



Book Reviews

What Value Does the U.N. Have?

THE UNITED NATIONS AND DISARMAMENT, 1945-1965

New York: Office of Public Information, United Nations, 1967

THE UNITED NATIONS: PEACE AND PROGRESS by ALF ROSS

Totowa, N.J.: The Bedminster Press, 1966

Reviewed by AMITAI ETZIONI

The United Nations is neither the major peace-keeping force that its enthusiastic supporters see, nor the end of national sovereignty that its enemies fear. The U.N.'s total effect on contemporary international relations is very limited. Its greatest value lies in its surprising capacity to act as the depository for some of man's dearest dreams, despite 20 years of disappointments—a history that seems bent on repeating itself.

There is little sense in discussing all of the U.N.'s activities jointly, as if they amounted to a unity. UNICEF (milk for kiddies), UNESCO (visual aids in four languages), and peace-keeping are, from almost every conceivable viewpoint, quite different operations. In the area of disarmament, little has been achieved by the U.N., or—for that matter—by anyone else. For the last two decades the world has seen a super-power arms race, various small-power arms races, a considerable number of limited wars, and the failure of scores of attempts to form supranational communities on a regional basis, not to overlook the failure to achieve worldwide collective security. While nuclear war has been avoided so far, we are gradually learning exactly how close we were to the brink in 1962, during the Cuban missile crisis. The U.N.'s inability to stop limited war is well demonstrated every day in Southeast Asia. In the Middle East, as Abba Eban put it, the U.N. force turned out to be an umbrella you close when it rains.

Against this backdrop there are a few achievements that can be listed, achievements that have a value of their own: Morally, every life saved justifies a whole U.N. And limited advances

serve as building stones upon which a future more hospitable to disarmament and to a more potent U.N. may be built. The U.N., for example, did provide numerous occasions for nations in conflict to talk to each other, and to other nations, even when they had no diplomatic relations. U.N. officials acted as go-betweens, helping to arrange and to observe cease-fires. Some agreements on arms limitation were reached, like the ban on the orbiting of weapons of mass destruction. The U.N. gained considerable experience in peace-keeping operations. While Eban is correct in saying that U.N. force failed in its ultimate objective, to prevent a war in the Middle East, for ten years it helped to keep the Egyptian-Israeli border along the Gaza Strip as the single most peaceful Israel-Arab frontier. (Positioning observers or forces on volatile borders is, and will remain, a major U.N. task.) By and large, though, the record is more one of promise than of reality.

Most friends of the U.N. tie their hopes for a more potent U.N. to the rise of a better world, in which all men will be brothers and will teach war no more. Because such a world may elude us at least for a while, we ask: Are there any "hard," "real-political" conditions under which more of the U.N. dream may be realized?

Among the factors pointing in this direction is, first, the increase in the number and importance of the nonaligned nations in the U.N. (if we compare the U.N.'s first decade with its second). These countries have tended to support disarmament and Soviet-U.S. peaceful co-existence, as well as strengthening the U.N. in general and peace-keeping oper-

ations in particular. Second, the decline in the Cold War tensions, the semi-détente between the U.S. and the U.S.S.R. (the two superpowers of the U.N.), provides the foundation for more U.N. agreements. The U.N. resolution banning the orbiting of nuclear arms, for instance, is in effect the outgrowth of a U.S.-U.S.S.R. resolution. Third, the rebellion of secondary powers in the main blocs—France and mainland China—has made world politics much more pluralistic, rich in combinations, and flexible compared with the rigid bipolar, duopolistic days of the main Cold War era (1947-1963). (I take Kennedy's experiment in a peace strategy as the main turning-point—see "The Kennedy Experiment," Roundup, Jan.-Feb. 1968.)

Not all trends point in this direction. China's absence from the U.N. increasingly hampers the U.N.'s peace-keeping activities and potential, not only in Vietnam but in India, in the dispute between Malaysia and Indonesia, and elsewhere. The U.N.'s financial weakness is another significant limitation. Both, however, could be corrected relatively easily.

The books before us deserve only limited attention. One is an official publication of the U.N. It reads like most official documents—as if it had been written by a committee for "external" purposes. *The United Nations and Disarmament* covers everything and nothing; every relevant act is listed, but nothing of the underlying political roots or consequences is shown. It is a useful reference book. For those who know the score, it may help in checking a date or the spelling of a name; for those who do not, it provides a fair starting-point.

If the first book is an official publication, the second is published by a small firm said to be inclined to produce books by students and acquaintances of the owner. *The United Nations: Peace and Progress*, written by a law professor at the University of Copenhagen, tries to cover too much, maybe hoping for a share of the textbook market. There are the routine chapters about the goals of the U.N., its membership, its apparatus, and so forth. Written lucidly, and assuming no prior knowledge on the part of the reader, the book often quite aptly summarizes an idea or a man's thought in a paragraph and a half. Despite the fact that the author is a law professor, he does tackle sociological, psychological, and economic issues with considerable courage. If we need another introduction to the field, this one may do,

though I prefer the works of Lincoln Bloomfield, Innis Claude, Leland Goodrich, and Stanley Hoffmann. People less peace-minded than this reviewer may

feel that the U.N. and these two innocuous books deserve each other.

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Treating Schizophrenics at Home

SCHIZOPHRENICS IN THE COMMUNITY: AN EXPERIMENTAL STUDY IN THE PREVENTION OF HOSPITALIZATION by BENJAMIN PASAMANICK,

FRANK R. SCARPITTI, and SIMON DINITZ

New York: Appleton-Century-Crofts, 1967, 448 pages, \$8

Reviewed by GENE G. KASSEBAUM

This is a report on the results of a study comparing three programs for adult schizophrenics in Louisville, Ky. The three programs were state mental-hospital inpatient care; home care with drugs; and home care with placebos.

All of the study patients had been screened to eliminate those who were

apparently homicidal or suicidal, or who did not have families willing to accept and supervise them at home. After passing this screening, the patients were randomly assigned to one of the three experimental programs. Inpatient controls were maintained in the hospital, and these patients had no further direct contact with the project staff during their confinement or after their release. Those patients put on home care were given psychological tests and an initial workup by the project psychiatrist, then largely left to the supervision of a public-health nurse. In accordance with established practice in clinical trials, only the study director knew which home-care patients were receiving drugs (phenothiazines) and which were receiving inert pills. In all, 152 patients made up the study population: 54 inpatient controls; 57 patients home on drugs; and 41 patients home on placebos.

The results: 44 of the 57 home-care patients with drugs (77 percent) remained continuously out of the hospital. Of the placebo home-care patients, 14 of the 41 (34 percent) remained out during the same period. The 54 patients in the hospital-control group spent an average of 83 days in initial custody; all were eventually released. By the time the study was concluded, 25 of the inpatient controls had been rehospitalized.

The authors conclude that home care for schizophrenics works; that drugs are obviously superior to no drugs in the home care; and that "even after hospitalization and presumable remission of symptoms, the [hospital] con-

trols continued to exhibit greater failure rates when returned home than did the [home-care] drug patients."

The implications of the study, like the design itself, are practical rather than theoretical. The data encourage expansion of home care for schizophrenics rather than institutional care. "Home care offers to all patients continuous management not otherwise possible. . . . This type of continuous care . . . in the absence of knowledge of the etiology or specific treatment of schizophrenia may be, and probably is, the only type of prevention [of hospitalization] available to us now."

The important finding of this study is that home care with drugs is a feasible way of avoiding the degradation and expense of committing a schizophrenic to institutional custody. Beyond this difference in social and financial cost, however, the home-care programs appeared to be no more effective than the inpatient program. Periodic checks run on the patients in all three programs showed that, during a one-year period following admission, the mental status of individual patients improved equally, regardless of the program.

The techniques of community-psychiatry practice itself receive little attention in this book. Patient care appears to have been, for the most part, public-health nursing. Quite possibly, there may have been a considerable amount of interesting training and subsequent "treatment" in the project experience of these public-health nurses, but these are not discussed in this volume.

The book states its findings in a clear and straightforward manner. However, only about 40 percent of the book's 448 pages relates the findings; the rest is nurses'-care notes (80 pages), copies of tests and questionnaires (148 pages), and an appendix of tables. As such, the book is unavoidably rather dull. The authors do not embark upon any analyses of their data that might stray from their primary goal of demonstrating the feasibility of home care with drugs as an alternative to institutional care. The book will provide little of direct academic excitement to the social sciences, but undoubtedly does make a solid and well-executed empirical argument in favor of community-based care programs for psychiatric patients.

Gene G. Kassebaum is associate professor of sociology at American University in Cairo, Egypt.

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