

will be mad. That's good for Kenn On the other side, farm prices this year have been generally good, and Carter's campaign advertising all recalls his own experience as a farmer who understands farmers' problems. Farmers tend to be patriotic folks, and Rosalynn Carter has been telling them that it's every

American's patriotic to support the president in the Afghan crisis, which she and he are claiming is the most serious threat to peace since World War II. Will the farmers vote their pocketbooks or their patriotism? They say they're undecided, which is why there is a deep political fog over Iowa right now.

Morton Kondracke

Jim,
I marked the relevant passage
gm

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Why the UN is so useless.

The League of Frightened Men

by Shirley Hazzard

To act with doubleness towards a man whose own conduct was double, was so near an approach to virtue that it deserved to be called by no meaner name than diplomacy.

Something like this view of George Eliot's may have influenced Iranian leaders in their contemptuous dismissal of Kurt Waldheim last week in Tehran. There was no reason for any of the prevailing factions in Iran to negotiate with an official who had ignored the atrocities of the previous regime, and had made himself an eager instrument of the shah's policy of buying respectability through donations to overseas institutions. Year after year, as Amnesty International presented documented reports of gross violations of human rights in Iran, the United Nations secretariat—supposed custodian of rights—courted funds from the shah and, in return, helped him to furbish his image.

Returning from Tehran, an unnerved Waldheim appeared on ABC's "Issues and Answers." He indignantly denied that the United Nations had done nothing about the abuses of the shah and SAVAK. "I received hundreds and thousands of complaints, and we always dealt with them. We sent them to the—and I even spoke to the Iranians. When I was in Iran two years ago, I did raise the question, but the authorities said that they wouldn't discuss the matter with me." This tragic charade—referring reports of atrocities back to the offending government for consideration—is indeed standard United Nations procedure. It is augmented by the UN Commission on Human Rights, a discredited body presided over for a

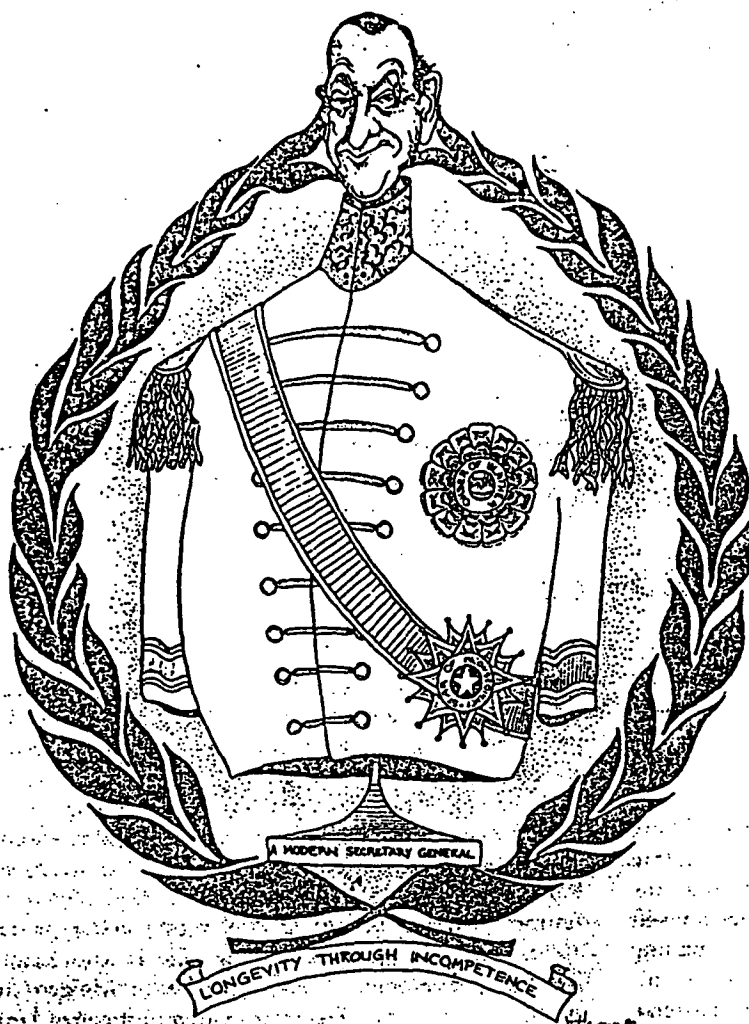
Shirley Hazzard, the novelist, worked 10 years at the United Nations, and is the author of *Defeat of an Ideal* (Atlantic Monthly Press), a documented study of the UN.

time by Princess Ashraf, the sister of the shah.

Princess Ashraf recently placed a full-page ad in some American newspapers to remind Waldheim about his past appreciation of her brother's favors. Her tactless *aide-memoire* included a photograph of a jubilant Waldheim clutching the princess with one hand and a large Pahlavi check with the other. It quoted rhapsodic tributes to the humanitarian ideals of the Pahlavis from Waldheim and his assistant, Mrs. Helvi Sipila. Princess Ashraf chaired a variety of UN rights bodies in the 1970s, and was given a leading role in the chaotic International Women's Conference held at Mexico City in 1975 and made possible by Iranian munificence. Until events overtook them, there were plans for a United Nations training institute for women in Iran, with a proposed Iranian budget of one million dollars. Despite this seeming preoccupation with women's rights, Kurt Waldheim demonstrates massive discrimination against women within his own staff. He showed no support for the Iranian women who bravely marched in thousands last year in Tehran to protest repression by the ayatollah.

During the shah's ascendancy, Waldheim administered an annual award of \$50,000, known as the Pahlavi Prize, paid for by guess-who and conferred for environmental services. The first recipient was Waldheim's own colleague, Maurice Strong, who was leaving the United Nations Environment Program after a short and turbulent career.

When Kurt Waldheim set foot in Iran on New Year's Day, his first utterance was characteristically negative: "You cannot expect from such a first visit to solve immediately all problems. That is not being realistic." Much more unrealistic was his supposition that the world observed the capers of United Nations officials with any residual optimism. Last October, the *Guardian*



drawing by Vint Lawrence

of London discussed Waldheim's role (nonexistent) in ending the Cambodia tragedy: "As so often when anything important is taking place in the world, the UN itself is silent. It is aided, abetted and guided in that silence by the inactivity of the Secretary-General himself. . . . Why does not Kurt Waldheim make a strenuous effort to overcome the deadly punctilio in which his office has taken refuge?"

In fact, the deadly punctilio is organic. The method for selecting secretariat leaders is the only UN official process that can be described as finely honed. United Nations senior officers are systematically chosen for their very lack of moral courage and independent mind. The office of secretary general is the pinnacle on which this negative capability culminates. In Waldheim, the position has found its consummate expression.

Kurt Waldheim was born in Austria in 1918. He came to manhood, as it were, with the Anschluss, dutifully following the normal path by taking part in the Nazi youth movement and serving in Hitler's army in various campaigns including the Eastern Front. To do otherwise would have been to exhibit a rare heroism—and, incidentally, to disqualify himself, had he survived, for the future position of United Nations secretary

general. Unflawed by any such aberration, Waldheim moved on through the Austrian diplomatic service and foreign ministry into the political life of his country, apparently intent on gaining high office. In 1971, shortly before his installation as UN secretary general, he was an unsuccessful candidate for the Austrian presidency. His UN appointment was sought, and possibly attained, through intensive lobbying.

When Waldheim's predecessor, the Burmese U Thant, retired as secretary general, it was—as was remarked of Asquith's fall from power—as if a pin had dropped. Waldheim inherited from Thant a position steeped in self-righteous timidity and administrative incapacity. The first UN secretary general, Trygve Lie—whose background as a labor lawyer and member of Norway's wartime government-in-exile might have promised better—had demolished any germ of a true international civil service by conspiring to violate the charter before its ink was dry. In the UN's infancy, Lie contracted a secret agreement with the United States government whereby Washington was given control over—United Nations administrative procedures. The US used this control to dominate the secretariat for 20 years, with incalculable adverse effect on United Nations potential, and in the end with particularly negative results for the United States.

The most powerful member of the United Nations secretariat in the organization's formative years was not Trygve Lie, but the administrative chief, Byron Price, an American of destructive tendencies who was in effect Washington's chief covert agent at UN headquarters. During the McCarthy years, the secretariat administration expelled, repelled, persecuted, intimidated, or alienated virtually every free-thinking employee in its senior and intermediate grades. This left a dross from which the present administrative edifice was formed. The danger to be avoided, in the view of member governments, was the possibility that a truly international civil service might be created, in accordance with the provisions of the United Nations Charter, to represent the moral principles that governments were likely to ignore. The organization was convulsed over this issue for six years. Lie's legal officer, an American, committed suicide, and Lie himself, along with Byron Price, eventually resigned—but not before they had installed a branch of the United States Federal Bureau of Investigation at UN headquarters, on international territory, for the purpose of "screening" the staff. The FBI office was retained by Dag Hammarskjöld until it had completed its "task." No senior UN official was heard to object.

Despite its systematic exclusion of persons of character from the secretariat, and its rejection of candidates with even a mild show of unorthodoxy in their backgrounds, the United Nations administration has knowingly recruited, and retained in prolonged employment at senior grades, agents of the KGB and CIA—and, presumably, of every other national secret police on earth. That is entirely consistent with a UN precept that the only unforgivable offense a senior official can commit is to lose the endorsement of the relevant member government—not necessarily his own. When the double agent Shevchenko defected to the United States last year from his high UN post, it was announced that even though he had violated every contractual obligation, his UN pension would be paid. The former head of the United Nations mission in Cyprus, Prince Alfred zur Lippe-Weissenfeld, who resigned last September after repeated complaints from the government of Cyprus about his massive thefts of Cypriot antiquities, also will receive his UN annuity.

Waldheim's own past presented no obstacle to his United Nations appointment. When the United Nations was founded, former members of fascist organizations in the belligerent states were declared ineligible for UN service. But this prohibition was rescinded quietly in 1952, at the very time when rigorous provisions were introduced against infusions of nonconformity. To have embraced a status quo, fascist or otherwise, apparently connoted the desired team mentality. What the United Nations abhorred was individual distinction. This view follows the precedent set in the 1930s by the League of Nations, whose officials declined to recognize the plight of German and Austrian Jews.

The field of human rights is where the United Nations secretariat had, and cast away, its supreme opportunity. In the intensifying violence of the last three decades, United Nations bodies of human rights and the leaders of the UN secretariat have remained virtually silent: about American ravages in Asia, and about Pol Pot; about genocide in Biafra and Indonesia, starvation in Ethiopia, torture in Greece, Chile, Argentina, Guatemala, the Philippines, and Uganda; about punitive mutilation in Saudi Arabia, and about the vast prison network of the Soviet Union.

Into the vacuum created by United Nations inaction on human rights has come an active humanitarianism by individuals and private agencies that has gradually formed itself into a moral force—a force of the kind that a different United Nations might have inspired and led. This is the most hopeful development of the past decade. Organizations like Amnesty International operate with voluntary contributions: they offer their workers no exorbitant salaries or inane revels, and no delusions of self-importance. Nevertheless, they mobilize inestimable resources of human fellowship and proper indignation, and have assumed the task that the United Nations, with its colossal funds and massive bureaucracy, would not attempt. Only since the human

rights movement burgeoned into a force not to be ignored has the United Nations made any effort to overcome its own paralysis in this area. Even so, Amnesty International has received no action on any of the thousands of documented cases it has submitted to the United Nations over many years.

In his Nobel address, Alexandr Solzhenitsyn denounced the United Nations as a place where individuals have no voice or right of appeal:

It is not a United Nations organization but a United Governments organization . . . which has cravenly set itself against investigating private grievances—the groans, cries and entreaties of single, simple individuals . . . and abandoned ordinary persons to the mercy of regimes not of their choosing.

Solzhenitsyn cannot address the United Nations. Terrorists bearing arms can address UN assemblies, but not the moral heroes and martyrs of our violent age. The only notable recognition of his existence that Solzhenitsyn has received from the United Nations was a clandestine attempt by Waldheim and his associates, at the Soviets' behest, to suppress his works in commercial bookshops on United Nations territory. Meanwhile in Moscow, in September 1977, Waldheim presented Leonid Brezhnev with the United Nations peace medal, "in recognition of his considerable and fruitful activities in favor of universal peace and people's security."

Each December a handful of Soviet citizens demonstrate to commemorate the promulgation of the United Nations Universal Declaration of Human Rights. They are inevitably and invariably arrested by the Soviet police within moments of their appearance. No UN medals have been conferred on them, nor has a United Nations official ever publicly raised a voice on their behalf.

The UN secretariat is a disordered and hypertrophic institution whose continuance, as a United Nations official recently remarked, "defies the laws of logic and gravity." This is reflected in the quality of all United Nations services, most tragically in the conception and execution of relief programs and technological aid. A systematic public inquiry into the competence of UN management and its cost effectiveness is overdue. It would be interesting to compare the true proportion of the budget spent on administrative costs in UN projects to that in private relief agencies. The United States Senate Committee on Government Operations found in 1977 that United Nations salaries and material benefits ran 50 percent to 650 percent higher than the corresponding rewards to United States civil servants.

Any effort to shed light on this pleonexia is characterized by the United Nations as a blow to world peace. Generally it arouses the only show of moral outrage at which UN circles excel. In the past year, realistic reporting on the United Nations by Morton Mintz of the *Washington Post* and a series in the same

paper by Ronald Kessler about UN finances brought hysterical denunciation from both the United Nations and the US State Department. Charles Maynes, assistant secretary of state for international organizations, confirmed that Kessler's statistics were accurate, but told the *Post* that "an article on the overall financial situation of the UN system would be used unfairly by political critics of the United Nations." Maynes said that a story on the subject "will do tremendous damage to the United Nations. . . . The damage will be incredible. It will be devastating." And so on.

United Nations officials were not called upon to testify at the cursory congressional inquiry that followed the *Post* story because, as a congressional aide explained, "the United Nations prohibits its employees from testifying before a member country's legislative committees." As it happens, dozens of American United Nations employees did appear many years ago before the McCarran Internal Security Subcommittee, which made political sport of them and ruined their careers. Not only did the UN administration make no objection to this procedure, but it made clear that any employee who refused the summons would be dismissed.

It is hard to see how significant reform of the present United Nations system could ever be effected. In any case, a juster system, based on merit as decreed by the UN Charter, could not be introduced without scuttling the corrupt political basis of the present bureaucracy. It is among the intermediate and junior staff of the United Nations that decency has lingered, like a trace of archaic culture in a totalitarian state. The extirpations of early years silenced resistance for a generation, and the staff in general remains an extremely conditioned and intimidated group. Nevertheless, with the entry of younger people into the lower and middle grades,

where appointments are not yet exclusively dictated by governments, some courage has filtered back.

The labor mediator Theodore Kheel recently has undertaken, for a nominal fee, to represent the UN staff in its struggle with the administration. Kheel says that he has never encountered anything approaching the UN administration's authoritarian attitude in 40 years of labor mediation, and compares the UN leadership to "the court of Henry VIII." Kheel says, "Waldheim would be a better international mediator if he'd eschew the role of ayatollah toward his own staff."

When Pliable, in *The Pilgrim's Progress*, turned back at the Slough of Despond and found his way home, he was at first "held greatly in derision among all sorts of people." But soon he recovered confidence. In Waldheim's case, too, with his recent excursion to Iran, the hollowness of his office has been only briefly exposed. But the question of Waldheim's reelection is imminent, and the Iranian debacle—which has yet to run its course—may put an end to his United Nations career. This could provide an opportunity for the public, for the first time, to observe and criticize the appointment of his successor.

Throughout the modern world, fear has created a heightened consciousness of human rights. The rise of active human rights agencies outside the United Nations suggests the form that a future world body might take. Whether public apprehension can be engaged toward the creation of rational international instruments depends, to a large extent, on serious treatment of this theme in the world's press, where it has as yet been little explored. Having almost no realistic information on the United Nations, the public cannot frame hard questions, and takes the organization at the UN's own trivial valuation, as an innocuous captive of incompatible national demands.

What the gold rush says about the 'modern' economy.

A Cross of Paper

by William J. Quirk

The world of gold is not one for two-dollar betters. Credit Suisse will accept less than five million dollars but the serious investor should have at least this much to start. The gold bar customarily used in international transactions weighs 400 ounces. Gold produces no

return except for its own potential rise in value, and there are costs connected with holding it. Not an investment for people worried about their heating bills.

In deep vaults beneath Wall Street and the Bahnhof Strasse in Zurich, there is room after room filled with gold bars. Most of the world's gold is held under the tightest security in a few great vaults. White-haired guards, like old family retainers, preside over the

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I went to Palm Beach last week, not because it's one of my favorite watering holes but because there are some charities whose boards can muster a winter quorum only if they meet there. I'm on two such, which meant two days in Palm—the devotee shorthand—providentially arranged one after another. It has been a refuge for the big rich away from the mere middling rich: there are no taxis in town, and that's not because the winter residents are big walkers. Worth Avenue is still the plaid slacks version of the Via Condotti and Rodeo Drive. But Hamburger Heaven is open for breakfast, catering to folk whose servants aren't sleep-ins. That's the fate of the thousands of new condominium owners, 10 or 15 of whom may cluster together in one of the many huge mansions that once accommodated single big-name families. There are also less attractive condos, with hundreds of units each. So nothing is immune to change, and nothing hastens change so dramatically as an economic squeeze. A team of specialists from Christie's was in town when I was, not to hold a splashy auction of old masters or modish minors but to appraise the inherited wares of the locals. It's not simply because I couldn't find *TNR* at the comprehensive magazine shop that I assume the citizenry has yet to discover the joys of reading. But one local publication, *Palm Beach Life*, does include real reading matter. The issue I saw featured an article on identity, titled "Who I Am," and a piece on DeBrett's, the service which, for a fee, will help you discover your noble origins. Another, *Palm Beach Illustrated*, is just that, big on pictures of residents in black tie and evening gown. Ambassadors from Latin American dictatorships are frequent guests at their frequent parties. Palm Beach does have a more prosaic life—a government, for example. The city council has just banned shirtless jogging. It's a deadly boring and bored town. My evidence? Even if it took a three-dollar discount off the regular Round Table luncheon tab to bring out a crowd, 250 people actually showed up to hear George McGovern speak against the Moral Majority. But, you should be told, it was raining.

Dr. Waldheim's campaign to succeed himself as secretary-general of the UN has already begun. In trying to show an equitable hand he's even come close to

apologizing to Israel for the now disproven charge that its troops detonated the bodies of some Palestinian terrorists. They'd been slain as they embarked on one of their missions which, though quite like those of the despised IRA, commend them to Britain's Lord Carrington. It's characteristic of Waldheim's UN, however, that it was more exercised over the disposition of some Arab corpses than it ever gets over the taking of Jewish life. Whoever becomes secretary-general is likely, these days, to be anti-Israel. It's likely, though, that the US could get a fairer deal from a Venezuelan or Nigerian or Kenyan than it will ever receive from the incumbent. But he's impertinent enough to try to placate America anyway. He has, for example, finally appointed a special representative on Afghanistan, mandated a year ago by the General Assembly. What he hasn't done is start preparing for the international conference on Kampuchea, similarly mandated by the assembly. You know why. Such a gathering would really offend his Russian patrons: it couldn't be controlled as easily as the secretary general's emissary. The Soviets, in fact, have controlled Waldheim himself ever since they put him over the top against the then favorite for the secretariat, the Finnish independent socialist diplomat (and Jew), Max Jacobson. On the surface, Waldheim was a strange choice for the Kremlin. Though he tried to fabricate an anti-Nazi past, the record proves otherwise. In any case, he was an officer on the Russian front in a unit that performed tasks of massacring innocents such as were carried out in other countries by the SS and Gestapo. This would have disqualified Waldheim in Soviet eyes had they not quickly recognized in him someone who possessed every attribute of an officer of the Third Reich except courage. He'd do their bidding, they guessed, and he has. Maybe a Nazi past doesn't count anymore. The current president of the General Assembly, West Germany's Baron Rudiger von Wechmar, who served with General Rommel, observed that his election "marks international approval that 1933-45 is forgotten." So the case against Waldheim must be made in more contemporaneous terms. It's dynamite. One of his deputies for political affairs, Viktor M. Lisiovsky, is an agent of the Soviet secret police, a violation of the UN charter. Waldheim's adminis-

tration, moreover, is riddled with scandal and corruption, extortion, prostitution, kickbacks, nepotism, etc. The UN Disaster Relief Agency barely functions at all. Pierre Salinger has amply exposed Waldheim's duplicities in Iran. It's now time for State to make it clear that Waldheim is unacceptable to the US for an unprecedented third term. This would not be a pleasant experience since, as a Polish proverb has it, it is a terrible thing to swim against the current in a dirty river.

Most of the hostages have shown restraint in not trying to make money from their ordeal in Iran. Not so two of Jimmy Carter's nearest and dearest, Hamilton Jordan and Gerald Rife, who are making a six-part special for CBS about what must be the single greatest ignominy of their administration. In the meantime almost every day brings forth new evidence of just how craven and asymmetrical, from the American point of view, the one-minute-before-midnight agreement with Iran is. You didn't have to master the arcana of the arrangement to understand that claims of American corporations against Iran were in trouble. But it probably didn't occur to you to ask, well, it didn't occur to me, about claims in American courts by Iran and Iranians against American businesses. These, it turns out, were still safe and protected. The Lick Corporation was about to be forced to satisfy a \$30 million judgment against it on behalf of an Iranian bank when a federal district judge in Massachusetts wisely interfered, putting this case in the context of the larger dispute. One of the firms that had won a judgment against Iran and whose \$20 million victory was to be nullified by the agreement is swashbuckling H. Ross Perot's Electronic Data Systems. He has now gotten a federal court in Texas to slow the transfer of frozen assets to Iran, pending further adjudication of constitutional issues by the courts. Whatever you may think of the greedy group now in power in Washington—and there isn't much leeway in what you can think about folk so greedy—just imagine how humiliating it would be if Carter were still president and his lawyers were going into court to defend their agreement and arguing against Americans and American businesses on behalf of the ayatollah's hench-

So Money magazine, TIME
New Republic, MAR '81 (DIPLO from State)