What’s at stake: The United Nations was created in response to two World Wars so horrendously lethal that the century is recalled for its mass slaughters and atrocities. The central purpose of the Charter of the UN, largely instigated and written by US representatives, is to end wars of aggression by nations. That ideal is still urgently important to the world, and although the wars have not been ended, the good provided by the cooperation of nations through the UN is incalculable in suffering diminished and lives saved. And let's not forget that during the Cold War both of the belligerents used and undermined the UN for their own purposes. Today let us return to the Charter, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the dozens of extraordinarily helpful UN agencies—as well as to the Geneva Conventions and to the Nuremberg Principles—for building a Culture of Peace and Ecology for the generations to come.
THE UN ANOTHER CORRUPT GUVMENT?  
BY Dick Bennett

A friend wrote to me: Dick-What do you think is the credibility for the statement "The UN is just one more corrupt international organization"?

My reply: What is not credible is the dogmatic dislike of government promoted by one Party in the US. Affirmative government has proven its immense usefulness to people from the Land Grant Universities and County Agents to Roosevelt's New Deal and Social Security to the National Institutes of Health and the Environmental Protection Agency. These organizations are corrupt?

The UN suffers the same calumny. Haters of "guvment" also hate the UN in the abstract as dogmas go. But its subsidiary bodies--its agencies (ILO, FAO, UNESCO, WHO, ICAO, UPU, ITU, WMO, IMO, WIPO, IFAD, UNDIO, and UNWTO) and related bodies (IAEA), all part of the United Nations system of administered by the International Civil Service--are carte blanche corrupt? The unsupportable slander is outrageous.

But we have been talking about US and UN civil, civilian society. If we turn to the military the word "corrupt" might apply. Not that individually military personnel are any more venal that their civilian counterparts. But if you compare the civilian system with the military system you confront the corruption not denoted by the synonyms of venality but by those of subversion and defilement. We are guided from birth not to kill other humans. Empathy, compassion are taught as the best, the true human nature. That is why so many young veterans are killing themselves, the consequence of what we now recognize as "moral injury." They were forced in basic military training to renounce their moral and spiritual
commitment to other humans, were sent to war against them, and to kill them. And then, the deeply, morally sensitive ones, kill themselves, but I suspect few who kill escape remorse.

Against this dismaying warping of our society, and cruel perversion of our youth, we can oppose wars, and we can turn to the United Nations for support. United, not separate and warring. Not conquering and occupying the world through armed force. Instead of our burgeoning, bristling westward Empire surrounding China and North Korea, for example—from San Diego/Vandenberg Missile Site/Seattle/Trident submarines/Hawai‘i to Guam/Okinawa/SK/Philippines/Australia—let us convert this dangerous, threatening, armed force to helping E. Asia prepare and adapt for the storms and floods and droughts ahead. Then we'll have real security. And the military suicides will end.

Is it any mystery why our mainstream media underreports the UN and especially its achievements? I urge you to join me in supporting the UNITED NATIONS.
UN ON SEX AND GENDER

The elimination of the violent practice of female genital mutilations was one of the Sustainable Development Goals adopted unanimously by UN member states in 2015. On Feb. 5, 2016, UN officials declared 2030 as the target. UNICEF estimates that “at least 200 million girls and women…have undergone FGM. But since 2008 more than 15,000 communities in 20 countries have abandoned the practice, “and five countries have passed legislation criminalizing it.”

On Feb. 4 the UN Postal Administration unveiled six new stamps that promote equality for and celebrate the diversity of LGBT. They are part of UN Free and Equal, a global campaign to promote equal rights and reduce crimes against and criminalization of LGBT throughout the world.

United Nations Population Fund

News. 17 March 2016. The time is now: A call to end female genital mutilation, child marriage and son selection by 2030. “When I was 12-years old, my family ...”

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United Nations Population Fund

UN Mine-clearing

As of mid-December, 2001, Afghanistan had “a small army of mine-clearers—about 4,500 of them, most employed by half a dozen U.N.-affiliated agencies” Their work was suspended Oct. 7, when the U.S. began bombing Taliban and al-Qaida targets, but resumed Nov. 14 in parts of Afghanistan after the Taliban fled Kabul.
United Nations Disarmament - Landmines

Landmines come in two varieties: anti-personnel and anti-vehicle mines. Both have caused great suffering in the past decades. Anti-personnel landmines are...

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The vision of the United Nations is a world free of the threat of landmines and explosive remnants of war, where individuals and communities live in a safe ...

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PAUL GREENBERG’s MENCKEN MOMENT OF HATING THE UN by Dick Bennett
Sometimes even ordinarily balanced individuals become rabid when they try and fail to discuss the UN. This happened recently to Paul Greenberg, the Editorial Page Editor of the *Arkansas Democrat-Gazette*, Arkansas’ leading newspaper. In a column discussing good and bad books, under the latter, after having quoted “the late great” H. L Mencken’s bashing of Woodrow Wilson’s *The New Freedom* in support of the League of Nations (“hollowness…ludicrous strutting and bombast…greasy and meaningless words”), Greenberg writes the following about the United Nations: “That description brings to mind today’s naifs who go into raptures over the League’s successor, the United Nations, or just takes that outfit at its worthless word—whether in Syria or anywhere else.”

Greenberg is well-educated and elaborately articulate; he is a wordsman; he chooses his words carefully, especially when he wishes to put someone down. So let us look at his words carefully.

Everyone enthusiastic over something a UN agency has accomplished is an inexperienced person (“naif”) who feels ecstasy (“rapture”), as with being transported to another sphere of
existence? Rather, in my experience, an encounter with UN efforts to relieve suffering (WHO, UNHCR, and so on), for example, the feeling has been admiration for the conscience and hard work. The UN is an “outfit,” according to my dictionary a “business firm engaged in a particular commercial enterprise”? The UN in all its labors for the world for all of its seventy years is “worthless”? Even the Peacekeepers are mainly honest, and their rapes and disease transmission are much the result of UN dependence upon national volunteer armies. Greenberg knows the extraordinary complexity of the UN. He’s not dumb, but he is malicious in reducing the UN to an “outfit” and its admirers to “naifs.”

Or, in case I am not sufficiently appreciative of his enjoyment of word-play, perhaps at that moment he thought he was the “late great” not only at the slash and smash but at the sneer and snide? Or maybe, an interesting possibility, he wanted to explore how far he could go in playing with his Pulitzer Prize reputation, without incurring serious permanent damage in the eyes of his publisher or his readers?

Reference: Paul Greenberg, “Best and Worst,” Arkansas Democrat-Gazette (March 6, 2016), 4H.

BOOKS


Most-browsed book in the UN library in 2015? A primer on war-crime immunity

Dr Ramona Pedretti’s *Immunity of Heads of State and State Officials for International Crimes* was the most-consulted new title at the United Nations library, with Malala Yousafzai’s autobiography *I Am Malala* most popular overall

**Alison Flood**  Friday 8 January 2016

The book is based on Columbia University fellow Dr Ramona Pedretti’s doctoral thesis, and its publisher promises it “gives the reader a full picture of this topical issue, which is located at the heart of today’s development of international law”. Chapter headings range from “Immunity of heads of state and other state officials from the criminal jurisdiction of a foreign state” to “The immunity of heads of state and other state officials as rules of customary international law”.

“Basically, Pedretti is arguing that incumbent heads of state can’t be charged and prosecuted
by a foreign court, whereas past heads of state can,” wrote Vox, quoting Pedretti’s statement that: “Immunity *ratione personae* prevents incumbent heads of state from being subjected to foreign criminal jurisdiction.”

President Bush and his close advisors (Rice, Cheney) I’ll wager have read that book!

Google Search, March 28, 2016

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Dec 10, 2006 - James Traub examines Kofi Annan's career as United Nations ... is one of the finest guides around, indeed, the best in recent memory.

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Recent Books on the United Nations. Reviewed by Kimberly Bush General Works Birth of a New World: An Open Moment for International Leadership. By Harlan ...

I spent many enjoyable hours with Lipsey’s splendid book. Give it a look. --Dick

**Hammarskjöld: A Life** by Roger Lipsey
The definitive biography of Dag Hammarskjöld

Description
After his mysterious death, Dag Hammarskjöld was described by John F. Kennedy as the "greatest statesman of our century." Second secretary-general of the United Nations (1953 - 61), he is the only person to have been awarded the Nobel Peace Prize posthumously. Through extensive research in little explored archives and personal correspondence, Roger Lipsey has produced the definitive biography of Dag Hammarskjöld. *Hammarskjöld: A Life* provides vivid new insights into the life and mind of a truly great individual. Hammarskjöld the statesman and Hammarskjöld the author of the classic spiritual journal *Markings* meet in this new biography - and the reader will meet them both in these pages. A towering mid-twentieth-century figure, Hammarskjöld speaks directly to our time.

"An admirably judicious and comprehensive—and long overdue—study of one of the most remarkable figures of the twentieth century, whose presence remains both spiritually and politically significant for an age of violently confused international relations."
—Rowan Williams, Master of Magdalene College (Cambridge University), former Archbishop of Canterbury

“A good and indispensable man, Hammarskjöld ‘understood and respected the need for heroes.’ In this lucid, well-written biography, he certainly emerges as one.”
—KIRKUS

The website related to *Hammarskjöld: A Life* can be found at www.dag-hammarskjold.com.

Roger Lipsey, author, art historian, editor, and translator, has written on a wide range of topics and intellectual figures. He was the general editor of the three-volume edited works of Ananda K. Coomaraswamy. Other works include *An Art of Our Own: The Spiritual in Twentieth-Century Art* and the prizewinning *Angelic Mistakes: The Art of Thomas Merton*. He is director of the parent company that publishes *Parabola* magazine.

Praise / Awards

- "An admirably judicious and comprehensive - and long overdue - study of one of the most remarkable figures of the twentieth century, whose presence remains both spiritually and politically significant for an age of violently confused international relations."
—Rowan Williams, Master of Magdalene College (Cambridge University), former Archbishop of Canterbury

- See more at: https://www.press.umich.edu/4422905/hammarskjold#sthash.8z9Ge7We.dpuf
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Dick Bennett

**Newsletters**: http://omicenter.org/dick-bennetts-peace-justice-and-ecology-newsletters/

**Blog**: http://jamesrichardbennett.blogspot.com/

For research purposes, specific subjects can be located in the following alphabetized index, and searched on the blog using the search box. The search box is located in the upper left corner of the webpage.

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