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Greater U.S. Government Efforts Needed to Recruit Qualified Candidates for Employment by U.N. Organizations. ID-77-14. May 16, 1977. 43 pp.

Report to Sen. Abraham Ribicoff, Chairman, Senate Committee on Governmental Affairs; by Elmer B. Staats, Comptroller General.

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The United States is the largest financial contributor to the United Nations and its specialized agencies, but few Americans are employed by the United Nations.

Findings/Conclusions: Only in the U.N. Secretariat is the United States within its "desirable range," the criteria for which are based on financial contributions, membership, and a geographically distributed allocation of positions. U.S. nationals held few senior management level and field-expert level positions. Constraints on hiring Americans are pressure from developing countries to hire more of their nationals and financial difficulties in the agencies which have caused personnel freezes. In addition, some agencies considered Americans' general lack of foreign language ability and international experience and the U.S. requirement of loyalty clearances to be drawbacks in hiring Americans. The U.N. system seemed to lack appeal to Americans, because there is no career development system, the selection period is too lengthy, and the resettling of a family in a foreign environment is traumatic. Salaries seem not to be a problem anymore. U.S. recruiting efforts are not coordinated among concerned agencies, are poorly emphasized, are oriented more towards finding jobs than qualified people, used narrow sources, and concentrated on undefined key positions. Recruiting efforts should be improved.

Recommendations: Realistic long-range targets for attaining optimum U.S. participation should be developed. An annual positive action plan detailing specific targets should be prepared. U.N. personnel systems should be reformed to streamline the long selection process and develop a better career system. Implementation of the positive action plan should be reported on annually. (SS)

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02241

**REPORT TO THE SENATE  
COMMITTEE ON GOVERNMENTAL  
AFFAIRS**



**BY THE COMPTROLLER GENERAL  
OF THE UNITED STATES**

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**Greater U.S. Government Efforts  
Needed To Recruit Qualified  
Candidates For Employment  
By U.N. Organizations**

**Department of State and Other Federal Agencies**

The success of U.N. organizations in achieving efficiency and effectiveness depends upon the quality of their professional staffs. The United States has a major stake in the quality of the employees hired and can assist U.N. operations by providing highly qualified American candidates.

GAO points out some of the problems encountered in locating and hiring Americans for U.N. organizations and makes recommendations for improving the U.S. recruiting system and increasing American professional participation in U.N. organizations.



COMPTROLLER GENERAL OF THE UNITED STATES  
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20548

B-168767

The Honorable Abraham Ribicoff  
Chairman, Committee on Governmental  
Affairs  
United States Senate

Dear Mr. Chairman:

Your letter of July 30, 1976, advised us of the Committee's current examination of United States involvement in international organizations and asked that our previous work in this area be updated. This report responds to your request for our current views on the employment of Americans in international organizations.

In the report we comment on the problems encountered in locating and hiring Americans for U.N. organizations. The principal concern, however, continues to be a need to improve the U.S. recruiting system and increase American professional participation. Since this subject was discussed in your recent Committee report, we hope our recommendations will assist you and the other Committee members.

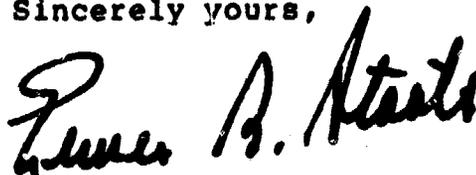
In order to expedite the report, we did not follow our usual practice of obtaining written agency comments on the draft report. We did, however, discuss the report matters with responsible officials of the agencies concerned and considered their views in finalizing the report.

This report contains several recommendations to the Secretary of State concerning improvements needed in various policy and management areas. As you know, section 236 of the Legislative Reorganization Act of 1970 requires the head of a Federal agency to submit a written statement on actions taken on our recommendations to the Senate Committee on Governmental Affairs and the House Committee on Government Operations within 60 days and to the House and Senate Committees on Appropriations with the agency's first request for appropriations made more than 60 days after the date of the report.

B-168767

As agreed with your office, we plan to distribute this report to the agencies involved and other appropriate congressional committees.

Sincerely yours,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Luther B. Stant". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial 'L' and 'S'.

Comptroller General  
of the United States

COMPTROLLER GENERAL'S  
REPORT TO THE SENATE  
COMMITTEE ON GOVERNMENTAL  
AFFAIRS

GREATER U.S. GOVERNMENT  
EFFORTS NEEDED TO RECRUIT  
QUALIFIED CANDIDATES FOR  
EMPLOYMENT BY U.N. ORGANIZATIONS  
Department of State and  
Other Federal Agencies

D I G E S T

The success of the United Nations and its specialized agencies in fostering international understanding, cooperation, and development depends on the quality of their professional staffs. The United States has a major interest in these staffs because it is the largest financial contributor to the U.N. system and relies on the organizations to execute multilateral development projects valued at millions of dollars. The United States can assist these organizations and improve its participation in them by providing highly qualified American candidates.

GAO reported previously on the low number of Americans working in the U.N. organizations, and made recommendations for improving the U.S. recruiting system. However, the Department of State has done little to improve the situation. In the seven organizations GAO reviewed, the level of U.S. employment is about the same as or lower than the 1973 level.

Under criteria established by five of the organizations themselves, the employment of Americans is relatively low in the Food and Agriculture Organization, World Health Organization, U.N. Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization, and International Labor Organization. Only in the U.N. Secretariat is the United States within its "desirable range" of employment--the level at which a member country is considered adequately represented. The organizations do not establish firm quotas for employment or designate specific positions for nationalities. However, the desirable ranges are based primarily on financial contributions and membership and indicate an allocation of positions subject to geographic distribution.

The other two organizations, the International Telecommunications Union and U.N. Development Program, do not have criteria. Based on the U.S. contributions to the budgets, however, the United States appears to be participating fairly well.

Also, at the senior management level, the United States has relatively low participation. In the organizations that GAO reviewed, Americans held 12.1 percent of the director positions and above.

U.S. nationals held few of the field expert positions--assignments given to experts who carry out development assistance projects in developing countries. Despite the apparent abundance of technical experts in the United States in medicine, agriculture, communications, and other fields, Americans generally held less than 10 percent of field positions. U.S. recruiters contend that they devote few resources to field positions because they are not key policymaking positions. (See ch. 2.)

There are constraints on hiring Americans, as well as pressure from developing countries.

--Developing countries, demanding more and more positions within the organizations, are applying pressure on the organizations to hire more of their nationals and to lower the number of positions allocated to large contributors, including the United States.

--Most of these organizations are experiencing financial constraints which have prompted personnel freezes and cutbacks. These are making it difficult to hire outside candidates, including Americans.

According to U.S. and organization officials, employment in the U.N. system lacks appeal to many Americans because:

--The organizations lack a career development system which will attract highly qualified people and assure them of promotion possibilities within the organizations. This causes qualified candidates to remain in their current U.S. jobs, or if Americans do take a job with the organizations they tend to leave after a relatively short time.

--The organizations take a long time to select a candidate; as a result, many American candidates from universities and private industry lose interest or take other jobs in the fast-moving U.S. job market.

--Salaries, a traditional problem in attracting Americans, apparently pose less of a problem now since salaries in the U.N. system have increased. Only a few of the organizations cited salaries as a problem, and then mainly in attracting highly paid private industry employees.

--Other aspects such as resettling a family in a foreign environment and finding and hiring qualified women also affect the employment of Americans in the organizations.

On the other hand, some U.N. organization officials consider Americans less desirable than other candidates because:

--Although qualified in their specialties, Americans often lack foreign language ability and international experience. The organizations consider this experience important because it indicates adaptability to new and different cultures and work environments. Knowledge of a foreign language is not always required but is considered desirable and is usually a factor in selection.

--The U.S. requirement of loyalty clearances for Americans selected to work in U.N. organizations has in the past been a delaying factor and may have caused some organizations to shy away from Americans. The 1975 change in the requirement appears to have alleviated much of the problem. (See ch. 3.)

Some of these problems could be overcome by an improved U.S. recruiting effort. The Department of State and other Federal agencies have not been recruiting and submitting large numbers of highly qualified candidates because:

--The recruiting effort is spread among several U.S. agencies with no central coordination, recordkeeping, or management reporting system.

- Little emphasis or few resources are devoted to recruiting. Candidates are found and submitted for only a small portion of publicized vacancies. Most recruiters have no budget for advertising, visiting potential candidates, or finding new recruiting sources.
- U.S. recruiters often aim at finding jobs for people instead of people for jobs.
- U.S. agencies claim to be concentrating on key positions, but they have not defined the term, identified the positions, accumulated the appropriate information on the positions, or made a concerted effort to find and attract the best possible candidates for the positions.
- Recruiting sources are too narrow, and some potential sources are overlooked or ignored; recruiters tend to concentrate only within their own agencies, without vigorous efforts to recruit from private industry. (See ch. 4.)

The United States should put forward well-qualified candidates to compete for vacancies in the U.N. organizations. It must take positive steps to improve its recruiting effort and to overcome the impediments of finding qualified candidates. It should intensify recruiting at all levels and focus on placing U.S. professionals in key management positions.

Intensified recruiting requires

- more resources,
- centralized management organization,
- innovative techniques,
- a broader search for talent,
- more active participation by the U.S. Civil Service Commission, and
- close cooperation between the U.S. Missions to the U.N. organizations and U.S. recruiters. (See ch. 5.)

GAO recommends that the Secretary of State, in consultation with other concerned agencies:

- Develop realistic long-range targets for attaining optimum U.S. participation in the U.N. organizations.
- Prepare an annual positive action plan detailing specific targets for improving participation and specific measures to be taken during the year to achieve those goals.
- Press for needed reforms in the U.N. personnel systems to streamline the long selection process and develop a better career system.

The Congress should require the Secretary of State to report annually on his implementation of the positive action plan for improving participation.

Because of time constraints, formal comments were not obtained for this report. However, the findings were discussed with the concerned agencies. State and other U.S. agencies do not take issue with GAO's recommendations. However, they believe that since the level of U.S. participation has not decreased, the United States has demonstrated progress. They believe the recruitment and hiring of Americans is largely beyond the control of U.S. recruiters and that most recruiting decisions by the U.N. organizations are political, particularly those affecting senior key positions. They say the correct recruiting approach is the one they are taking--observing the personnel scene and recruiting for selected positions.

However, GAO remains convinced that State and other U.S. agencies have done little to improve the situation since GAO last reported, and U.S. professional participation in many U.N. organizations in recent years has changed little. If the U.S. Government would undertake an extensive, affirmative recruitment program, more candidates with the requisite experience and qualifications could be identified. The best possible U.S. candidates could then be submitted and more U.S. citizens selected.

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**ABBREVIATIONS**

FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization
GAO	General Accounting Office
HEW	Department of Health, Education, and Welfare
ILO	International Labor Organization
ITU	International Telecommunications Union
UNDP	United Nations Development Program
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization
WHO	World Health Organization

Our review of the employment of Americans in international organizations was made as part of our continuing effort to examine the activities of the executive branch in carrying out its responsibilities to direct and coordinate the management of U.S. participation in international organizations. Our work reflects the expressed interest of the Chairman, Senate Committee on Governmental Affairs, who asked us on July 30, 1976, to report on the employment of Americans in international organizations. (See app. I.)

The United States has a major interest in the quality of the professional staffs employed by the United Nations and its specialized agencies. Through these international staffs, the organizations plan and implement a wide variety of programs and activities aimed at international understanding, cooperation, and development. As President Johnson stated in 1964 in a memorandum to heads of departments and agencies:

"\* \* \* the capacity and efficiency of these organizations depend, in the end, upon the quality and the motivations of the international civil servants who administer them. These organizations--and our national interest in their fortunes--deserve the services of some of the ablest citizens of the United States.\* \* \*"

According to the State Department, the United States can make a substantial contribution to the work of international organizations through the employment of Americans in the professional staffs of the organizations. The hope in advancing the candidacy of Americans is that through their competence they will benefit the United Nations and make it a stronger and more viable organization. While the United States has no monopoly on the available talent in the world, it has many excellent people who can contribute to the efficient operation and management of U.N. programs. A byproduct of their activities is to enhance the image of the United Nations in the United States as a competent organization.

In a statement to the U.N. General Assembly's budget committee the U.S. delegate criticized the Secretary General for yielding to pressures from governments seeking U.N. positions for unqualified candidates. The statement, made during an October 1976 session discussing the composition of the Secretariat, states in part:

"The work of the United Nations is done by human beings, by international civil servants, and unless they are competent, fully productive, dedicated, and fair, the appropriations we approve will simply be squandered. The primary objectives of the Organization--helping people to help themselves and assuring international peace and security--are dependent to a large degree upon the capability of the Secretariat.

"Once again this Committee \* \* \* must emphasize to the Secretary General his solemn obligation under Article 101 of the Charter to see to it that 'the paramount consideration in the employment of the staff \* \* \* shall be the necessity of securing the highest standards of efficiency, competence, and integrity.' Failure to adhere first and foremost to this obligation can only mean that the ability of the United Nations to do its job in the manner its members have every right to expect will be compromised \* \* \*. The time is long overdue for the Secretary General to act forcefully to bring personnel recruitment and management in this Organization up to the high standards which the closing decades of the twentieth century require.

"\* \* \* Member States indeed must cooperate by putting forward only well-qualified candidates \* \* \*. My own Government takes its own responsibility for such cooperation with the utmost seriousness \* \* \*."

U.S. technical expertise and know-how is generally very highly regarded. In such fields as medicine, public health, agriculture, and business management, Americans are considered among the best qualified and trained in the world. Therefore, to fulfill its responsibility to the United Nations and its specialized agencies, the United States should put forward its share of well-qualified candidates.

Our report to the Congress of December 22, 1970, "U.S. Participation in the International Labor Organization Not Effectively Managed" (B-168767), noted that the executive branch had not been successful in its efforts to increase substantially the number of Americans employed and recommended that the Secretaries of State, Labor, and Commerce take steps to increase employment of Americans by the International Labor Organization.

In 1974 we followed up to determine the extent to which our past recommendation had been implemented and to examine the progress made. Our report, "Numerous Improvements Still Needed in Managing U.S. Participation in International Organizations" (B-168767), dated July 18, 1974, showed that the United States had not succeeded very well at improving the percentage of U.S. citizens employed in the U.N. organizations. We made specific recommendations to advance and encourage participation of U.S. citizens in the organizations.

The State Department has done very little to improve the situation. It has not acquired the necessary resources for intensified recruiting and has not fully implemented our recommendations.

This report examines the current status of the employment of Americans in professional positions in U.N. organizations and presents recommendations to overcome known recruiting problems.

U.S. STAKE IN U.N. ORGANIZATIONS

The United States is the single largest financial contributor in the U.N. system, contributing around 25 percent to the regular budgets of the United Nations and most of its specialized agencies. Through assessed dues and voluntary contributions, excluding peacekeeping operations, the United States has contributed over \$5.6 billion to the United Nations, its specialized agencies, and various voluntary programs and funds since 1946. Of this amount, \$2.9 billion, or over 50 percent, went to the seven organizations included in this review, as shown below.

	Total U.S. contributions calendar years <u>1946-75</u>
	(000 omitted)
U.N. Secretariat	\$ 917,861
United Nations Development Program (UNDP)	1,192,160
Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO)	154,803
World Health Organization (WHO)	320,668
United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization (UNESCO)	196,595
International Labor Organization (ILO)	117,549
International Telecommunications Union (ITU)	11,797

In 1975, U.S. assessments and voluntary contributions to these seven organizations totaled \$234.8 million.

This large financial investment, however, is not the only U.S. stake in the efficiency and effectiveness of the international organizations. The United States is relying upon U.N. organizations to carry out an extensive program of development assistance activities in developing countries. It contributed an average of more than \$200 million annually during the past decade toward development and humanitarian projects administered under U.N. voluntary programs and specialized agencies.

### U.N. PERSONNEL SYSTEM

As of December 1975, the United Nations, its specialized agencies, and programs employed over 14,000 professionals. There is a continuing need for competent staff in numerous professional fields. Under the U.N. Charter and the personnel policies of the various specialized agencies, the paramount consideration in selecting staff is to secure the highest standards of efficiency, competence, and integrity. However, due regard is to be given to achieving the widest possible geographic diversity, hiring candidates from member states which have no or few employees on the staffs whenever possible.

The United Nations and each specialized agency have their own personnel departments which identify and publicize vacant positions, recruit qualified candidates, and screen applicants. The organizations require a wide range of professional disciplines, including specialists in agriculture, medicine, education, and many other areas. They also have a great need for management and financial expertise for their headquarters staffs.

The selection process for filling vacancies varies among the organizations. Generally, candidates are screened to be sure they meet the minimum job requirements, and then their applications are reviewed and compared by the technical department having the vacancy. A short list of candidates then goes to a selection committee, which reviews the work of the department and affirms or challenges its selection. The final choice is made by the Director General of the organization or his designee.

## U.S. RECRUITING EFFORT

To assist the international organizations in finding qualified staff, member governments also recruit within their own countries. This is both an aid to the organizations--because they often do not have the resources to recruit extensively--and an advantage to the member government in meeting its responsibility to the U.N. organizations.

In the United States, the Bureau of International Organization Affairs in the Department of State has primary responsibility for managing U.S. recruitment. The Bureau recruits Americans, helps to develop recruitment policies, and coordinates the recruitment efforts of Federal agencies. For four organizations included in our review, the Department of State has delegated specific recruiting actions to counterpart agencies within the U.S. Government, as shown below:

<u>Organization</u>	<u>U.S. counterpart agency</u>
FAO	Department of Agriculture
WHO	Department of Health, Education, and Welfare (HEW)--Public Health Service
UNESCO	HEW--Office of Education (field programs only)
ILO	Department of Labor

The counterpart agencies recruit the technical specialists required by their assigned organizations. The Department of State generally handles administrative positions common to all organizations such as accountants, systems analysts, budget analysts, and statisticians.

To help coordinate recruiting among the various Federal agencies, the Inter-Agency Liaison Group on International Organization Recruitment was created as a result of President Johnson's Memorandum of August 15, 1964. Representatives of most executive departments and agencies are supposed to identify problems encountered in recruiting and to discuss and agree on possible remedies.

The United States maintains permanent Missions for liaison with the organizations we reviewed. The United States has permanent representatives to UNESCO in Paris and to FAO in

Rome, and Missions to the United Nations in New York and Geneva. The Geneva office includes ILO, WHO, and ITU, as well as many other U.N. organizations headquartered there.

#### SCOPE OF REVIEW

Direct examination of international organizations' internal operations is outside our audit authority. Therefore, we did not make firsthand observations on their internal activities. However, we talked with representatives of the U.N. Secretariat, UNDP, UNESCO, ILO, ITU, WHO, and FAO at U.N. agency headquarters in New York, Paris, Rome, and Geneva.

Work was performed primarily in Washington, D.C., at the Department of State, Agency for International Development, and other agencies charged with recruiting for specific counterpart international organizations, such as the Department of Agriculture (FAO); Department of Labor (ILO); and Department of Health, Education, and Welfare (UNESCO and WHO). We also worked at the U.S. Mission to the United Nations in New York and Geneva and at the offices of U.S. representatives to U.N. agencies in Paris and Rome.

## CHAPTER 2

### U.S. EMPLOYMENT LEVELS STILL UNFAVORABLE

Based on criteria for measuring representation established by the organizations which recognize the large U.S. financial contribution, the employment of Americans in professional positions is relatively low in most of the U.N. organizations in our review. Although the United States has the largest single national group in many of the organizations, it is still underrepresented and the positions held by Americans tend to be at lower grade levels. Also, the United States is underrepresented on field expert staffs.

#### PROFESSIONAL POSITIONS

In four of the seven U.N. organizations that we reviewed, the United States does not have enough Americans working. The United States has been unable to provide enough highly qualified candidates. In many cases, the U.S. employment level falls below the "desirable range" established by most organizations to measure member representation.

The U.N. system has no quotas for representation nor positions specifically identified to be filled by a particular nationality. However, most organizations reviewed have adopted the concept of a desirable range of employment for nationals of each member state, based primarily on the percentage of contributions and membership. The range indicates an allocation of positions subject to geographic distribution. Generally, headquarters, regional office, and certain field positions funded from regular budget contributions are counted under geographic distribution. WHO, however, includes all positions wherever located or financed from whatever source of funds including field project experts. For most contributors, the desirable range is established by allowing a fluctuation of plus-or-minus 25 percent around the contribution percentage level. This upward fluctuation does not apply to the largest contributors. Depending on the total number of positions available, the percentages are then converted into the number of positions allocated as each member's desirable range. For very small contributors, a minimum allocation is established. All members are then classified as overrepresented, underrepresented, or adequately represented, depending on whether they are above, below, or within their desirable ranges.

The U.S. recruiting system has not taken advantage of this distribution scheme to place Americans in the U.N.

organizations. At the end of 1975, 1,833 (or less than 13 percent) of the 14,568 professionals employed by the United Nations, its specialized agencies, and programs were Americans. U.S. participation in the U.N. Secretariat and the UNDP in New York is about what would be expected--significantly higher than the U.S. presence in the European-based organizations.

Except for ITU and UNDP, the organizations reviewed have criteria for measuring participation. In ITU, Americans held 10 positions out of about 150 in July 1976--about 7 percent. The United States contributes 7.2 percent of the ITU budget, or about the same percentage as U.S. participation. In UNDP, the United States contributed about 20 percent of the budget in 1976 and had 100 out of 566 UNDP employees in December 1976, or about 18 percent. Based on U.S. contributions to the budgets, the United States appears to be participating fairly well in these organizations.

Based on criteria used by the other five organizations, the United States is underrepresented in four of them:

- UNESCO allocates the United States 128 to 171 positions; in August 1976, Americans held 100 positions, or 13.2 percent.
- FAO bases representation primarily on contributions, coupled with a system of point values for each professional position; the higher the position the greater the point value. The United States is considered equitably represented if its point value is between 18.75 and 25 percent of the total value of positions, representing between 141 and 187 of the occupied positions. However, the U.S. representation in July 1976 was 9.0 percent, representing 83 positions.
- WHO allocates the United States 15 percent of all positions, or about 325 positions; as of September 1976, U.S. nationals held 207 positions (about 12 percent), including 143 of 1,323 positions (about 11 percent) financed from WHO's regular assessed budget.
- ILO allocates from 110 to 150 positions for Americans; as of March 1976, Americans held only 75 positions, or 11.7 percent.
- In the U.N. Secretariat, the U.S. desirable range was 396 to 569 positions; in June 1976, the United States was considered adequately represented with 504 positions, or 19.2 percent.

The U.N. Secretariat includes the New York and Geneva offices. The overall U.S. participation is within the desirable range, but in the Geneva office Americans comprise only about 7 percent of the professional staff. State officials acknowledged the low U.S. representation in the U.N. Office in Geneva and stated they are working to correct the imbalance.

The chart on the following page shows the 1976 and 1973 levels of participation compared to the U.S. desirable range in each organization we reviewed. The percentages are based only on positions subject to geographic distribution.

Besides these positions subject to geographical distribution, most of the organizations have many professional positions which are not governed by the requirement to achieve a broad geographical base. In the seven organizations we reviewed linguistic positions (translators, editors, and interpreters) are excluded. Positions funded by voluntary sources are also excluded, except in WHO.

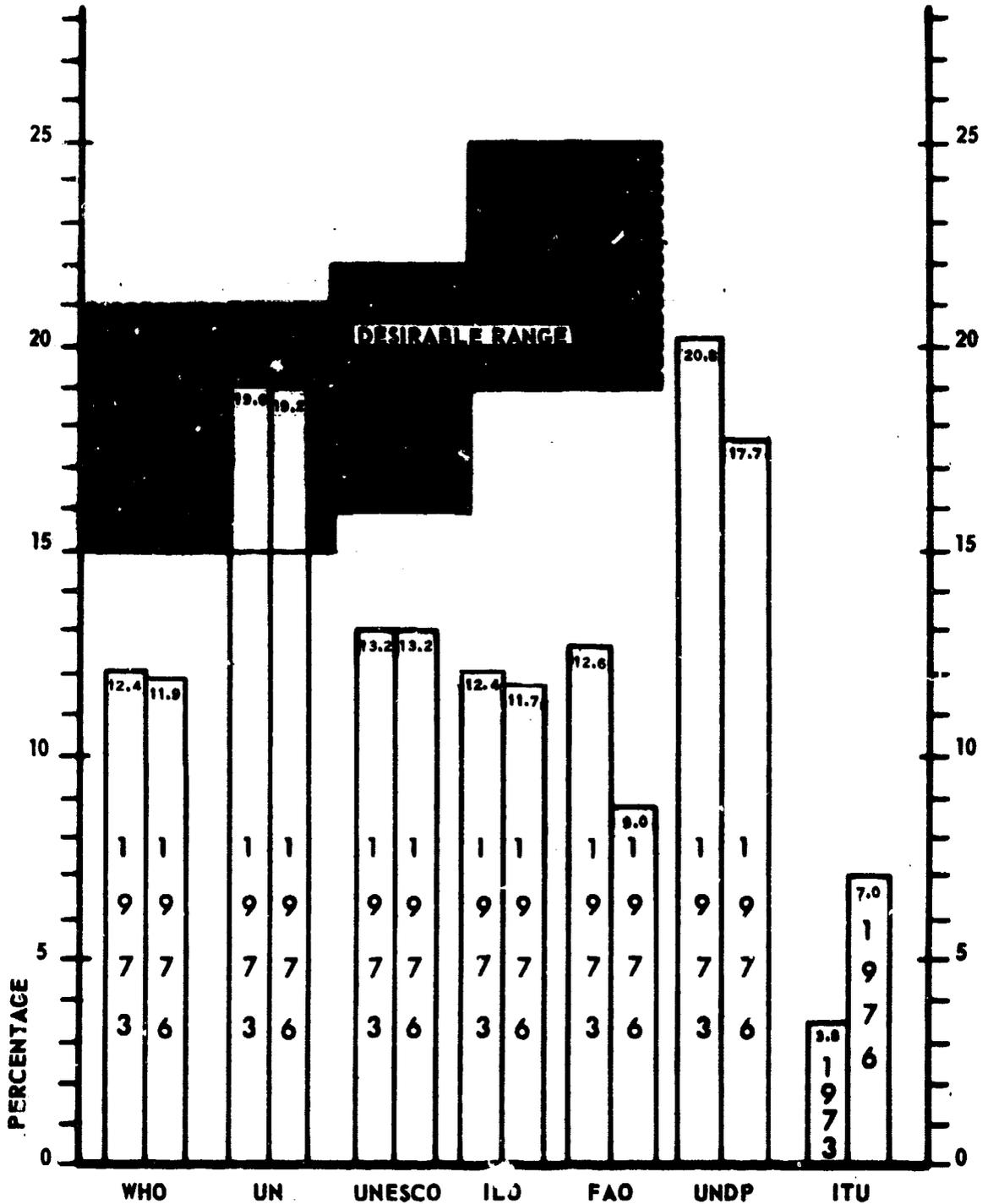
If linguistic positions were included it would not improve the U.S. participation percentage. We found that the percentage of Americans in such positions, however, is generally the same or lower than in geographic positions. In FAO, for example, Americans held 5 positions which are not subject to geographic distribution; this represents only about 7 percent of such positions. In December 1975, WHO had 169 such positions, only 10 of them held by Americans.

#### GRADE LEVEL OF POSITIONS

Besides the low participation, Americans tend to be concentrated at the middle or lower professional grades. The United States seems to be experiencing difficulty placing qualified Americans in key management positions even though the Department of State and other Federal agencies concentrate their recruiting efforts on these positions. U.N. organizations have no criteria for participation at these levels.

The U.N. personnel grading system generally has five professional grades (P.1 through P.5), two director grades (D.1 and D.2), and the ungraded positions of assistant director general, deputy director general, and director general. A D-level professional typically would head up a division within the Secretariat, with responsibility over several branches or offices. An assistant director general would have overall control over several divisions and be an advisor to the director general.

COMPARISON OF U.S. PERCENTAGE REPRESENTATION TO  
 "DESIRABLE RANGES" 1973 AND 1976



According to the latest statistics available, Americans held management positions at the director level and above as shown below:

- ILO, 9 of 86 positions, or 10.5 percent.
- FAO, 10 of 134 positions, or 7.5 percent, and 5 of the 10 were due to retire around the end of 1976.
- WHO, 10 of 128 positions, or 7.8 percent, including 6 special P.6 positions which have the same salary as the D.1 position.
- ITU, 1 of only 9 positions, or 11.1 percent.
- UNESCO, 7 of 71 positions, or 9.9 percent.
- UNDP, 15 of 113 positions, or 13.3 percent.
- U.N. Secretariat, 52 of 317 positions, or 16.4 percent, down from 19 percent in 1973. However, in the U.N. Office in Geneva, the United States held 2 of 25 of these high level positions.

UNDP has resident representatives in most countries where field projects are being carried out. They manage and coordinate the projects of U.N. agencies. In November 1976, the Americans held only 5 of about 100 of these positions, compared to 15 in 1972. In addition, Americans held 11 of 74 deputy resident representative positions, about 15 percent. U.S. officials acknowledged the low level of U.S. participation and stated that they are working to correct the situation.

In the organizations that we reviewed, Americans tend to be concentrated at the middle or lower professional grades--P.4 to P.1. These are generally not key policymaking positions, and U.S. recruiters indicated they do not devote much effort to positions at this level. In UNESCO, for example, less than one-third of the positions subject to geographic distribution are P.3 and below; but 42 percent of the Americans are at this level. In ILO such low level positions account for about 42 percent of all positions, and about 49 percent of American positions. The situation is similar in the other organizations. At the D.1 level and above, Americans held, overall, 12.1 percent of the positions. It is important for Americans to hold middle and lower grades, but it is also important to be well represented in key management positions.

## FIELD EXPERT POSITIONS

The U.N. specialized agencies hire thousands of technical experts annually to carry out field projects in the developing countries. The experts are recruited from all member states generally without regard to geographical distribution, and are typically funded by voluntary sources outside the regular budgets of the organizations. UNDP is the largest source of these funds; the other organizations generally act as executing agencies for UNDP projects.

The United States is considered to be a major source for field experts, but its share of these positions is usually lower than its overall representation. Of the organizations we reviewed, the highest U.S. representation of experts was in WHO, where Americans held 64 of 409, or 15.6 percent. In UNESCO, Americans held about 50 of 722 positions (about 7 percent); in ILO, 55 of about 860 (6.4 percent); in ITU, only 11 of 326 (about 3 percent). In FAO, despite the apparent abundance of U.S. agricultural experts, Americans hold about 7 percent of the available field positions.

Some U.S. Federal recruiters with whom we talked acknowledged the low number of field positions which go to Americans, and said they devote relatively little emphasis to this area because field positions are not key policymaking positions. Certain U.S. Mission officials pointed out that another way the United States participates in field projects is through short-term consultants. It was pointed out that Americans comprised about 25 percent of WHO consultants under contract in 1975.

## ORGANIZATIONS' VIEWS OF U.S. EMPLOYMENT

Because the United States has relatively low participation in FAO, ILO, WHO, and UNESCO, American candidates are officially welcomed and encouraged. WHO puts the United States on the list of countries from which recruitment is to be encouraged. The others all have policies which require nationals from underrepresented countries--including the United States--to receive preference over those from adequately or overrepresented countries, if they are otherwise of equal competence.

We found, though, that being underrepresented may not be much of an advantage for the United States. It has the largest national group in all four organizations--there are more Americans in the Secretariats than any other single

nationality. (In FAO, however, the United States slipped slightly behind the British in late 1975.) From 37 to 67 member states were classified as underrepresented in these organizations, and most have no nationals employed. Pressure is being exerted to hire nationals from these countries, not Americans. Most of these countries, of course, are small members who contribute very little to the budget; nevertheless, with the "one nation, one vote" concept these countries can apply considerable pressure in the legislative bodies of the organizations.

The United States is not the only large contributor underrepresented. The four or five largest donors generally are in the same predicament. The Soviet Union (not a member of FAO), Japan, the Federal Republic of Germany, and the People's Republic of China are seriously underrepresented in most of the organizations we reviewed. Japan, which contributes 9.1 percent of FAO's budget and 7 percent of UNESCO's, has less than 2 percent representation on their staffs. In all four organizations, the top four or five contributors pay over 50 percent of the budget but have only 20 to 30 percent of the positions subject to geographic distribution.

Moreover, some personnel department officials from these organizations told us that even the minimum level of participation indicated by the formal desirable range criteria may be unrealistically high for the United States. They indicated that it would be very difficult for the organizations to allow as many as one out of every four employees to be an American. They said this could cause resentment among other members and would damage the multilateral character of the organizations' work. FAO, UNESCO, and WHO officials all said that 15 percent of the staff would be the more realistic maximum for U.S. representation. However, the U.S. representations for FAO, UNESCO, and WHO are only 9.0, 13.2, and 11.9 percent, respectively.

We recognize the adverse effect of giving other countries the impression that the U.N. organizations are overstaffed with Americans. Nevertheless, the effectiveness of the programs, which is governed by the quality of these staffs, should be the dominant consideration. Consequently, the United States should submit well-qualified candidates to organizations where U.S. participation is below its desirable range. For the United States to do otherwise could result in lower quality candidates filling positions, with unfavorable results in U.N. operations.

## CONCLUSION

The United States has not provided enough well-qualified candidates necessary to reach its desirable range in many U.N. organizations. In WHO, FAO, ILO, and UNESCO, the organizations officially recognize the relatively low participation. Therefore, the United States is not fulfilling its responsibility to the U.N. organizations by providing its share of candidates at all levels.

## CHAPTER 3

### FINDING QUALIFIED CANDIDATES--THE PROBLEMS

Both the State Department and the organizations reviewed cited many factors contributing to the low number of Americans employed in the U.N. system. We were told that for professionals in developing countries, and in some developed countries such as Britain and France, where the incomes are below the United States level, the U.N. organizations offer very attractive salaries, locations, and prestige career positions. It appears that for the organizations headquartered outside the United States, there is not a natural attraction between Americans and the international organizations.

U.S. and organization officials generally indicated that positions overseas are not so appealing to Americans. They cited such things as the long selection process and limited career systems as discouraging Americans from seeking U.N. employment. Factors such as the foreign language inability and the limited international experience of many Americans and the need to hire developing country nationals make it difficult for the organizations to hire greater numbers of Americans.

The following sections describe the major problems.

#### U.N. EMPLOYMENT LACKS APPEAL TO MANY AMERICANS

According to U.S. and organization officials, several factors discourage Americans from seeking U.N. employment--limited career potential, the long selection process, and to a lesser extent, salaries.

#### Limited career potential

The U.N. system has no uniform career progression system for its professional employees. A UNESCO official explained that the philosophy of the U.N. agencies is to hire people at the peak of their professional expertise and use that experience and talent. The organizations do not have the capabilities for training inexperienced employees. Some organizations are beginning to stress promotion from within, but there is still no clear path for professional development which a new employee can anticipate.

Highly qualified American professionals in Government service or private industry often have excellent advancement and development potential in their present jobs and are, therefore, reluctant to take a chance on U.N. jobs.

When Americans do take positions with U.N. organizations, they tend to leave after a relatively short time, because they do not want to miss out on current developments in their specialty and because they see little chance for advancement within the organization. For example, college professors must be careful to return before they lose their tenure. As a result, this high turnover makes it difficult to maintain the level of Americans in the organizations, much less increase it. FAO, for example, hired an average of 12 Americans a year during 1973-75, but 12 Americans left the organization each year during that time.

Limited career potential has been well recognized, but little can be done until personnel systems of the organizations include a uniform career progression system for their professional employees. The establishment of the International Civil Service Commission in 1974 for the U.N. system is a step in this direction. However, a 1975 report prepared by a group of 25 experts for the Secretary General on the structure of the U.N. system noted that in its present form the Commission has a limited mandate and limited power. The report recommended that the Commission be given additional power and responsibility to enable it to achieve a unified personnel system.

### Long selection process

Officials at some of the organizations we visited advised us that the long time it takes them to select a candidate for a vacant position makes it difficult to attract and hire Americans. Officials said, though, that this is mainly a problem in hiring university and private industry candidates rather than Government employees. In our view, the long processing time is more acceptable to U.S. Government candidates than to university and private industry candidates. According to an FAO recruiting official, it would not be considered unusual for an American to decide to change jobs, begin a job search, be interviewed and selected, change residences, and assume new duties in the same time it takes FAO (and the other organizations) to advertise a vacancy. Jobs are generally advertised for 2 months, and it takes another month or more for the selection to be made. Several organizations reported examples of Americans being offered jobs but turning them down because they took other positions while the organi-

zation was still making up its mind. For example, one organization made 22 job offers to Americans in 1975 for headquarters; 7 of the offers were declined. The recruiting officials did not have complete records on the reasons for the jobs being declined, but cited the long processing time as a major reason in many cases. The candidates either lost interest in the organization or took other offers.

Organization officials told us they have studied the problems of the long selection process but see little chance of greatly shortening the time required because of the international scope of the recruitment. In our opinion, the International Civil Service Commission, if given the additional power and responsibility to achieve a unified personnel system, would be the best mechanism to push for the needed improvements.

### Salaries

Some of the organizations cited salaries as somewhat of a problem in attracting Americans. FAO officials told us at least four Americans turned down job offers recently, mainly because the salaries were too low to entice them to change jobs. ITU recruits mostly from private industry in the United States and said that it was difficult to compete with large U.S. companies for their top employees. In addition, Americans often have income other than their basic salaries--college professors may earn money through consultant contracts or speaking engagements, and many men have working wives. This source of income may not be available overseas.

With the 1975 U.N. pay raise, however, most officials agree that the U.N. salaries are sufficient to attract qualified candidates. According to the Noblemaire Principle, U.N. salaries are supposed to be competitive with those of the highest paid national civil service. Our January 1976 report, "Tax-Free Salaries of the International Development Banks Exceed Those of All Member Governments" (ID-76-38), showed that U.N. salaries adjusted for tax-free status are higher than those of the U.S. Civil Service, which is generally accepted as the best paid in the world.

The Department of State, with our support, was instrumental in obtaining passage of section 502 of the Foreign Assistance Act of 1969, 5 U.S.C.A. 3343 (1976) which established an incentive for Federal employees to transfer to international organizations. This act provided for salary and allowance equalization, assuring that a U.S. employee would be reimbursed by the Federal Government when he returned to Federal

service if his pay with the international organization was less than he would have received had he stayed with the U.S. Government.

### Other problems

According to some officials, American candidates with families may be willing to move their families to Washington or New York, but are more reluctant to move to European or developing countries. In Paris, Rome, or Geneva, the American would be accepting a different lifestyle in a foreign culture, with an unfamiliar school system. For a married woman candidate, whose husband is usually employed, this is a special problem. One woman was offered a job with an overseas-based organization but would not accept it unless the organization found a job for her husband. The organization could not, and the woman turned down the job.

### Women in the United Nations

The United Nations and some of the specialized agencies have undertaken efforts to recruit women and increase their representation in the professional ranks. The United States has been a major backer of this effort, and the U.N. General Assembly has endorsed it. The percentage of women professionals in the U.N. Secretariat has increased slightly from 19.4 percent in 1975 to 20.4 percent in 1976. In some of the organizations, however, the percentage is considerably lower. For example, ILO during 1975 had only 128 women in 803 professional positions, less than 16 percent, and ITU had only 10.9 percent.

U.N. organizations cite many reasons for the difficulty in placing women in professional positions, including:

- A reported scarcity of qualified female candidates in certain technical professions, such as engineering, meteorology, agriculture, and aviation.
- Cultural inhibition against hiring women in some parts of the world.
- Family considerations, especially when the husband is a professional.
- Competing hiring priorities, such as geographic distribution.

## RELUCTANCE TO HIPE AMERICANS

U.S. technical expertise and know-how are generally very highly regarded. When Americans apply for U.N. positions, however, the organizations are at times reluctant to hire them because of such factors as foreign language inability and lack of international experience. The U.S. requirement for a loyalty clearance has in the past been a delaying factor, but a 1975 change in the requirement appears to have alleviated much of the problem.

### Foreign language inability

Some of the organizations believe that knowledge of a second language, especially French, is important to the efficiency of the international headquarters staff. Most job descriptions call for English or French and at least a working knowledge of another official language. U.S. Mission officials told us that French and English are used about equally as the working language of the UNESCO Secretariat. An American without a knowledge of French is at a great disadvantage, because the Director General speaks French and very little English. French is not required in Geneva for conducting official business, but it is desirable, and some language proficiency is needed just for day-to-day living. According to FAO, a foreign language is not a necessity in Rome, but is required for some field positions.

U.S. and organization officials told us it is difficult to find Americans who meet all technical qualifications and also speak a foreign language. They said that Americans must compete against Europeans and some developing-country nationals who speak many foreign languages, and this puts the Americans at a disadvantage. A UNESCO personnel official indicated that Americans should not complain about the language requirements because they have the advantage of already speaking one of the official languages. The real hardship is on the Japanese and others whose native language is not an official U.N. language.

While a foreign language ability is beneficial, we were told that Americans can function adequately in some Secretariat positions with only English. With this in mind, the Department of State should make certain that qualified Americans are not unjustly eliminated because of language alone.

Possibly, part of this language problem could be alleviated through use of the Department of State's Foreign Service Institute language training facilities. Several officials agreed that Institute training could enhance a candidate's chances of being selected for employment. However, the training would be more expeditious for someone who already has some proficiency; the Foreign Service Institute could bring him up to a working knowledge. To reach this level starting from scratch, a candidate would require on the average about 4 months of full-time training. Also, arrangements would have to be made to authorize this type of training, provide time for the candidate to attend classes, and reimburse the Institute for the training costs. Perhaps, the best approach would be to use this training method only for certain individuals who have excellent employment prospects and where the United States has considerable interest in filling the position.

#### Lack of international experience

Most of the U.N. organizations place great importance on the length and type of experience possessed by candidates for professional positions. They especially look for evidence of international experience and proven ability to adapt to new and different working environments.

Unlike candidates from European and some developing countries, U.S. candidates tend to lack such international experience in their field of expertise. They may be experts in their specialties, but all or most of their experience has been within the United States; they have not dealt much with different cultures, languages, educational systems, and political philosophies. Many U.N. organizations are reluctant to take a chance on Americans who lack international business or government experience.

Some officials suggested that one way to improve this situation would be for Americans to gain the needed experience through short-term consultancies with the organizations or on field projects in developing countries before applying for headquarters jobs. Other countries have successfully used these approaches.

#### U.S. loyalty clearances

The United States still requires its citizens to be checked and cleared by Federal investigators before taking a

job with a U.N. organization. The basic purpose is to assure that the individual will be a worthy representative of the United States.

In the past this loyalty check has been a bottleneck in the hiring process. An FAO official told us they are reluctant to take Americans when they need to fill a position quickly. These clearances often took 2 to 3 months or more. Executive Order 11890 signed late in 1975 relaxed the requirements, and candidates now undergo only a national agency check.

FAO recruiters, however, believe that the loyalty clearance is still a problem. One official said the average time for the agency checks has been reduced to an acceptable 17 days. For non-Government employees, though, the average time since the change in procedure is still about 73 days, which still causes a "psychological block" for FAO officials when considering an American for a position.

In a recent study of 59 loyalty checks for U.N. organizations, the State Department found that the average processing time from receipt at the Civil Service Commission until issuance of clearance was 35 days; 42 cases, or 71 percent, were completed in the target time frame (4 to 6 weeks); 17 cases took longer to process, with 1 taking 11 weeks. The State Department concluded that there was still a need for improvement, but our review showed the situation was not as bad as described by the FAO official. The overall delay seems to be the responsibility of FAO rather than the U.S. Government clearance procedure. Nevertheless, we encourage improvements to speed up the clearance process.

#### OTHER CONSTRAINTS ON HIRING AMERICANS

The desire for geographic diversity is a major constraint on the organizations' ability to hire more Americans. Also, many organizations are plagued by financial constraints which have prompted freezes and cutbacks in hiring.

#### Geographic distribution

Developing countries are clamoring for more and more positions on the Secretariat staffs of the U.N. organizations. They want a broader geographic distribution of professional staff and contend that their own technicians and specialists

have the most intimate knowledge of development problems and needs. In the U.N. Secretariat, WHO, and UNESCO, the developing countries are urging that the formula for determining adequate representation be changed. The proposed changes would be to the disadvantage of the United States, resulting in a lower desirable range.

The U.N. Secretariat formula for geographic distribution, based largely on contributions to the regular U.N. budget, is generally used as a model for the specialized agencies. Until 1962, the ranges were determined by percentage of contributions to the regular budget, subject to a minimum of one to three positions for each member. As more and more new members joined the United Nations, pressure mounted to change the criteria and decrease the emphasis on financial contributions, as follows:

- In 1963, each member, regardless of contribution, was allocated 1 to 5 positions as a minimum range, and a population reserve of 100 positions was established to be apportioned to countries with large populations and low contributions; the remaining positions were allocated by percentage of contributions to the regular budget.
- In 1967, the minimum range of positions for small contributors was raised to 1 to 6 positions and the population reserve to 130, thus reducing the number of positions allocated by percentage of contributions.
- By June 1976, the population reserve had increased to 220 positions, and for 1977 it will increase to 240.

The current proposal (August 1976) in the General Assembly would raise the minimum allocation to at least two to seven. Some members wanted an even higher allocation. On the basis of a total of 2,700 positions subject to geographic distribution, this change would reduce by 144 the number of positions distributed on the basis of regular budget contributions from 1,956 to 1,812. Because the United States is the largest financial contributor, it would be the most seriously affected by the change. A U.N. analysis shows that by raising the minimum allocation from 1 to 6 to 2 to 7, the U.S. desirable range (currently 396 to 569) would fall to 389 to 526. Since the United States held 504 positions, it would be almost at the top of its

range. In our view, there probably would be pressure to reduce the number of Americans in the Secretariat to bring the U.S. representation closer to the middle of its range.

The specialized agencies included in our review do not have a population reserve, but UNESCO and WHO do establish generous minimum allocations for small contributors--two to three in UNESCO and one to seven in WHO. ILO's minimum is just one to two positions. FAO criteria hold that members with very small assessments are adequately represented with just one staff member. UNESCO is considering a measure to raise the minimum to three to five positions. The WHO Executive Board will be considering a proposal to change its criteria by increasing the minimum or adopting some other alternatives which would give small members more positions.

At the time of our review, the Department of State was actively engaged in efforts to forestall these changes in the geographic distribution formula. U.S. officials said they were prepared to oppose these proposals but saw little chance of succeeding. The small contributors, who would benefit from the changes, comprised a majority of the organizations' memberships.

In a October 1976 statement to the U.N. General Assembly's budget committee, the U.S. delegate strongly criticized the Secretary General for using geographic distribution to justify the appointment of unqualified candidates to the Secretariat. The statement also noted the underrepresentation of women in higher level positions and the absence of younger people in entry level positions.

In January 1977, we were advised by the Department of State that the proposed changes to raise the minimum allocations were adopted by the U.N. Secretariat and UNESCO and rejected by WHO.

### Financial constraints

In 1976 many international organizations experienced financial constraints which restricted recruiting and limited the hiring of outside candidates, including Americans. Organizations are cutting back on professional positions and stressing promotion from within to save money. This will make it extremely difficult to increase the number of Americans employed in these organizations in the near future.

In late 1974, FAO, ILO, UNESCO, UNDP, and WHO all instituted hiring freezes lasting from 2 months (in WHO) to 2 years (in UNESCO).

UNESCO's financial crisis is partly due to the U.S. decision to withhold its assessed contributions for 1975 and 1976 in protest over political decisions of the organization. Loss of the U.S. share--25 percent--obviously necessitated severe austerity measures by the UNESCO Secretariat.

ILO has identified almost 50 positions, both general service and professional, that it plans to eliminate, and with the United States having given notice of its intention to withdraw from ILO, the prospect for Americans in the Secretariat are dim. ILO and U.S. officials told us that since the U.S. announcement, the flow of American candidates for ILO positions has virtually stopped, and many Americans employed there are looking for jobs elsewhere. The Department of Labor closed down its ILO recruiting office in April 1976 and has done virtually no recruiting since then.

### CONCLUSIONS

Many factors inhibiting the recruitment and hiring of Americans are beyond the control of U.S. recruiters. The U.N. organizations must themselves improve their personnel systems to enhance career opportunities, speed up the selection process, and limit the continuous increase in the number of positions allocated to countries because of their membership. Our 1974 report recommended that the Secretary of State press for needed reforms in the U.N. personnel system. The United States is aware of the difficulties and has strongly endorsed needed improvements for the U.N. personnel system. However, in attempting to bring about improvements, the United States cannot act unilaterally, but must press for changes in the various governing bodies of the organizations by enlisting the participation of a majority of other interested members.

Currently, budget constraints and personnel cutbacks make it difficult to greatly increase the number of Americans hired by the U.N. organizations. However, the United States should closely monitor these actions to make sure that Americans are not disproportionately affected by the cuts.

In 1974, we reported that most of the overseas U.S. recruiting officers we contacted had no formal written procedures from the organizations explaining their selection process. Most of these officers, however, had an informal understanding of the process. We recommended that the Secretary of State obtain from each organization a formal statement of personnel policies and selection procedures, including details of their recruiting practices, and arrange for an assessment of each. Although the State Department has not yet made formal written assessments, it is aware of recent changes. The overseas U.S. recruiting officers we contacted have formal written statements of personnel policies and selection procedures from the organizations, and are familiar with how the process works.

We believe that if the benefits and scope of U.N. work received more emphasis in the United States, more candidates with the requisite experience and qualifications would come forward.

#### RECOMMENDATION

We recommend that the Secretary of State press for needed reforms in the personnel systems of the U.N. organizations, in order to streamline the long selection process and develop a better career system.

## CHAPTER 4

### U.S. RECRUITING SYSTEM

#### NOT OVERCOMING KNOWN HANDICAPS

The U.S. recruiting system is spread among several Federal agencies and lacks the resources for a vigorous recruiting program. In many cases, the U.S. agencies act more like placement offices than recruiters, directing most of their efforts to finding jobs for people who come to them rather than recruiting the best candidate for a specific vacancy. The State Department and other agencies claim they concentrate on key positions in the organizations rather than on total number of positions. We found, though, that they have not defined or identified key positions and have not had much success in filling high level positions with Americans.

#### ORGANIZATION

The State Department's Bureau of International Organization Affairs is responsible for the overall U.S. recruiting effort, but it has not adequately managed and coordinated the other offices involved. In 1974, we recommended that the Secretary of State develop the policies, procedures, and programs necessary to guide other Federal agencies in advancing and encouraging participation by U.S. citizens in international organizations. The State Department agreed to pursue this recommendation to the extent permitted by available resources. The policies concerning the transfer and detailing of Federal employees to international organizations are well established. According to State, specific steps taken to advance the participation of Americans in international organizations include:

- Executive Order 11890, dated December 1975, which reduces the time required for the loyalty clearance process.
- Revision of certain factors used in calculating the equalization allowance paid to Federal employees upon return from service in international organizations.
- Guidance to Federal agencies, on a case by case basis. Many agency questions are routine in nature and others require extensive research and analysis.

These steps may advance the participation of U.S. citizens, but we believe State's recruitment effort is still detached and lacks central direction.

No fewer than four departments and one agency are involved in recruiting Americans for the organizations we reviewed. The formal coordination mechanism is the Inter-Agency Liaison Group on International Organization Recruitment. It has received little attention by the Bureau, however, and at the time of our review its members had not met since 1971. Its main activity during the past few years has been to distribute information on the equalization allowances.

Most recruiters keep only informal records of recruiting actions and do not prepare reports on candidates submitted, appointed, and rejected. State has not required such reports to monitor recruiting performance and pinpoint problems, even from its own recruiters.

The detached recruiting responsibility has resulted in gaps in coverage and lack of coordination between agencies over specific positions. We found several cases of lack of coordination and potential conflict between the various agencies. State and Agriculture apparently competed for top FAO positions. One official told us it is difficult for FAO to choose between candidates submitted by these two Departments and it would prefer to have a U.S. candidate suitable to both. We noted one case in which the HEW recruiter knew of a candidate who would have had an excellent chance at a key WHO position. The recruiter did not submit the candidacy, however, because State had already submitted two candidates. State's candidates, however, were not chosen.

Organization officials pointed out the need for the United States to adopt a centralized recruiting office. In their opinions, such an office would better assure that the U.S. Government was organized to reach all recruiting sources and provide quality candidates. An FAO personnel officer said that establishment of such an office is the single most important step the United States could take to improve its recruiting effort.

#### LACK OF EMPHASIS AND RESOURCES

The United States gives little emphasis to recruiting for international organizations and devotes relatively few resources to the effort. As of November 1976, the Bureau

of International Organization Affairs had six professionals involved in recruitment, but two of them were engaged almost full time in administrative matters and equalization allowances. The other Federal agencies generally devote one professional to recruiting, and in some cases this is not a full-time effort.

The Bureau has budgeted \$2,000 for recruitment travel, but showed no budget for advertising. U.S. counterpart agencies have no budget for advertising or recruiting trips.

Because of a lack of emphasis and resources, U.S. recruiters have submitted candidates for only a small percentage of published vacancies in the organizations. We estimate that in 1975 candidates were proposed for about 70 of 230 headquarters vacancies at FAO, 34 of about 100 at UNESCO, and 7 of 19 at ITU. Precise records were generally not available.

Bureau recruiters indicated they do not have the resources to find candidates for all vacancies and must concentrate on positions for which an American has a chance and for which qualified candidates are readily available. The recruiting staff has been augmented slightly in recent years but is still understaffed for the workload handled.

A further indication of the lack of recruiting emphasis is the fact that in some organizations more Americans were hired directly by the organizations than through the U.S. recruiting system. In FAO headquarters, for instance, only two of six Americans hired from September 1975 to September 1976 were recruited by U.S. Government recruiters. WHO hired 11 Americans for headquarters in 1975; only 2 came through official U.S. recruiting channels.

The State Department maintains a roster of potential candidates for administrative positions--accountants, budget analysts, and others. However, according to a State official, it provides no more than 15 percent of the candidates submitted for employment with the U.N. organizations. Some organizations also maintain rosters of this type, and they indicated that 33 percent or more of their candidates are chosen from them.

The U.S. Missions to the organizations generally devote little emphasis to recruiting and personnel matters. The U.S. attaches to FAO, ILO, and WHO estimated that only 5

to 15 percent of their time was spent on personnel matters. The two personnel officers assigned to UNESCO and the U.S. Mission to the United Nations in Geneva said they have to divide their time among administrative, recruiting, and personnel activities.

UNESCO and FAO officials cited this lack of U.S. emphasis as an important factor in the low number of Americans employed. One official said it was inconsistent that the United States would contribute 25 percent of the money but devote only 1 staff year to recruiting for the organization. In responding to our 1974 report, State pointed to internal staffing shortages and noted that if it had the required resources U.S. participation could improve. Nevertheless, State has done little in the past few years to acquire necessary resources.

### PLACEMENT, NOT RECRUITMENT

The U.S. recruiting system is geared more toward finding jobs in the U.N. organizations for people looking for work than toward actively recruiting the best candidates for specific jobs.

The U.S. recruiting system submits candidates to the organizations for "general consideration," with no specific vacancy in mind. The FAO recruiting officer told us that such candidates have little chance of being selected. Unless matched against a current vacancy, the applications are lost. However, U.S. recruiters stated that they were advised by FAO to submit well-qualified candidates even if there is no specific vacancy.

Candidates are sometimes referred to organizations based on support from high-ranking Government officials. Often, these are young college graduates who have little chance of being selected because of the organizations' stringent experience requirements. In the United Nations, for example, the typical job opening is at the P.3 level. The minimum educational and work experience requirements for a typical P.3 position are a Ph.D. and 3 years' work experience, a master's degree and 5 years' experience, or a bachelor's degree and 7 years' experience. A Ph.D. with no experience could qualify for a P.2 grade, but there are relatively few openings at this level; most positions are at the P.3 and P.4 grades.

The Department of State has a longstanding interest in placing Foreign Service Officers in international organizations. The Department believes this will benefit both itself and the organizations. We found many examples of State emphasis on finding jobs for Foreign Service Officers who were often nearing retirement age and seeking outside employment. Many of these officers, however, are generalists, with few of the specialized skills required by the organizations.

The Agency for International Development has a placement office specifically established to find jobs for its officers who are retiring or being displaced. International organizations are one source they look to in placing these people. The Agency gave an FAO recruiter an entire folder of officers available for FAO jobs. The recruiter told us that it was of little use because the officers' qualifications generally did not meet job requirements.

Some organization personnel department officials criticized the quality of many candidates submitted by the United States. UNESCO officials felt that most of them were just "average," rather than top quality. A 1974 letter from FAO's Deputy Director General to the U.S. representative stated that during a 6-month period in 1971, 140 out of 195 American candidates did not meet the minimum essential requirements of the vacancy announcement (length and type of experience, language, academic degrees, etc.).

Submitting general applicants, unqualified candidates, and retiring Foreign Service and Agency officers is time-consuming for both U.S. and organization personnel officials and offers little hope of increasing the number and level of Americans in the organizations. Some U.S. Mission officials said they are reluctant and sometimes embarrassed to bother organization recruiters with many of the applicants they receive from Washington. One U.S. official said that he cannot afford to "use up" his influence with the organization by giving them candidates they cannot possibly hire. In commenting on this matter, Agency officials pointed out that if their candidates are not competitive, U.S. Mission officials should, and occasionally do, notify them of marginal candidates.

#### KEY POSITIONS

In reply to our previous reports on the low number of Americans in the international organizations, the Department of State said that its primary emphasis is on placing Americans in key positions, with total numbers a secondary

objective. However, we found that State and other Federal agencies engaged in recruiting have not defined or adequately identified key positions, nor updated and effectively filled the positions. Also, U.S. participation in key management positions is often lower than its overall participation.

U.S. Mission officials, who should be in the best position to identify and update information on key organization positions, told us they were not aware of any systematic effort to identify and fill such positions. The Mission official at UNESCO said he has often heard the term key positions used, but no one has ever defined it or indicated just what constitutes a key position. There is no clear statement of the objectives to be achieved by filling such positions or the methods to be used to identify them. Until some uniform policies are adopted, the positions cannot be identified.

In 1974, we recommended the establishment of a range of objectives or goals for the number of U.S. nationals to be employed by each organization. The Department of State agreed to establish a range of objectives which is not exclusively numerical but also has reference to the level and importance of the position. Although State initially took steps to establish a range of objectives, it still has not fully implemented this recommendation.

The Bureau of International Organization Affairs, with assistance from counterpart Federal agencies, attempted to accumulate an inventory of important positions in the organizations in 1974. These lists were slow in being assembled and in certain cases contained only sketchy information. We found that, except for the U.N. Secretariat, these lists have not been updated or used effectively. If the Mission officer hears of an opening or sees a vacancy notice, he will inform the Bureau that it would be desirable for an American to have that position. Thus, important positions are noted and sought on an ad hoc basis. There is no long-term plan for ensuring that the United States has adequate participation at the policymaking levels.

#### NARROW RECRUITING SOURCES

The Federal agencies have not done enough to expand their recruiting sources. U.S. recruiters tend to concentrate only within their own agencies. Some organization officials expressed the feeling that many sources are

overlooked in the United States. A UNESCO official, for example, told us that in his opinion, U.S. recruiters are not doing a thorough job in reaching the vast private sector in the United States.

Personal contact between the recruiters and potential candidates is an important element of an effective, intensive recruiting campaign. Under the current system, recruiting trips are rare. Organization officials told us they consider recruiting missions to be the proper function of the U.S. Government recruiters. We noted that UNESCO and FAO sent their own recruiters to the United States. Agency officials advised us that FAO had sent a recruiter to the United States, but this was after considerable pressure from the U.S. Government concerning the low percentage of U.S. citizens on the FAO staff.

Federal employees are encouraged to take assignments in international organizations under the Federal Employees' International Organizational Service Act of 1958, as amended. U.S. civil servants can take jobs for periods of up to 5 years--8 years in some exceptional cases--without loss of their retirement, health and life insurance, and other benefits. In 1970, Executive Order 11552 called upon all Federal agencies to assist and encourage detailing and transferring their employees to international organizations. At the end of 1975, 276 Federal employees were on detail or transfer to numerous organizations.

The U.S. recruiters do not use the U.S. Civil Service Commission to publicize and advertise vacancies. The Commission has 62 area offices and 112 job information centers which attract a wide range of professionals seeking employment. This is a potential source of qualified candidates. Agency officials advised us that while they do not publicize and advertise vacancies through the Commission, they do on occasion use the Commission as part of their selective target recruitment approach to identify candidates for key positions.

A Mission official in Geneva pointed out that the State Department's own Foreign Service recruiters come in contact with many individuals who may be eligible for employment with U.N. organizations and are interested in international work. He suggested that this source could be tapped relatively easily during normally scheduled recruiting trips. In commenting on this, State advised us that Foreign Service Officers who visit U.S. colleges are not professional recruiters; however, arrangements are being

made with the United Nations to share some of the Foreign Service Officer candidates who have high qualifications.

Some U.N. organizations and U.S. recruiters give wide distribution to vacancy notices. FAO, for example, sends vacancy announcements to over 100 colleges, universities, and government and private organizations. HEW sends WHO announcements to about 30 Government offices, public health schools, and other potential recruiting sources. Merely distributing vacancy notices, however, will not assure a flow of good candidates. We believe the low percentage of Americans hired by the organizations indicates that top-quality candidates are not being found and attracted under the present recruiting system.

### CONCLUSION

The U.S. recruiting system as presently instituted for U.N. organizations lacks the ability to seek out and present the best possible candidates. It needs reorganization, resources, and fresh approaches to mount an effective recruiting effort.

## CHAPTER 5

### INCREASING U.S. PARTICIPATION

Our 1970 report to the Congress, "U.S. Participation in the International Labor Organization Not Effectively Managed" (B-168767), observed that the executive branch had not been successful in its efforts to increase substantially the number of Americans employed and recommended that the Secretaries of State, Labor, and Commerce take steps to increase employment of Americans by ILO.

Our 1974 followup report, "Numerous Improvements Still Needed in Managing U.S. Participation in International Organizations" (B-168767), noted that the United States had not succeeded very well at improving the percentage of U.S. citizens employed in the United Nations and recommended that the Secretary of State establish a workable system for a continuing overview of the U.S. recruiting effort and for advancing the level of U.S. participation.

The State Department has done little to improve the situation since we last reported, and U.S. participation in U.N. organizations has changed little in recent years.

To fulfill its responsibility to the United Nations and the specialized agencies, the United States should put forward well-qualified candidates. Positive steps must be taken to improve recruiting efforts and to overcome impediments to finding qualified candidates. The Department of State said that its primary emphasis is on placing Americans in key positions. We believe the United States should intensify recruiting at all levels and should focus on placing Americans in key management positions.

### INTENSIFYING RECRUITING EFFORTS

Intensifying the U.S. recruiting efforts would entail a significant revamping of the current approach. It would be aimed at changing the emphasis from placement of people to active recruiting for specific vacancies. It would incorporate many of the suggestions of U.N. organization officials on ways the United States could improve its recruiting. It has the advantage of assuring more and better qualified American candidates for U.N. positions.

## Centralizing and coordinating recruitment

The Department of State must assume a more active role in bringing together and coordinating the various Federal agency recruiters. Because recruiting is essentially a personnel department function, State should consider moving this activity from the Bureau of International Organization Affairs to its Bureau of Personnel. This would allow State to take advantage of its Foreign Service recruiting to assist in international organization recruiting.

Recruitment should be centralized and could take the form of a combined interagency office, under the leadership of State, bringing together the recruiters from HEW, Agriculture, the Agency for International Development, and others with communication lines into their respective personnel departments. Also, the U.S. Civil Service Commission should have a role in the recruitment effort. The centralized management organization would provide consistent U.S. policies and should result in a better allocation of resources. This would enhance coordination and permit more effective monitoring of recruiting activities.

## Expanding staff and resources

Even with centralized management, the total U.S. recruiting effort would require additional staff and resources. The organization would have to handle an increased volume of applications and candidates. It would be spending money on activities neglected in the current program--advertising, recruiting trips, and expanding recruiting sources.

## Developing more recruiting sources

A prime element of the intensified effort would be an active search for more and better sources of qualified candidates. This search must extend beyond Government agencies and colleges and universities. The U.S. Civil Service Commission, through its regional employment centers, should be used extensively. Overtures must be made to private industry, especially those multinational companies which have considerable interest and talent in international work.

## Advertising

Because of a lack of funds, the United States does little advertising for candidates for U.N. organizations.

Most recruiters told us their advertising is limited to internal agency newsletters and professional journals which will provide space free of charge. Advertising--for both specific vacancies and U.N. employment in general--would help stimulate interest in international work and bring forth numerous candidates. There are many magazines, newspapers, and professional publications which would be appropriate media for such advertising. Some U.N. organizations have successfully advertised in the New York Times, the Wall Street Journal, and other periodicals.

### Innovative programs

The United States could make better use of new, innovative programs aimed at achieving greater American participation in the international organizations.

The associate expert plan is one such approach. Under this program, a country sends young professionals to an international organization and pays for their training. Some of the participants eventually become direct-hire personnel and assume responsible jobs in the organization. Most of the organizations said they would welcome U.S. participation in an effective associate expert program and believed it would be a good way for Americans to gain international experience.

The Agency for International Development in 1973 entered into an agreement with the United Nations to provide the cost of hiring up to 20 experienced Agency personnel to assist in planning and implementing economic and social development programs in developing countries. Under this program, the Agency finances associate experts to work with senior U.N. representatives and host-country officials in field development programs. As of April 1976, 10 Agency officers were placed with international organizations, 2 with UNDP and 8 with FAO. While this program does assist developing countries, it is not the typical associate expert plan. Ordinarily, the associate experts are supposed to be young, inexperienced college graduates at the entry levels. The Agency personnel, however, were more experienced officers, most of whom had served in the U.S. Mission in Vietnam and needed new positions.

Some U.N. organizations have contracted directly with U.S. universities to operate field projects in developing countries. Under these contracts, the universities plan and implement the projects using their own professors for

short-term assignments. This eliminates the problem of professors losing tenure or being denied leaves of absence. It provides development experience to many Americans and a pool of potential candidates for later employment. This contracting approach could also be applicable to some U.S. private companies and consulting firms, and we believe the United States should encourage the organizations and the universities to expand the use of this technique.

### FOCUSING ON KEY POSITIONS

U.S. recruiting agencies have traditionally claimed that the most effective approach for the United States is to concentrate on placing Americans in key policymaking positions on the organizations' staffs. As pointed out in this report, the State Department and other agencies have not had much success at this effort and have not made a systematic effort to define, identify, and fill key positions.

#### Defining the objectives

The United States must have a clear objective in viewing U.S. participation in key positions. What are the priority areas of U.S. interest in the organization programs? Where can U.S. citizens make their greatest contributions to the efficiency and effectiveness of programs? What positions are important to the efficient operation and management of organizations and programs? Such questions must be answered before the United States can identify priorities and key management positions.

U.S. technical expertise and know-how are generally very highly regarded, and in such fields as business management, medicine, agriculture, engineering, and others, Americans can contribute to the efficient operation and management of U.N. organizations' programs.

#### Identifying key positions

Once the objectives and priority areas are defined, the positions must be identified. Some important positions might be filled at relatively low grades, and some high-graded positions may not be at a very high policy level. The U.S. Missions should play a major role in the identification process, because they are most familiar with the qualifications for the positions and the nuances of headquarters'

politics. This process should involve close coordination between the Missions and Washington headquarters.

Before identified positions can be sought and filled by Americans, U.S. recruiters must obtain, update, and use all information available about such positions. Information needed includes the nationality and retirement or contract expiration date of the incumbent, exact nature of the job, qualifications required, whether other Americans are working in the same department, and the selection process. The information should be updated as changes occur and used by State and other agency recruiters to anticipate and plan for important vacancies.

#### Recruiting candidates for key management positions

Senior management positions will be sought after by many organization members, and only well-qualified Americans should be sought and proposed for such positions. Recruiters must anticipate vacancies and begin their search for candidates well in advance of the selection date. They must expand their search into private industry as well as Government agencies. The approach should be comprehensive-- candidates should be sought for all appropriate key positions, and all potential sources should be contacted. Many of the same techniques suggested under intensified recruiting could be used in a more specialized manner in recruiting for senior management positions.

#### Supporting U.S. candidates

U.S. candidates submitted for senior management positions should be supported with appropriate measures, focusing on publicizing the candidates' qualifications, the underparticipation of the United States, and the need for high standards of competence in the Secretariats. If the U.S. candidate is not the best available, he should not get the job. If he is the best, but is not hired, the United States should take appropriate measures to criticize the nonselection.

#### ADVANTAGES AND DISADVANTAGES OF INCREASED RECRUITING

Intensifying and expanding the U.S. recruiting system using the measures discussed above will achieve broader recruitment and greater publicity for the U.N. system. It

should bring forth many qualified candidates who have been unaware of U.N. employment possibilities or uninterested in leaving their present jobs and help to assure that the best possible U.S. candidates are being sent to the organizations.

U.S. participation in positions vital to the efficient operations and management of U.N. organizations could be increased by focusing recruitment on key positions. It should allow the United States to plan ahead and shape participation in a logical manner and make it more effective.

The major disadvantage of increased recruitment efforts is the cost involved. Hiring more recruiters, making prospecting trips, advertising, and providing innovative approaches could be expensive. We have not made a detailed estimate of the potential costs. Because the final hiring decision is made by the international organization, the United States has no assurance that this increased spending would result in increased participation by Americans in international organizations. The financial and geographical constraints presented in chapter 3 could keep the American presence down.

#### RECOMMENDATIONS

We recommend that the Secretary of State, in consultation with other concerned agencies:

- Develop realistic long-range targets for attaining optimum U.S. participation in the international organizations.
- Prepare an annual positive action plan detailing specific targets for improving participation and specific measures to be taken during the year to achieve those goals.

#### RECOMMENDATION TO THE CONGRESS

The Congress should require the Secretary of State to report annually on his implementation of the positive action plan for improving participation. This reporting could be incorporated into the annual report of the Secretary of State to the Congress, "United States Contributions to International Organizations," as required by section 2 of Public Law 81-806.

## AGENCY COMMENTS

Because of time constraints, formal comments were not obtained for this report. However, the findings were discussed with the agencies concerned.

The Department of State and the other agencies concerned do not take issue with our recommendations, and they acknowledge that the level of Americans working in U.N. organizations is about the same as previously reported. However, they believe that the United States has demonstrated progress in that the level of U.S. participation has not decreased. The agencies cited the factors mentioned in the report as inhibiting the recruitment and hiring of Americans and said that these factors are largely beyond the control of U.S. recruiters. U.S. officials stated that most recruiting decisions by the international organizations, particularly those affecting senior "key positions," are political and the number of candidates submitted by the U.S. Government has little to do with appointments. Further, the correct recruiting approach is the one they are taking-- monitoring the personnel scene and recruiting for selected positions.

However, based on recruitment results as noted in our review, the Department of State and other agencies have done little to improve the situation since we last reported, and U.S. participation in many U.N. organizations has changed little in recent years. We believe that if the U.S. Government engages in an extensive, affirmative recruitment program, more candidates with the requisite experience and qualifications would be identified, thus assuring that the best possible U.S. candidates are submitted to the organizations, which would result in more U.S. candidates being selected. We found that in many instances, the United States did not submit any candidates for positions in organizations that recognize the United States as underrepresented.

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RICHARD A. WESMAN  
 CHIEF COUNSEL AND STAFF DIRECTOR

## United States Senate

COMMITTEE ON  
 GOVERNMENT OPERATIONS  
 WASHINGTON, D.C. 20510

July 30, 1976

The Honorable Elmer B. Staats  
 Comptroller General of the United States  
 U. S. General Accounting Office  
 441 G Street, N. W.  
 Washington, D. C. 20548

Dear Elmer:

As you know, the Committee on Government Operations is currently reviewing United States involvement in international organizations.

We are familiar with the reports the General Accounting Office has issued, the testimony you have given before various Congressional committees, and your continuing concern with improving the management of U. S. participation in international organizations.

To assist the Committee I would request that GAO update its previous work by the middle of next February, including an update of your prior reports on the World Health Organization, the International Labor Organization, and the Food and Agriculture Organization. I hope you would be prepared to testify before the Committee, possibly in the early part of the next session, on your conclusions.

I would also like to have by next February a report on your current review of employment of Americans by international organizations and a report on the World Food Program and our participation in it. I would also be interested in any review you can do of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization.

I hope that you can also consider in your work the overall management and budgetary systems of the U.N., and especially the status of your efforts to encourage the establishment of independent review and evaluation systems in international organizations.

I look forward with interest to learning your thinking in this important area.

Sincerely yours,

  
 Abe Ribicoff

OFFICIALS PRIMARILY RESPONSIBLE  
FOR MANAGING U.S. PARTICIPATION IN  
INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS

		<u>Appointed or commissioned</u>
<b>SECRETARY OF STATE:</b>		
Cyrus R. Vance	Jan.	1977
Henry A. Kissinger	Sept.	1973
William P. Rogers	June	1969
 <b>ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF STATE FOR INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATION AFFAIRS:</b>		
Charles W. Maynes (designee)	Jan.	1977
Samuel W. Lewis	Dec.	1975
William B. Buffum	Feb.	1974
David H. Popper	June	1973
Samuel DePalma	Feb.	1969
 <b>U.S. REPRESENTATIVE TO THE UNITED NATIONS:</b>		
Andrew W. Young	Jan.	1977
William Scranton	Mar.	1976
Daniel Patrick Moynihan	June	1975
John A. Scali	Jan.	1973
 <b>U.S. REPRESENTATIVE TO THE EUROPEAN OFFICE OF THE UNITED NATIONS AND OTHER INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS:</b>		
Henry E. Catto, Jr.	Aug.	1976
Francis L. Dale	Jan.	1974
Jules Bassin (acting)	Apr.	1973
 <b>ADMINISTRATOR, AGENCY FOR INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT:</b>		
John J. Gilligan	Mar.	1977
John E. Murphy (acting)	Jan.	1977
Daniel Parker	Oct.	1973
 <b>SECRETARY OF AGRICULTURE:</b>		
Robert Bergland	Jan.	1977
John A. Knebel	Nov.	1976
Earl L. Butz	Dec.	1971

**APPENDIX II**

**APPENDIX II**

**SECRETARY OF HEALTH, EDUCATION, AND  
WELFARE:**

Joseph A. Califano, Jr.  
David Mathews  
Caspar W. Weinberger

**Appointed or  
commissioned**

Jan. 1977  
Aug. 1975  
Feb. 1973

**SECRETARY OF LABOR:**

F. Ray Marshall  
William J. Usery  
John T. Dunlop  
Peter J. Brennan

Jan. 1977  
Feb. 1976  
Mar. 1975  
Nov. 1972