer
(b) Intermediate Officer
(c) Officer

While the fourth category, that of General Service, would include all secretarial and clerical staff, and individuals with routine administrative duties. This had five levels:

20 Energin, op. cit., p. 192
Manual workers would not be classified, and would be paid as per local conditions. The plan can be seen in detail on table VIII.

**TABLE VIII**

**CLASSIFICATION PLAN OF STAFF**

*IN THE UNITED NATIONS*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>General Service</th>
<th>Special service</th>
<th>Substantive service</th>
<th>Directors and principal officers</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Messenger</td>
<td>Assistant officer</td>
<td>Assistant officer</td>
<td>Principal officer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Typist</td>
<td>Intermediate officer</td>
<td>Intermediate officer</td>
<td>Director</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Junior stenographer, etc.</td>
<td>Officer</td>
<td>Officer</td>
<td>Principal director</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Secretary, clerk, etc.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Senior secretary</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Senior clerk, etc.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Principal Clerk, administrative assistant</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Association recommended that the service should be divided into three broad categories - Executive heads and their deputies or associates, Professional staff, subdivided into five levels, and General Service, with more levels than those which existed at that time (1956). The Secretary-General opted for a very long entrance scale, to be formed by combining the P-3 and P-4 levels into a single level with 15 to 20 steps at annual intervals. This would allow for satisfactory, yet unambitious or mediocre employees, a group that is hardly in demand for an international organization. Both sets of proposals were, however, rejected by the Committee. The present structure seemed to provide the best method for distinguishing between jobs, and at the same time, staff turnover has been such that a full career opening seemed, at best, self-delusion. Nonetheless, the P-2 and P-3 levels were to be combined, and the P-1 level was to be a junior probationary grade for recruits. This in turn would reduce the grade for recruits. This in turn would reduce the grade structure by a considerable amount. Certain professional staff were to be reclassified as General Service staff, while the latter category became a highly technically-oriented one. A common standard of grading was recommended, as it seemed that there was a complete lack of uniformity in the application of staff grading. Unfortunately, most of the Committee recommendations were rejected by the General Assembly, so the plan ran as hitherto. Eventually, it became apparent that salaries were not keeping up, with outside competitors. Furthermore, recruitment to the various classification positions was uneven, with very little
career recruitment for the higher levels. The suggested recruit-
ment grades became almost redundant, as staff was increasingly
seconded or appointed on geographical consideration from out-
side the Secretariat. Recruitment, as such, became a task of
filling high-level posts rather than providing for a career
service. As a consequence, the classification plan has become
very much of a fiction - staff are, it is true, classified into
the various grades, but there has been no attempt to maintain
the entrance levels or promotional pace which the Secretariat
requires.

(e)

PROBLEMS OF CLASSIFICATION

A classification plan is supposed to ensure adequate
career and promotional patterns, as defined by the recruitment
system. The unsystematized nature of recruitment within the
U.N. Secretariat places considerable strain upon the ingenuity
of the classifiers in structuring careers. In essence, it is
impossible - with top-heavy external recruitment and a poor
rate of external recruitment at the base levels, a situation
has arisen in which the employee's path for advancement is
blocked. He will, provided his performance is satisfactory,
reach a position eventually from which there is, literally,
no prospect for advancement. In certain categories, there
is a large number of ageing employees - as they retire, it is
to be hoped that they will be replaced by career officials,
but former Secretariat practice renders this somewhat of a
pipe-dream. As Alagappan points out, "a career in the United Nations sometimes consists of devotion to a specialty".\textsuperscript{25} Such individuals can generally progress through their specialized grades, thereby creating a career pattern. The bulk of the staff, however, are appointed on the principle that a "career" is merely the sum total of a series of assignments which may or may not be interrelated. This group is one of administrative generalists, whose ranks appear, more and more, to be filled at the middle and higher levels, rather than at the bottom.

The problem of classification within the Secretariat has been one of differentiation between security and progress. The Secretariat method of recruitment can guarantee a safe job at each level, but it would be foolhardy for a trainee to enter the organization and assume that, in twenty-five years, given his abilities, he might end up as a Secretary-General. The demands of the Secretariat are such that each opening has to be filled within a short time after it appears. In addition, the demands of the geographical recruitment bias seem to discriminate against persons already employed by the organization. Suggestions for geographically-based promotion have not been accepted, and it seems that, to satisfy a highly-volatile General Assembly, short-term recruitment at higher levels is more politically acceptable than promotion. So far, all suggestions for a career system have met with opposition from

\textsuperscript{25} Alagappan, \textit{op. cit.}, p. 225.
the Assembly, and there seems to be little reason to assume that there will be a change of heart amongst the delegates.

All too often, the classification system has been permitted to act as a substitute for a salry scale, or vice-versa. There is a certain link between salaries and classification - after all, the employee is paid in accordance with his rank - but in theory, the two scales must be separated. The situation has arisen whereby promotion is sought after purely for financial reasons, rather than a source of additional status. The role of the classification plan has become further diminished, and in fact, such a plan can be seen merely as a form of grouping, rather than a means of providing careers. And, as has been pointed out throughout this paper, the aim of a competent personnel office is to provide, not jobs but careers. Short-term appointments and the correspondingly high turnover that is thus entailed are incredibly wasteful, both in terms of placing an extra burden upon the recruiter, and in the effect such a turnover has on staff morale. Periodically, the Secretary-General's reports contain estimated prospects for advancement for staff at various levels. For many categories, such periods may be well over the 200 year mark! As an article in the Secretariat News of March, 1966, put it, the grading structures may be compared to "A Manhattan apartment house full of small rooms and low ceilings". 26

26 quoted in Alagappan, op. cit., p. 241
Within each category and grade, increments were to be established. The aim was that

The length of the scale for each salary level should be such as to assure the staff that given good conduct and satisfactory performance they will have the prospect of a regular advance in remuneration and that their progress will not depend simply on fortuitous vacancies or on the reclassification of their posts. As far as possible there should be a minimum of overlapping between the scales applying to the various salary levels of each category or service.21

This broad grading system then, would ensure the development of career patterns while preventing the unreasonable over-grading of individual posts. On the other hand, the categories were not necessarily compartmentalized, inasmuch as an individual with the required qualifications and experience might be able to pass without hindrance from one grouping to another.

It was found desirable to reduce the number of grades within each category to numbers that "could readily be recognized by the non-expert, as well as the expert, as marking different levels of responsibility".22 Salary scales were to be established for each level on the principle that a satisfactory employee need not necessarily have to await reclassification or the death or retirement of a superior for regular remunerative advancement. In fact, a system of annual increments was to be set up.

Eventually, the number of categories was decreased, as

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21 A/C.5/331, p. 23
22 Energin, op. cit., p. 194

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the "Substantive Service Category was combined with the Special Service Category and retitled Professional Category, with five levels, thus further reducing the number of grades to thirteen. The final plan adopted by the General Assembly as of January 1, 1951, went as follows:23

A Principal Officer and Director Category, with 3 levels:
   i Principal Director (F-D), with 2 steps;
   ii Director (D-2), with 5 steps;
   iii Principal Officer (D-1), with 6 steps;

B Professional Category, with 5 levels:
   i Senior Officer (P-5), with 9 steps;
   ii First Officer (P-4), with 10 steps;
   iii Second Officer (P-3), with 10 steps;
   iv Associate Officer (P-2), with 9 steps;
   v Assistant Officer (P-1), with 8 steps;

C General Service Category, with 5 levels:
   i Principal level, with 7 steps;
   ii Senior level, with 8 steps;
   iii Intermediate level, with 9 steps;
   iv Junior level, with 8 steps;
   v Messenger level, with 9 steps.

The modus operandi of the 1951 system has been a manning table. This is "a statement of the number of authorized posts, by level of the staff present at the first of January of each

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23 ibid., p. 195
year, for every department or office in the Secretariat".\(^{24}\) Since 1957, all Secretariat positions have been placed into one consolidated manning-table. The latter reflects more the needs of the organization than the qualifications of particular individuals, despite superficial resemblances to the old League system. On the other hand, classification and duties are so intermingled that extra work cannot be assigned to an employee without reclassifying his position. The permanence of the positions established by the 1951 plan gave the staff a feeling of continuity.

In 1956, the Salary Review Committee found the classification system to be generally satisfactory. On studying the plan, however, four fundamental questions came to the Committee's notice:

(1) Why is there such a long scale to the grade structure? Is it justified?
(2) Because of limited promotional prospects, should the number of steps in the Professional and General Service Grades be increased in order to provide more of a career service?
(3) To what extent should all the diverse professional employees continue to be lumped into one Professional category?
(4) Has a uniform standard ever been applied to determine post grading?

Concerning the first question, the International Civil Servants' 24 Mahgoub, \textit{op. cit.}, p. 165
The solution seems to be the strengthening of the 1951 plan. As far as classification plans go, it is not a bad one, although it lacks imagination. The divisions are sensible, the grades, not too precise. In all, it is suitable for a small, highly-technical organization such as the Secretariat. A method strengthening the classification system would be to enforce intake at specified levels, coupled with internal geographical distribution. The division of the categories into various career-blocs would provide separate career patterns. Each bloc, or cell might contain 2 or 3 categories or ranks, each with 4 or 5 levels of promotion. For example, a filing cell might be developed, with 10 positions, embracing two categories and with four parallel levels of promotion, which might be staggered, as illustrated:
This could itself be seen as a miniature Secretariat, but somewhat less diversified and more oriented around a particular type of work. There would have to be a method of ensuring lateral promotion - the cells, in other words, would be open-ended. This might, in itself, solve several recruitment problems.
CHAPTER VIII
CONCLUSION

It is necessary at this stage to return once more to the original principles upon which this paper has been based. One of the chief of these has been the linkage, in the sphere of personnel administration, of theory and practice, and it is now necessary to evaluate the amount of such linkage as applied to the classification and recruitment functions within the United Nations Secretariat. Very little attention appears to have been paid by the founders of the United Nations to any principles of recruitment, aside from the pragmatic one of geographical distribution. Despite the ritual degree of lip service that has been paid to the criterion of excellence and the need to reinforce the status of the various Secretariat officials, the observer finds a completely unintegrated recruitment pattern. Staff are selected strictly in terms of their ability, if ability be the correct word, not to antagonize other member states. The consequence has been mediocrity in terms of standards set in the Charter, and the stifling of initiative stemming from the lack of a structured pattern of intake. On the other hand, some small justification for the situation has been the abundance of interference by some of the more powerful member states. The Secretariat has had to compromise, even to the extent of lowering standards and appointing staff purely for political reasons. Efficiency has been replaced by persistence as the major criterion of
success.

Classification practices, after an initially disastrous period until 1949, have tended to reflect the need for broad, flexible groupings of staff with broadly similar occupations and qualifications. The chief criticism of the classification plan as it exists as of 1970 is that it has subordinated those few classification principles that were outlined in Chapter II to the need to integrate classes with salary-positions. Obviously, position classification was not applicable to the United Nations situation, and the regression, if one could call it that, to the old League system, albeit with modifications, reflects a refreshing degree of pragmatism. Indeed, there is no reason why salaries should not play a highly significant role in the classification process, provided classification can exist on its own apart from the salary schedule.

Certainly it seems that the classification plan is rational and logical, but the intake of staff (recruitment) has not been at the base levels. As a consequence, career patterns have become unfulfilled, rather than unstructured. This in turn should indicate the degree of linkage that is required between classification and recruitment. A situation can be seen in which, because of the chaotic, piece-meal approach which has been taken to recruitment, the classification plan has been almost fictionalized. The fault therefore lies in the recruiting function. Whether or not recruitment need be based on such political considerations as geography should
not affect intake patterns, provided certain standards for all recruits are met, and provided staff are only recruited at the lowest level of intake. There is an outstanding need for a career service to replace the ad hoc fluidity of the present system. Partial solutions to the present problems do in fact exist. The fact that they have been ignored to date is a consequence of the small degree of importance which the General Assembly attaches to Secretariat Administration. In the first place, the International Civil Service Advisory Board can very easily be converted to a meaningful International Civil Service Commission, even if it be under the strict jurisdiction of any combination of the Secretary-General and the General Assembly. Further solutions lie in abandoning the policy of ignoring the classification plan. As mentioned above, there is no reason why the consideration of geographical distribution cannot be restricted to low-level recruitment. What the United Nations Secretariat needs is what every bureaucracy claims to reject, even when it is most necessary for their continuation: An institutionalized elite of career personnel. It is only through intake at the specified levels indicated in the various classification plans that such an elite may be built up.
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