

The Children and the Nations

To my research assistant, Céline

The Children and the Nations

The Story of Unicef 

Maggie Black

**With Forewords by Peter Ustinov
and Sir Robert Jackson**



The contents of this book reflect the views of the author, and do not necessarily reflect the views of the United Nations Children's Fund or any other United Nations organization.

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Maggie Black
New York

Introduction

There are those in our world whose pleasure it is to speak ill of the United Nations, as though that organization were the source of all their frustrations, a barrier to what they regard as a healthy nationalism, and as money down the drain.

It is always difficult to argue with such people, since by nature they are more adept at expressing opinions of their own than at listening to those of others, and therefore have difficulties with the rules of debate, and the fundamental principles of democracy.

Because of this, they regard themselves as essentially political animals, always alive to any quirk of national policy not to their liking, forever writing to newspapers and to Congressmen in order to express their outrage at this or that. As often as not, they are members of pressure groups to right real or imagined wrongs, and to protect themselves against often peaceful folk who do not happen to share their views.

It stands to reason that once such people find it hard to stomach internal democracy, any form of democracy tinged with (or, in their views, tarnished with) internationalism is bound to act as an intolerable provocation.

A sophisticated idea such as the United Nations, born of the world's deceptions, and the errors of the League of Nations, which, on top of other novelties, gives small nations the illusion of being as worthy of attention as the greatest powers on this planet, is the ultimate of impertinences to them.

It stands to reason, therefore, that the agencies of the United Nations—the shop as opposed to the shop window of the General Assembly—have come in for their own share of misconception and abuse.

The International Labour Organization and UNESCO have had more than the usual share of marching and countermarching, of threat and of gesture. Even Unicef, the organization with the least controversial of platforms, comes in for its regular ration of suspicion and abuse.

'Haven't we enough undernourished and poor children of our own without bothering with those of other countries?' The cry usually emanates from rich parts of the developed world, and one must admit that, while one is often saddened by the degree of poverty in developing countries, one is sometimes shocked by the prevalence of poverty in wealthy countries. But it surely does not need an international organization to help solve problems

which are not those of dire necessity, but of policy.

Unicef directs its energies and ideas towards those who are born where history and geography have precluded a natural or available affluence, and it is right that this should be so. Its strength as an organization is the very fact of its independence from religious or political colour. One remembers that in Nigeria, Unicef was encouraged to continue its mission of mercy immediately after the conclusion of the civil war over breakaway Biafra at a time when other organizations were denied this urgent access. One may also recall the appeals from the Governments of both South and North Vietnam, as well as from the Viet Cong, for Unicef to become active even before the cessation of hostilities in order to save as many young lives as possible as the chaos of the final debacle engulfed them.

Nowadays, the initials remain, even though Unicef is no longer called the United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund, but merely the United Nations Children's Fund—no doubt because the emergency is ongoing and perpetual. There are always conflicts, famine and tragic migrations in the news. There has never been so much for Unicef and its sister organizations with overlapping interests, such as the UN High Commissioner for Refugees and the World Health Organization, to face up to.

At a time in which it is fashionable to reduce national contributions to international organizations in order to find funds for sections deemed imperative, such as defence, the ingenuity and will to survive of these servants of humanity are put to a severe test. It is remarkable with what resilience they have met the challenge.

Unicef has helped develop, and is now promoting worldwide, a cure for diarrhoeal dehydration, that great killer of babies, which costs the equivalent of 11 cents US a packet . . . hardly an extravagance. Unicef has also estimated that it is possible in this day and age to immunize all the children in the world against the handful of lethal diseases which affect childhood for a cost amounting to less than that of three strategic bombers.

Now, certainly to its pilot and to its designer one of these aircraft is a thing of beauty—and as an object of sheer design, it may well awaken feelings of aesthetic admiration in many of us. But let us compare it to a child. First of all, for all its extraordinary technical complication, it is far less sophisticated than a child. Its capacities are all destructive, and it cannot develop. It can merely age. That a child can do also, but a child can grow, *in size and in experience*. It can even, if it has the inclination, become the master of such a machine, or its victim, if we all lose control over the monsters we never cease creating.

Think, every time that such a machine falls from the sky by accident or design, that the supply of vaccine which could have protected millions of the world's children has been splashed uselessly over the landscape.

The time has come in the development of the human animal for a

decision to be reached. Which are more important, people or things? Despite the fact that we spend infinitely more on things, on the pretext that these things are for the ultimate benefit of people, those who regard a particular nation as being above the rest instead of part of the rest must forgive me if I vote for people. People of every colour, every race, every belief. People.

Peter Ustinov

Peter Ustinov is known worldwide for his accomplishments as an actor, producer, novelist, playwright, designer and film star. He has been a Goodwill Ambassador for Unicef since the late 1960s, representing Unicef in television specials and other benefit events in various parts of the world and has travelled extensively for Unicef, both officially and unofficially, to a large number of countries.

Foreword

by Sir Robert Jackson, A.C., K.C.V.O., C.M.G., O.B.E.

It gives me a special pleasure to write this foreword for I have had the good fortune to be associated with this remarkable organization, Unicef, since it was first conceived in 1946.

Maggie Black has emphasized that this is not an official history. However, from my own personal knowledge both of Unicef and of official histories published by various organizations within the UN system, I doubt very much if any other record will ever provide a more comprehensive, clearer, or more readable description of Unicef's wonderful work.

Not only today's generation of children, but also their parents have no recollection of the unbelievable horrors and endless human suffering which gave rise to the idea of a special UN organization for children, tens of millions of whom suffered so terribly during the second World War. I would therefore like to recapitulate the events that led to the creation of this institution, whose work over the last forty years has expanded continuously until it is now vitally concerned with children and their mothers in over 100 countries.

Anyone who served in the second World War and helped to deal with its aftermath witnessed death, destruction and suffering on a scale beyond human comprehension. Great cities were reduced to rubble, towns and villages were obliterated. Vast tracts of eastern Europe and the USSR were subjected again and again to the devastation of 'scorched earth'. The tornadoes of war swept through the Pacific islands and African deserts which were left once more silent and empty, littered with graves, rusted guns and armour. Finally, to crown the incredible saga of horror, came the climax of Hiroshima which cast a lasting shadow of fear and foreboding over the entire world.

And while all this destruction took place, there were other more terrible, hidden horrors. Millions of men and women were herded into concentration camps, tortured, used as living experiments, exterminated. Even more became human flotsam and jetsam scattered all over Europe by turbulent forces of an intensity never before experienced in this world; ultimately they became known officially as 'displaced persons'—homeless, hungry, bereft of hope.

Within this maelstrom of terror, tens of millions of children struggled to

survive. Not for them the simple pleasures of childhood; all they knew was constant hunger, constant fear and, all too often, no homes and no-one to love or protect them. Great numbers were orphans; others had been separated from their parents as a deliberate act of government policy.

Having personally observed this unending grief and misery in every theatre of war, I was left with one absolute conviction: nothing was more important in the postwar world than to try to do everything possible to succour these children, the most innocent and most heart-breaking of all the victims of that terrible conflict.

As the Allied forces began to liberate occupied countries from 1944 onwards, it was the disclosure of the concentration camps that produced, understandably, the most sensational effect on people all over the world. Their first reaction was one of horror and disbelief, followed immediately by a desire to do everything possible to help the survivors. Yet, to those of us who were responsible for providing relief and rehabilitation, the needs of those millions of children in the war-torn countries and in the camps for displaced persons were equally urgent, for the children represented the next generation in whose hands would rest the possibility of creating a better world.

What could be done to restore a war-ravaged planet? Winston Churchill and President Roosevelt, with their principal advisors, had shown great foresight and imagination during 1941 and 1942. During these most difficult war years, they took action that led to the creation in 1943 of an international organization deliberately designed to provide relief and rehabilitation, immediately hostilities came to an end, to all countries. UNRRA—the United Nations Relief and Rehabilitation Administration—became the first of the many institutions that now make up the modern UN system. Its first Director-General was Governor Herbert Lehman, a distinguished American statesman and philanthropist, whose Senior Deputy I had the honour to become towards the end of 1944.

UNRRA began operations in 1944 as Allied forces were liberating countries in the Mediterranean and the Balkans, and progressively assumed greater responsibilities until the Armistice in May 1945. It was then inundated with an avalanche of requests from governments all over Europe in desperate need of assistance. In addition, the Allied forces, wishing to demobilize as quickly as possible, turned over to UNRRA responsibility for the pathetic survivors of the concentration camps, and also for some 8,500,000 men, women and children displaced by the ravages of unrestricted warfare. The Governments of the Ukraine and Byelorussia—the two countries most devastated by the war—also asked for assistance, and shortly afterwards, when hostilities with Japan ended, war-torn countries in Asia—China, Korea, and the Philippines—joined the chorus in need.

In the immediate aftermath of the conflict, action by UNRRA was a matter of life and death. Despite the political and practical difficulties that

often impeded its work, and with the invaluable support of the Allied forces, hundreds of millions of people survived as a result of its operations. Three special responsibilities were invariably given absolute priority: the survivors of the concentration camps, the displaced persons and, above all, the children. The success with which it shouldered its task is illustrated by the fact that, in dramatic contrast to 1918–1919 when it is estimated that over thirty million people perished from influenza and typhus, there were no major disease epidemics during the very harsh winter in Europe of 1945–1946. 1, 2, 3.

1) By early 1946 UNRRA was moving essential relief supplies to over twenty countries on a scale that exceeded the movement of munitions by the Allied forces during the war. The preservation of life dominated every action and speed was the constant order of the day. A remarkable range of goods was procured, shipped and distributed: every form of basic food stuffs; clothing (new and second-hand provided as a result of voluntary appeals); materials that could provide shelter (military surpluses were a goldmine, and provided at bargain prices); medical and dental supplies and equipment, vaccines, hospital equipment; seeds, fertilizers, agricultural machinery (tractors were flown into Yugoslavia during the early months of 1945 in a desperate effort to secure a harvest soon after the war ended); industrial machinery; telecommunications in every form; aircraft for transport, and for malaria spraying; large numbers of locomotives, thousands of railway wagons, tens of thousands of trucks (many provided by Allied forces); fishing trawlers and nets; Bailey bridges; sewing machines; about a quarter of a million horses and mules (the latter used for distribution of food in mountain areas); tens of thousands of dairy cattle (with their rumps branded UNRRA); and innumerable fowls and chickens—the range was endless. All those supplies preserved the lives of those hundreds of millions of people in three continents, and they were also of critical importance in UNRRA's work of looking after the survivors of the concentration camps, the displaced persons and, above all, the children. In today's currency, UNRRA had about \$20 billion at its disposal—and there was never enough—and employed about 15,000 professional staff and some 35,000 local staff. 111

While UNRRA was doing everything in its power to provide the supplies essential for the preservation of life, it was simultaneously making every effort to nurse and endeavour to restore strength to those who, miraculously, still survived from the horrors of the concentration camps. Many of the millions of displaced persons had also undergone great suffering and hardship. Wherever possible, the obvious thing was to get them back to their homelands, and here again the US Air Force and the Royal Air Force played a decisive role with UNRRA in moving six million people. Over two millions, alas, remained and UNRRA therefore initiated an operation designed to find new homes for them in other parts of the world. Although nearly two million were resettled, still more refugees from eastern Europe

arrived during the period 1945–1948.

UNRRA had realized from the outset that this work would extend beyond its own lifetime, and it therefore advanced proposals to the first General Assembly of the UN in 1946 for the establishment of a new and more permanent agency which, in due course, could take over UNRRA's responsibilities. The proposals were adopted, and the International Refugee Organization (IRO) came into being, which would later become the UN High Commission for Refugees (UNHCR).

It is worth noting that UNRRA's operations in relation to displaced persons led to an acute political confrontation, for certain governments claimed that they alone could decide the future of those of their nationals in UNRRA's care. UNRRA resisted this claim successfully on the ground that the individual alone could decide what he or she wished to do, and in that process UNRRA laid the foundation of what became the UN Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

UNRRA's performance was impressive. But then came a bombshell. Sir Winston Churchill, who had played such a critical role in the creation of UNRRA, also prepared its death warrant. On 6 March 1946, he gave his famous 'Iron Curtain' speech at Fulton, Missouri. The Cold War had become so intense that UNRRA's days were numbered. Probably the most difficult political aspect of UNRRA's operations was the fact that so much of its assistance went to the Socialist countries in eastern Europe, while it depended for its funds almost entirely on the US and its Western allies. Under these circumstances it was most improbable that future financial support could be mobilized. Nevertheless, UNRRA carried on for another two years, continuing to preserve great numbers of lives in many parts of the world, to provide for the survivors of the concentration camps and for the displaced persons, and to safeguard the children—its most important responsibility.

In many respects, the suffering of the children provoked the deepest reaction of all. Their deeply-sunken eyes, reminiscent of small, frightened animals, and their emaciated little bodies can never be forgotten. Malnutrition was starkly apparent everywhere, but even more heart-rending was the ever present sadness and sense of hopelessness. You rarely saw a smile, and the eyes were always fearful and all too often suspicious. These were not children as we know children; they barely existed. They could well be regarded as the ultimate victims of that global conflagration: they had lost the most precious years of their lives. And the picture was the same wherever one travelled—in the displaced persons camps in Germany, in Poland, in Austria; in the refugee camps in the Middle East (whose inhabitants were almost all Poles); in China, in the Ukraine, in Greece, everywhere. Obviously they needed a proper diet; they needed medical attention; they needed proper homes. But, above all, my deepest impression was that they needed love.

Most of those children, thank God, had one priceless asset. They were resilient. Of course, the effects of malnutrition would take some time to correct (in some cases, alas, permanent damage had been done); but once they were treated as all children should be treated, the response was wonderful. There were still tens of thousands who were orphans, and large numbers separated from their parents. As more normal conditions returned to the war-devastated countries, local organizations and local families were able to give invaluable help, thus reinforcing the efforts of UNRRA's medical and welfare staffs, and of the many nongovernmental organizations that made such a vital contribution to this aspect of UNRRA's work.

Gradually, some degree of order appeared out of chaos. Once it was clear beyond doubt that a child was an orphan, possibilities for adoption could be explored (carefully), and many new homes were found. But the problem of children separated from their parents was the most complex of all those we faced, and aroused more profound emotions than any other. From the outset it was realized that there could be no complete solution; tens of thousands of children were scattered in camps spread all over Europe, nearly as many parents had been swept into other parts of the continent by the merciless force of that warfare. It was a matter of doing everything possible to reunite as many as could be traced.

If the problem is likened to a criminal investigation (and, indeed, the substance of the problem represented one of the greatest crimes committed during the war) then it would have tested all the professional skill, imagination and commitment of the finest detective force in the world. The only written evidence that could help to solve it was, at best, small bits and pieces. In a few camps there might be a register or some kind of record; by a miracle the child might have some means of identification. But all too often the children did not even know their full names. As for the parents, there might be a document or, vitally important, a photograph. Oral evidence? Little could be expected from the children. Much more, of course, from the parents, but very frequently the circumstances they described had totally changed as a result of the war.

And who were the detectives who devoted themselves to this, the most moving of human challenges? The great majority were women from national Red Cross societies and voluntary organizations, working within the framework of UNRRA. During the war, women had frequently demonstrated their superiority over men in conducting research and in analyzing the results of photo-reconnaissance, for they were more painstaking, pertinacious and patient. Those qualities were demonstrated to the full when it came to dealing with the infinitely detailed and incomplete jigsaw puzzle represented by those thousands of children; in addition, the profound emotion of maternal care exercised a compelling influence. Without exception, everyone involved in that work demonstrated dedication, remarkable imagination, and seemed never to rest from their labour of

love. Photographs were a vital factor in the process of reunion; sadly, it was often a case of attempted reunion. Virtually all children were photographed, and, where possible, compared with earlier pictures in the possession of parents. Frequently, parents were brought to inspect photographs in the hope that they might be able to recognize a child. The work never ceased, it just went on and on.

It is difficult to conceive of a greater emotional experience than to have witnessed that moment of contact, after years of separation and suspense and sorrow, between the child and the possible parent or parents. If it was, in reality, the reunion of the child with its mother and father, the reaction was ecstasy—not only for the family, but also for those who had the wonderful good fortune to bring it about. If, tragically, it became clear that it was not a reunion of a family, the reaction, if anything, was even more searing. It was an experience that was almost beyond description: a few moments of hope, of expectancy, of shining eyes, and then the look of total despair, the retreat, and the return to numbing sadness. My memories of those occasions, often on the central railway station in Vienna—memories which bring back those moments of ecstasy and of heartbreak—are as vivid today, forty years later, as they were then. Over the years many successful reunions were brought about as a result of the extraordinary efforts and dedication of those wonderful women, whose work must have remained with them always as the most profoundly satisfying experience of their lives.

Another very clear memory of UNRRA's efforts to help children remains. After the completion of the great operation to return to their national homes all those displaced persons who were eligible for repatriation, negotiations were initiated with governments all over the world to accept those who were either stateless or feared to return to their own countries of origin. Unbelievably, for over a year, not one government—even those of countries that had not been combatants during the war—would receive any of these unfortunate people. However, in July 1946 the Prime Minister of Australia, the Hon. J. B. Chifley, agreed, as a major act of policy, to accept immediately 100,000 of them, including many children. This began a great immigration programme which was ultimately to provide new lives for many hundreds of thousands of people, and to bring great benefits to their newly-adopted country. Australia having broken the log-jam, discussions were held a few days later with the Prime Minister of New Zealand, the Hon. Peter Fraser, and they, too, were successful. This made it possible to bring pressure on countries in North and South America, and some in Europe, to follow suit. Ultimately, new homes were found for some two million of these displaced persons.

Within that great sea of misery, there was one particular tragedy which aroused the world's sympathy. In September 1939, over a million Poles fled east in the face of the Nazi onslaught. Ultimately, less than 100,000 arrived

on the northern border of Iran, the remainder having perished during their long and perilous journey. As the war progressed, the survivors became the responsibility of the British authorities who accommodated them in settlements in Karachi, Nairobi and Ismailia. These were administered by a new organization, the Middle East Relief and Refugee Administration (MERRA) based in Cairo.

A census determined that there were precisely 999 orphans in the settlements: not 998 nor 1000, but precisely 999! Somewhat naturally, those orphans became famous simply because of their number. As soon as it was possible to do so (in late 1944) UNRRA took over responsibility from MERRA for those refugees, not all of whom wished to return to their homeland. How to ensure that everything possible was done to give those 999 orphans love, protection and new lives? As soon as they were mentioned to Mr Fraser he exclaimed: 'Of course we'll take them'—and where better in the world could they start new lives than in New Zealand? By then, the famous 999 had been in my life continuously for nearly five years, and when the Prime Minister gave his approval my reaction can easily be imagined. It was natural that a careful record should be kept of their future progress and without a single exception they developed into splendid New Zealanders, to the delight of all concerned. (About a year later, Mr Wladyslaw Gomulka, who was then Vice-Premier of Poland, complained good naturedly that UNRRA had 'stolen' some of his children, but UNRRA's reputation in Poland was remarkable—'To us, UNRRA is a holy word'—and he quickly agreed that they could not have gone to a better country.) That tiny little operation within a vast worldwide enterprise remains one of the best memories of UNRRA's most rewarding involvement with children.

These recollections underline how deep and widespread was UNRRA's involvement with children. Within the framework of the fundamental principle of preserving human life, the well-being of children was always UNRRA's paramount concern. Unintentionally, Churchill's 'Iron Curtain' speech in March 1946 planted the first seed of a unique tree that would one day grow into Unicef as we know it today. Churchill's speech meant that UNRRA's life was limited; how to preserve the most essential of its functions? One action of critical importance was to ensure that, whatever happened, other UN institutions could carry on the most important elements of its work. Within a month, UNRRA's senior staff prepared a policy document, describing how its residual functions could best be preserved. Some of its work could be transferred naturally to the UN itself (then just coming to life), and to the UN Food and Agricultural Organization (FAO), the UN Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), and to the Interim Commission of the World Health Organization (WHO). As a result of UNRRA's foresight, an International Refugee Organization had been approved by the General Assembly a few months before in February 1946, and it would be relatively easy to transfer staff and sufficient

funds ('seed money') to get the new institution on its feet. But what of the most important responsibility of all, children?

When the policy memorandum of 25 June 1946 went to governments, it made a special plea that effective child feeding should be continued in every country in which UNRRA had been operating, and that continuity of UNRRA's work would be preserved. The memorandum ended with an unmistakable warning to all governments: 'These matters cannot be left in abeyance.' That part of the memorandum provided the seed with which Unicef was conceived.

The memorandum was considered by UNRRA's Governing Council at its Fifth Session in August 1946, where various representatives of governments gave it impressive support under the leadership of Fiorello La Guardia, who had succeeded Governor Lehman as Director-General a few months earlier. The Governing Council adopted a Resolution (103) which recommended that an International Children's Fund should be created and, indeed, embodied a suggestion advanced by UNRRA (informally to avoid difficulties with the specialized agencies) that any funds remaining at the end of its operations should be transferred to the new children's organization.

After that, the Economic and Social Council gave its blessing, and then finally, the General Assembly on 11 December 1946 approved the creation of a United Nations International Children's *Emergency* Fund. The word 'emergency' was of vital importance in securing the support of some governments that were not keen to see any new institution established which resembled even part of UNRRA's work. In one form or another, the 'emergency' has continued for forty years. Long may it continue!

Shortly after the passage of the resolution, Maurice Pate was appointed the first Executive Director of Unicef. It was an inspired choice. During the next two years, as UNRRA gradually wound down its operations, both staff and funds were transferred to Unicef. The passage of the resolution in the Governing Council, and all the subsequent development gave great pleasure and satisfaction to all those of us in UNRRA who had been involved with children. We were confident that our precious human legacy was in safe hands.

With the passage of time, and Unicef's success, it was understandable that many individuals should feel that they played a special role in its creation. Undoubtedly several men and women made outstanding contributions once the recommendation for continuing assistance to children was put before UNRRA Governing Council, and stimulated the process that enabled the seed of Unicef to be fertilized and nurtured. But there would never have been a Unicef if there had not been an UNRRA, a fact in which many of us who lived through the postwar UNRRA experience feel a special kind of pride.

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All these early developments in Unicef's life are admirably described by Maggie Black, who then goes on to tell the story of Unicef's first forty years. It is a fascinating record of the evolution of an international organization which has succeeded in making the whole world aware of its responsibilities for safeguarding its most priceless asset: children. The book is divided into five distinct parts, each of which deals in chronological order with a particular period in Unicef's life. This arrangement has the advantage of showing clearly how the organization has adjusted itself successfully to the constantly changing political forces since the second World War—indeed it has been a period of both political and scientific revolution—while simultaneously taking initiatives and exploring new methods which might improve children's lives.

The first part deals with Unicef's first four years when it could be regarded as a direct offshoot of UNRRA, although its resources at that time were, of course, tiny in comparison. It soon began to move in new directions and, as its work progressed, new experience was gained and the organization was consolidated. Unicef developed a very distinct character of its own. It was most fortunate that such was the case, for in 1950 the US—incredible as it may seem today—led a campaign to terminate Unicef's existence. This action, of course, reflected the same attitude that had brought an end to UNRRA's invaluable work. Fortunately, this attack was repulsed, and Unicef was able to survive, thus enabling innumerable children all over the world to benefit from its aid in the years to come.

Having overcome that crisis in its existence, Unicef continued to undertake new programmes during the decade of the 1950s, which forms the second part of the chronicle. Many of these grew out of programmes which began in Europe in the postwar era, some—malaria control, campaigns against treponemal disease—with links tracing back to UNRRA programmes. Assistance was given to an international onslaught against tuberculosis, first in Europe and then in other countries; support was also provided for campaigns against yaws, leprosy and trachoma throughout Asia, Latin America, Africa—the parts of the world then known as 'underdeveloped'. All these activities achieved much success, but the great campaign to eradicate malaria, while making notable progress, met an exceptionally tough opponent in the *anopheles* mosquito who, despite massive attacks, often 'lived to fight another day'.

All this activity by Unicef in the field of health naturally brought it into close contact with WHO. As a result of opposition in the US Congress, WHO had got off to a slow start; two years elapsed before sufficient governments ratified the agreement negotiated by the Interim Commission in 1946 and thus brought the organization to life. Every specialized agency within the UN system is very sensitive about its independence and its constitutional responsibilities, and it was natural that at times strains should develop between the two organizations as to where the responsibilities of

each in the field of child health began and ended. However, commonsense, professional interest in the substance of each problem and, above all, recognition that both institutions existed to help children and mothers in need, steadily led to an effective partnership that has brought benefit to all concerned.

During this period, the General Assembly confirmed (in 1953) Unicef's existence indefinitely, at the same time recognizing that its primary focus should be the children who suffered not from the temporary calamity of war, but the permanent disaster of poverty and underdevelopment. The words 'international' and 'emergency' were dropped from Unicef's title, but the acronym was retained because it had by now become so well-known. The need for Unicef's existence has never again been challenged, and it is now most improbable that it ever will be.

Maggie Black very appropriately selects for the third part of her record the first Development Decade, 1960 to 1970. This was a time of great political and economic activity, with the Third World literally exploding into existence as country after country in Africa attained its independence. The effect of this political revolution on the UN itself, and on the UN system, was profound; the entire character of the system was changed as new voices were heard, and appeals were made to consolidate political independence by economic and social development. In one sense, the 'balance of power' in the UN was changed for all time. When the UNRRA Agreement was signed on 9 November 1943, there were forty-four member States; today there are 159. The governments of the older, industrialized nations, now outnumbered, were compelled to listen to the claims of the new, and adjust their policies accordingly.

All these developments naturally had a very direct effect on Unicef, and its Executive Board and senior officials sought to define new policies. After much debate, it was agreed (rightly) that children should be regarded as a resource—and, indeed, the most precious resource of all—and as a vital element in national development. Quite apart from the essential needs of the child in Asia and in Latin America and in some parts of Europe, the needs in Africa had a special significance. In large parts of that continent food production has always been hazardous as a result of climatic conditions. The fragility of the family food supply as well as shortages of nourishing proteins and vitamins have resulted in widespread malnutrition. These conditions placed great numbers of children at risk, and Unicef soon found itself forging new partnerships with the FAO and the World Food Programme.

During this period, there were at least three other important events in Unicef's life. First, the UN itself and all relevant institutions within the UN system, became actively concerned with population growth. Once more, Unicef found itself involved with a global problem, particularly from the point of view of the negative impact of the large families, poorly spaced, on

the health and well-being of the individual child. Second, the Nobel Peace Prize was awarded to Unicef (in 1965)— an honour which was well-earned, and one which served to consolidate the organization's role and reputation still further. The only sadness was that Maurice Pate, whose contribution to Unicef is unsurpassed, died shortly before the award was announced.

The third event was the tragedy of the Nigerian civil war and here Unicef played the key role in providing humanitarian relief. That it was able to do this during a civil war within a member State was made possible by what might be described as 'a fluke of history'. When the resolution that brought Unicef into existence was being drafted for the General Assembly, much of the work was undertaken by UNRRA's legal staff. During one meeting, a senior UNRRA official, exasperated and frustrated by the politics that were bringing the organization's operations to an end, exclaimed: 'For God's sake, keep governments out of this as much as you can. Make it possible for the new show to give help to mothers and children direct'. While the basic resolution on Unicef requires that governments agree to Unicef operations, in some delicate political situations successive Executive Directors have been able to interpret this provision flexibly. The art is *not* to persuade governments to agree that Unicef should undertake activities, but to ensure that the government does not say no and then, in the absence of a prohibition, to get on with the job as quickly and discreetly as possible. That flexibility was of great value in making it possible to provide assistance for mothers and children in rebel-held territory during the Nigerian civil war. Some years later it would prove to be the key that enabled Unicef to open the political door, and so take the lead in alleviating the effects of what some regard as the greatest individual tragedy in history: that in Kampuchea in 1979–81.

The next decade (until 1980) represents the fourth part of the story, and is described by the author as 'The Era of Alternatives', a period when still further dimensions were added to Unicef's increasing range of activities. Particular attention was paid to the availability of clean drinking water, and great progress was made in rural areas. In 1974, the Sixth Special Session of the General Assembly reflected with dramatic clarity the great change in the composition of member States, and what the new nations felt should be their place in the world. This led to the definition of a new international economic order which gave great impetus to alternative approaches to development. Unicef articulated its own version, 'the basic services strategy', in 1976. Hitherto, the transfer of knowledge and experience had been almost entirely from the older, industrialized countries to the new nations. Now the knowledge and the expertise that had always reposed in the Third World was recognized. Another expression of the search for alternatives could be seen in a major change in the philosophy of what was meant by 'health care for all'. At a meeting of ministers of health in Alma Ata, USSR, in 1978, a new 'Primary Health Care' model was designed, based on

pioneering work in rural communities. The concept of Primary Health Care, whose most important implications were for the health of mothers and children, was one which Unicef helped WHO to develop.

Twice in the 1970s, Unicef found itself heavily involved in major disaster operations co-ordinated by the UN. Bangladesh became independent at the end of 1971 and during the next three years the UN carried out the largest relief and rehabilitation operation ever undertaken for a single country since the days of UNRRA. Throughout that operation Unicef provided invaluable assistance, and on its completion on 31 March 1974 Unicef reverted to its normal work. Towards the end of the UN operation, it became apparent that a substantial sum of money would be available for transfer to other UN agencies to continue parts of the rehabilitation programme. Naturally each of them did all they could to secure these funds, but bearing in mind the precedent by which UNRRA provided Unicef with the financial support that brought it to life, no prizes would be offered for guessing which agency became the beneficiary!

By the middle of 1979, Unicef became involved with what could be regarded as one of the most notable operations in its remarkable record. In early January 1979, Pol Pot and his forces were driven out of what is now known as Kampuchea, and a new regime was established in Phnom Penh. During the next few months, some of the obscene atrocities practised by Pol Pot gradually became known to the outside world. For nearly four years, from 1975 onwards, the people of Kampuchea had been subjected to one of the most ruthless revolutions ever known; in some respects it was even more bestial than the horrors of the concentration camps. This had been preceded by the effective collapse of the political, economic and administrative structure of the country by its involuntary entanglement in the Vietnam war. The US Air Force, which commenced bombing secretly in March 1969, dropped on Kampuchea bombs whose destructive power was equivalent to 120 times that of the atomic bomb dropped on Hiroshima. All this created death and destruction on an almost unbelievable scale. Yet, for some extraordinary reason, it is a tragedy that is now forgotten by most of the world, but certainly not by the Kampuchean people.

About the middle of 1979, in conditions of great political difficulty, Unicef and the International Committee of the Red Cross managed to make contact with the new authorities, and about the same time FAO and voluntary agencies such as Oxfam also succeeded in visiting Phnom Penh. After many weeks of delicate, and often frustrating, negotiations Unicef and ICRC were able to initiate a relief programme, and Oxfam also began to provide assistance. The expansion of Unicef's programme within Kampuchea in 1980 and 1981—which was of critical importance in preserving life—and its equally valuable work with ICRC and the World Food Programme in looking after the great number of Khmers who had taken refuge on the border between Thailand and Kampuchea, is recounted

clearly and with sensitivity by the author.

In September 1979, because of Unicef's established record of working in co-operation with administrations which the UN General Assembly did not recognize, the Secretary-General designated Unicef the 'lead agency' for humanitarian relief inside Kampuchea. Thanks to the flexibility with which Unicef's Executive Directors had always interpreted the basic resolution governing Unicef's work, it was able with the ICRC to spearhead the relief operation in circumstances of great political sensitivity. Unicef was able to draw on the resources of the relevant specialized agencies—FAO, WHO, UNESCO—and from UNDP and WFP, their role, so to speak, being that of subcontractors. The efforts of the UN system to do its best to alleviate at least some of the unbelievable suffering of the Khmer people evoked harrowing memories in anyone who had been concerned with the Nazi concentration camps. Unicef's outstanding work in Kampuchea represents one of the finest chapters in its history.

Maggie Black then moves on to the fifth and concluding part of her book which deals with the five years from 1980 onwards. During that period, in which what is described by Unicef as 'A revolution for Child Survival' began, great changes took place. Unicef became more directly concerned with the women's movement (itself gathering momentum), as well as the phenomenon of uncontrolled urban growth in Third World cities. The world scene darkened with an economic recession, and drought and famine again struck many countries in Africa (to which Unicef responded with its customary speed and efficiency). Not only did Unicef succeed in adjusting its work to these constantly changing conditions, but it embarked on a great and ambitious campaign designed to secure the immunization of all children by 1990, and boost other measures for their survival and development.

It is essential that Unicef should continue to sink deeper roots and flourish. During the last forty years Unicef has accomplished great things; perhaps the most significant has been its success in making people of the world aware that the most important reason for living their own lives is to cherish and safeguard the lives of the children who will make the world of tomorrow.

Clearly a great deal has been done, but it is almost insignificant compared to what is still waiting to be done. One statistic is enough; a statistic that Unicef has emphasized again and again. Forty thousand children are still dying unnecessarily each day, and Mankind has the power to save them. Obviously, Unicef cannot resolve this vital global problem by itself, but it can undoubtedly play a unique role. Indeed, it is already pointing the way to solutions. For that reason, all who believe in the future of the human race and the preservation of this planet will pray that Unicef will continue to go from strength to strength.

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I should like to end this Foreword on a personal note. Looking back on a long involvement with the UN system, I know of nothing, apart from the effectiveness of UNRRA's operations, that has given me greater pleasure than to have participated in the earliest steps that led to the creation of Unicef, to have been able to provide assistance with UNRRA staff and funds, and to have observed with admiration and respect its subsequent work both in headquarters and in the field.

Unicef has been blessed with three outstanding Executive Directors, and I have had the good fortune to be their friend: Maurice Pate from the time he was first considered for the appointment until his death, Henry (Harry) Labouisse from the time of our work together during the second World War, James (Jim) Grant who started his international career with the UNRRA Mission in China in 1945. More friendships with Unicef's staff were forged during the Bangladesh, Indo China and Kampuchean operations, when the Secretary-General entrusted me with the responsibility for co-ordinating each of them. It is therefore natural that Unicef should occupy a special position in my life, and leave me with constant feelings of affection and gratitude.

Maggie Black has written an excellent account of Unicef's first forty years, and it is a book which is not only full of interest for anyone who is interested in children, or the way in which international organizations work, but one which will undoubtedly give pleasure and satisfaction to all those who have been fortunate enough to have any association with Unicef's work and its dedicated staff.

Sir Robert Jackson, currently Senior Advisor to the United Nations, first served with the incipient UN system as Senior Deputy Director-General of the United Nations Relief and Rehabilitation Administration from 1944 to 1947. He had previously served in the Navy and British Army, and was later Director-General of a large Anglo-American paramilitary organization—the Middle East Supply Centre—which became the model for the Economic Commissions in the UN. When UNRRA completed its work he became Assistant Secretary-General for Co-ordination at Lake Success, and after that held a variety of appointments in the UK, India, Pakistan, Australia and West Africa. From 1961 he has held several senior appointments in the UN and has been involved with development plans and projects in some sixty countries. He was married to Barbara Ward (Baroness Jackson of Lodsworth, D.B.E., F.R.S.) who died in 1981.