

various places. However, when such changes do take place, we shall furnish full information to those libraries which will be affected and request their consideration and cooperation.

In summary, let me state that the Census Bureau will continue to issue the statistical reports which you use in your reference work with the same care and consideration that has governed the preparation of these reports in the past. It will continue to prepare and issue the catalogs, announcements and other material which will help you use these publica-

tions, and, if you indicate your needs in the way of finding media and other aids, we will prepare and furnish them to the extent that our facilities permit. We will continue to encourage the maintenance of strategically placed collections of census publications and rely on the librarians, in turn, to make these collections available to the public and to encourage their use. Finally we shall appreciate any suggestion for the improvement of our publications from the principal retailers of our data, the librarians.

By JAMES H. MACBRIDE

A Subject Approach to United Nations Documents

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A BIBLIOGRAPHY of some proportion is growing around the documents issued by the United Nations and its Specialized Agencies.¹ However the viewpoint taken by nearly every author in the past has been descriptive in nature. Thus we have a list of sources, exclusive of certain official documents of the Secretariat, the United Nations Library, and the United Nations Archives, which gives us sufficient detail concerning types of documents, associated symbols, and organs of issuance. It should be pointed out that the stress has been placed on the mimeographed document originating from sources within the United Nations proper. The publications of the Specialized Agencies have been somewhat neglected. The printed document, other than the various *Official Records*, has received even less attention although it presents problems of equal magnitude, if somewhat different in nature. Mr. Jerome K. Wilcox of the City College of New York has suggested that the gap which exists at present in the above bibliography in regard to the Specialized Agencies might well be a subject for future research.²

After having visited a few libraries in the

East, the Mid-West, and the West, it is believed that there is a felt need for a more definitive line of approach to the research and reference use of all of the United Nations documents.³ Specifically the need as expressed is not one of description or organization but rather one for tools for use in entering the large mass of variegated material *quickly and easily*. Many questions might be raised at this point, but let us begin with an assumption: the documents of the United Nations and of the Specialized Agencies should not be separated from one another, but instead should be placed if not in a collection at least in a common shelf area. This point is vital in terms of ready *physical and subject* access to both the documents and the information contained in them. Separation of the documents into the stack area under various systems of classification means 1. that full cataloging is necessary, 2. that time is wasted in securing the documents, and 3. that related pieces of information are frequently "lost" to the reader through being so far dispersed in space or in the catalog. Therefore, acting under this assumption, logical and pragmatic considerations demand that we emphasize:

1. the basic importance of the mimeographed document
2. the binding of these documents and of the

¹ Moor, Carol Carter and Chamberlain, Waldo, *How to Use United Nations Documents*, New York, New York University Press, 1952, p. 22.

² Letter to J. H. MacBride dated April 29, 1953. Mr. Wilcox points out that "... a paper ... (on) the Care, Treatment, and Handling of United Nations Specialized Agency Material by Designated Depository Libraries ..." would be both new and useful.

³ The libraries visited were those of Harvard College, Massachusetts Institute of Technology, Yale University, City College of New York, New York University, The United Nations Library, University of Pennsylvania, University of Michigan, University of Illinois, Washington State College, University of Colorado, Los Angeles Public Library. However, unless stated otherwise, the views in this article are those of the author.

- later printed versions
3. the academic use of the documentation
 4. the establishment of broad, overall subject cores around which definitive subject bibliographies may be arranged
 5. the setting up of an abstracting service.

THE MIMEOGRAPHED DOCUMENT

Now anyone who has worked with United Nations documents even to the slightest degree recognizes the difficulties of gaining a *complete* subject entry which will lead directly from somewhat limited areas of research into broader areas or vice versa. This is particularly true of the literally thousands upon thousands of mimeographed documents issued since 1946 by the present and past organs and sub-organs, standing and temporary committees, not to mention the Specialized Agencies. These documents represent a fundamental collection of primary source material, the importance of which cannot be overemphasized. Why are they basic materials? The answer lies in the fact that no one has any clear idea as to how many of them appear in the final printed *Official Record*. Cassidy has pointed out also that "The mimeographed documents are the most inclusive, containing all published material. . . ."⁴ Other questions remain.

Should the student or research fellow be led to the mimeographed document first, or should he be shown the printed versions? What difficulties arise if mimeographed documents are not available, have been destroyed deliberately or inadvertently, or lost? How, beside detailed searching, may one locate a mimeographed document in the *Official Records*, having a footnote citation given as the question source, assuming no mimeograph collection?⁵ Now these among others, are questions of first importance. It would appear that answers are necessary to efficient reference and research service.

In answer to the first suggestion as to the relations of the mimeographed documents to the printed *Official Records*, research is currently being carried on at Michigan State Col-

⁴ Cassidy, Thomas R., "United Nations Documents in the Medium Sized University—Nuisance or Necessity?", *College and Research Libraries*, 13:107-110, April, 1952.

⁵ Cassidy, *op. cit.*, also raised the same point, ". . . the greatest disadvantage of using the *Official Records* as a substitute for a set of mimeographed documents is the difficulty of locating a document which has been reprinted there." It might also be pointed out that there is no means of knowing whether a document has been printed or not. The research mentioned later in this article should solve this difficulty.

lege which should give an answer from 1946 on, although we are, at present, using the years 1950-53 as a sample basis. The years previous to 1950 will be completed at a later date. In answer to the question about the primacy of the mimeographed documents, no library serving a graduate student body and a research faculty can afford to be without them. They represent, historiographically speaking, *primary source material*. The cost, in terms of the coverage gained and research questions answered, is relatively slight, approximately \$250 a year for the United Nations documents proper.

The third question has already been partially answered in the assertion that these documents should be made available. If they are in the possession of a library they should never be destroyed, since they are fundamental. The next question concerning citation will be solved, it is hoped, with the completion of another piece of research which will eventuate into a complete listing in numerical order of the mimeographed documents appearing in the printed *Official Records* from 1946-1953 of the main organs of the United Nations.

SUBJECT ENTRY AND BINDING

Let us now consider binding, not formalistically as a protective means (although this is most important for the preservation of the mimeographed documents) but academically as a means of subject entry. Those libraries possessing even a partial set of League of Nations documents have experienced binding and index difficulties, resulting in a use difficulty. Few libraries to date have established a clear, concise, and workable binding policy for United Nations documents, mimeographed or printed. Yet in many ways as is illustrated by Carroll and Signor,⁶ the documentation of both is similar and presents similar difficulties. In the United Nations collection, the question is one of use and of subject use primarily. Since in this tremendously hard to digest mass of material, entry is the problem, *proper* binding may be one of the answers.

For example, research people are by reason of their task narrow-minded and "definitive"

⁶ Carroll, Marie J., "League of Nations Documents and Publications Comparable with or Continued in United Nations Publications," *College and Research Libraries*, 13:44-53, January, 1952.

Signor, Nelle, "United Nations versus League of Nations Documentation," *Special Libraries*, 43:62-64, February, 1952.

people. They are interested in their subject and its possible ramifications only. Therefore, it is suggested that servicing their subject requests may be facilitated with the use of the following:

1. In the case of the *Official Records* of the General Assembly and the Economic and Social Council particularly, specific subject divisions are available year after year. Here it is possible to bind such documents as the *Annual Report of the Secretary-General*, the various committees,⁷ and certain supplements⁸ together into single volumes.

2. Similar treatment may be afforded the mimeographed documents with the added advantage that due to the separate nature of this material, the Security Council, the Secretariat, and the Trusteeship Council publications may be added to the others pointed out above. Otherwise binding these by symbol or annually leads to tremendous entry difficulties and forces automatic use of the *United Nations Documents Index*.

3. A possible variation, suggested by Miss Nelle Signor of the University of Illinois, is that the mimeographed and official versions of the same documents may be bound together, thus giving all primary source materials to the user at once.

The basic idea then is a simple one. Bind together all those materials pertaining to the *Official Records* of the various organs of the United Nations which year by year have a similar subject approach. Of course, this is acting on the assumption that we wish to hold the documents together with the view of reducing to a minimum the effort involved in gaining ready access by the researcher and of limiting the interim step usually needed of the aid of a librarian.

There is no real problem in binding the Reports of the Plenary Meetings. Their very size dictates that only one volume may be bound at a time. Nonetheless, they may be shelved together and entry gained through *United Nations Documents Index* and as sug-

⁷ Reference is made here to the Main Committees of the General Assembly of which there are six. The Procedural Committees, two in number, may be handled as subject divisions as well. The Standing Committees offer in their publications a very similar possibility. The Ad Hoc Committees must be handled very carefully as their special purposes inevitably lead to special subjects.

⁸ The General Assembly is more consistent than is the Economic and Social Council in the handling of its supplemental material by one subject. Nonetheless, the Economic and Social Council, in its later years, has begun a similar publishing policy so that subject binding is possible.

gested below. The Specialized Agencies issue material which is rather easily handled from a subject binding viewpoint as, in great proportion, it is divided, as, for example, in the publications of the Food and Agriculture Organization, into studies, reports, and missions. However, care should be exercised due to the fact that a large number of Specialized Agency publications deal with one subject and one subject only.

In fact then the question of correlating subject entry and binding may be posed as follows: Is it not feasible to work out a *standard* method of binding United Nations documents so as to gain another means of subject entry? Perhaps, in this fashion, coupled with the numerical list of mimeographed documents appearing in the *Official Records* mentioned above, we would have the beginnings of a subject approach which would channelize the research person's efforts and as well save the librarian's time. I am, of course, neglecting as obvious the *United Nations Documents Index* and the relatively new *Check Lists* as means of entry.

While the mimeographed and printed documents are important in everyday use, there is the fact that since the use of United Nations documentation is primarily restricted to college and university libraries, with the exception of certain of the larger public libraries, the problem of academic use by the undergraduate, graduate students, and faculty members needs to be considered. A case history may illustrate this need.

ACADEMIC USE OF DOCUMENTS AND SUBJECT BIBLIOGRAPHIES

Michigan State College has been faced with the situation of setting up and organizing the documents of the United Nations and its Specialized Agencies in terms of the use demanded by the departments of political science, history, economics, home economics, and certain of the biological sciences. In particular our department of political science, which is a rapidly growing, young, and vigorous department, has several courses and seminars on international relations and a course in the United Nations. The latter course is given at least twice a year, while the seminars and classes in international relations occur somewhat more frequently. Therefore, there is a constant demand on the collection. We are confronted continually with questions such as

these which originated in the United Nations course:

1. In considering the Greek border troubles from 1946 to 1952, consider the applicability of the following:
 - a. What are the principal elements involved in the problem?
 - b. What United Nations organ(s) have dealt with the problem? How extensive has their consideration been?
 - c. What are the attitudes expressed by some of the countries which were most active in debate?
 - d. What decisions were reached, if any? In what form were these decisions? What was to follow the decisions, if anything?
 - e. What were the votes of the Member states on the decisions?
 - f. What degree of success or failure do you think is shown in the United Nations proceedings on this matter?

In servicing the home economics department, while the demand is restricted to one or two quarters, the information needed has proved to be so extensive that an annotated and indexed bibliography of food and agriculture documents was prepared. It has proved invaluable. Other such bibliographies are in preparation. (A limited number of copies will be available upon request. It should be emphasized that they are necessarily in a preparatory stage.)

Now the annotated bibliography and the index accompanying it are unfortunately only a partial solution. For example in answering faculty questions developing out of the research of the political science department, the typical solution was laid in the matrix of gathering together *all* material on a given *subject*, such as Bacterial Warfare. Now the *United Nations Documents Index* and *Check Lists*, were, of course, the only means of entry for such questions. However, a number of hours were spent in determining that full coverage was afforded. This included the last, up-to-the-minute mimeographed document. As a consequence of the experienced difficulties, there are being developed subject bibliographies on the "Disposition of former Italian Colonies (1947-1952)," "United States Administration of the Trust Territory of the Pacific Islands," and "The Expanded Technical Assistance Program." (These will also be available upon completion.) Other subjects are being considered.

It is not suggested that the *United Nations Documents Index*, the *Check Lists*, the *Year-books*, and other sources such as the *United Nations Bulletin* may be disposed of categorically, but it is certain that hours of time are consumed by the servicer and the researcher in attempting to gain full coverage of a research topic when they are used as the *only* means of entry. They must be *at least* supplemented by such subject bibliographies as are outlined above. This is of evident truth when one considers the troubles suffered now by traditional library organization and the newer difficulties experienced by such libraries as are organized on a divisional principle, as is the case with Washington State College, and will no doubt be experienced by ourselves in the new library which will presumably soon begin construction at Michigan State College and which will likewise be organized on the divisional basis.

In the divisional libraries, the documents of the United Nations might of course, be separated and placed in the various reading rooms. This would be a subject division, but what of the marginal documents? However, if this is done, it means either subject cataloging (an impossible task), duplicate copies of the *United Nations Documents Index*, and the *Check Lists*, or an intimate knowledge of the entire documentation by several people. None of this is desirable. Instead the documents should be shelved together complete with the various aids afforded by the United Nations and *full research bibliographical entries derived from current use by research individuals and by the efforts of the librarian in charge*.

Enough has been said to indicate that the first task at hand is not to rely entirely on the indexing service of the United Nations. While it is a rather good substitute at present for cataloging entry on a subject basis,⁹ it does not give *in one place* sufficient coverage to enable the research faculty member, the undergraduate, the graduate student, or the

⁹ Mr. Andrew D. Osborn of Harvard College Library has pointed out in a letter dated May 14, 1953 that "The *United Nations Documents Index* acts as a checking medium for acquisition purposes, as a catalog record for the holdings of depository libraries, and as a reference tool. So the whole of our library organization needs to be built around the index as far as the UN collection is concerned. For one thing, that means holding the collection together to a high degree. For another, it means we should be on our toes to see how effective the *United Nations Documents Index* is so we can pass word to the United Nations Library as improvements are needed."

reference librarian to gain quickly and readily the necessary insight into the many and various questions raised by themselves and others. Nor is it easy to use due to the method of numbered entries in its subject index.

It is to be emphasized therefore that two approaches around which definitive subject bibliographies may be arranged are necessary: 1. There must be established standard subject cores of research use, and 2. there must be established more narrow subject areas for the smaller definitive problems of research and class use which continually develop. The latter may be derived on an empirical basis being revised continually.

ABSTRACTING SERVICE

Mr. Rudolf Hirsch of the University of Pennsylvania has suggested that "qualitative selection would be made easier if a good abstracting service could be developed."¹⁰ He suggests as well that "spoon feeding" may be

¹⁰ Letter to J. H. MacBride dated May 14, 1953. It is of interest to note that Mr. Hirsch feels "concerning undergraduate use, the question arises whether it is important to create interest where there is little evidence of self-expressed desire to use original United Nations sources. If the answer is in the affirmative, it would seem important to provide easier access to, and organization of, United Nations publications."

undesirable in this connection. As a comment upon this, I would say that as long as undergraduates and beginning graduate students find United Nations material to be of use to them in their work, certainly such a service would not be amiss. It goes without saying that it would be of value to others on the campus. Naturally enough it would be difficult to organize, administer, and maintain. Nevertheless it is believed that it would be entirely feasible for a *collaborative* service to be organized between several of the larger colleges and universities, if not on a private basis. To my knowledge nothing has been done on this aspect of bibliographical procedure. It is a challenge to all of us. Are there any "takers?"

CONCLUSION

An attempt has been made in the above to raise questions and issues not argumentatively but rather provocatively. Deliberately no answers in the definitive sense are to be found, but the answers suggested *work*. I should like to hear from anyone interested in continuing any of the notions which interest them with particular emphasis on the subject bibliographies as a means of gaining full coverage of past and current United Nations materials.

ACRL at the Midwinter Meeting

The Midwinter Meeting emphasizes the business needs of the Association, but a number of programs of general interest have been arranged by the section chairmen. ACRL will not have a general session. A very short business meeting will be held after the College Section program on the evening of Wednesday, February 3. The various programs are listed in full in the January *ALA Bulletin*.

Since a number of university librarians will be attending the ARL meeting on January 31, the University Section was scheduled for Tuesday afternoon, February 2, the first day. The ACRL Board of Directors will also meet February 2, in the morning and again in the evening.

Wednesday afternoon, February 3, finds Orwin Rush scheduled to speak on his Fulbright year in England at the Reference Section meeting. Wyllis Wright and Eileen Thornton are the feature speakers for the College Section that evening.

Thursday morning and afternoon are given over to ALA Council. That evening the Pure and Applied Science Section will dine at a nearby restaurant (\$2.50 in advance to Arthur T. Hamlin, 50 East Huron St., Chicago) and then hear committee reports and discuss several interesting new projects. The Junior College Section meets the same evening to hear a paper on *Periodicals in the Junior College Library*, and discuss statistics and standards.

The Teacher Training Institutions Section meets Friday afternoon to discuss the section on libraries (VII) of the Association of Colleges for Teacher Education Visitation Program.

The chief business of Midwinter is of course conducted by the various boards and committees, whose meetings are limited to members. Time and place of these closed meetings will be posted in the Hotel Morrison. ACRL will as usual have a desk in the hotel along with other ALA offices.