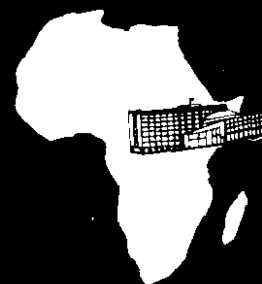




# Africa UN Staff News



PUBLISHED BY  
U.N. STAFF ASSOCIATION

AFRICA HALL  
ADDIS ABABA



NO. 2, APRIL - MAY 1975

OUR COVER shows the new stamp issued by the United Nations Postal Administration on 9 May 1975 to commemorate International Women's Year. The design, the first done by a woman/man team for the UN Postal Administration, illustrates the equality of man and woman.

Just before the opening of the XXVIIIth FICSA Council at ILO, Geneva, "UN Special" interviewed the General Secretary, Mr. V.J. Brendow on CLOSING THE ACCOUNTS ON A YEAR OF PARTICULAR DRIVE.

UNSP: The 1975 Annual Session of the FICSA Council<sup>1/</sup> has been called to take place from 12 to 16 May at the new ILO building in Geneva. We assume that you are now closing the accounts on your activity during the last twelve months?

BR: Correct. The Executive Committee has prepared an Annual Report (FICSA/C/XXVIII/2) which interested colleagues can receive through the FICSA Secretariat in Geneva (Palais des Nations).

UNSP: What were, in your opinion, the most encouraging developments during 1974/75?

BR: Those in the field of staff/management relations. After short but intensive discussions, FICSA obtained from the executive heads, inter alia, confirmation of:

1. the right that the staff can decide itself on the form of its representation which need not necessarily be the same as foreseen in the staff rules and regulations.
2. the right of direct access to the legislative organs of the organisation concerned as opposed to the present practice by which the executive head is considered as representing also the views of the staff in his statement on personnel questions before the legislative organs.

UNSP: Will this mean that from now on the President of FICSA will address the General Assembly on staff matters?

BR: We are not yet at that stage, but the direct access of FICSA to the Fifth Committee (on budgetary and administrative questions) is now obtained. But let me continue: the executive heads have also agreed to:

3. recognise the right of the staff to negotiate the employment and welfare conditions whilst at present staff representatives are considered in the staff rules as advisers to the directors general.

UNSP: What does this mean in practice?

BR: Less "administration" and more staff participation, satisfaction,

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<sup>1/</sup> Federation of International Civil Servants' Association grouping the 42,000 staff members of the UN system.

efficiency, a greater flexibility in personnel management and a faster response to changing requirements. Also the presently existing advisory committees would have to become negotiating organs who decide directly on the issues brought before them. These changes also mean increased responsibility for staff representatives who adhere to such decisions and who can no longer hide behind "paternalistic" decisions taken by their executive head; I expect less demogogy and more involvement also in the organisation's difficulties and problems.

UNSP: And the material situation of the staff? Were there in 1974 as many positive developments as in the field of staff/management relations?

BR: No, not as professionals and staff in higher categories are concerned; but at least did the General Assembly agree on interim measures:

- an increase in base salaries
- an increase in the children's allowance
- an increase in the assignment allowance
- the establishment of the "consumer price index" system for retired staff which roughly grants the purchasing power of pensions at the time of retirement, i.e. provides for compensation for losses due to the devaluation of the dollar.

Whilst we have to recognise that our employers have made a considerable effort to respond to our claims in a situation of economic and budgetary strain, we must nevertheless insist on full compensation of losses occurred: in comparison with the purchasing power at the time when the salaries and allowances were adjusted the last time, we are at present still suffering from a loss of 9 per cent of professional salaries, of 65 per cent of the spouse allowance, of 40 per cent of the children's allowance and more than 30 per cent of the education grant.

UNSP: Do you think that the newly established International Civil Service Commission will find more equitable and longer lasting solutions?

BR: FICSA welcomes the establishment and the composition of that Commission as well as the regulations which permit FICSA to participate directly and effectively in the work of the Commission. We have even the right to make suggestions for inclusion in the provisional agenda of the Commission. Thus, the start is good. We will see to what extent the representatives of the staff are able to out-balance such considerations.

UNSP: What problems in your opinion should be tackled first by the Commission?

BR: Without any doubt, higher attention must be given to the imperfections of the post adjustment system with respect to monetary fluctuations. FICSA has obtained from the administrations that solutions to these problems will be found on a priority basis. In addition FICSA requests automaticity of adjustments in countries with hyper-inflation. If inflation reaches 30 per cent or more a month, the staff cannot await the results of the quarterly reviews and the expiration of the four months waiting period to receive compensation.

UNSP: He who says "hyper-inflation", speaks of conditions of work in the field. What has FICSA done for the staff in the field?

- BR:
1. Acceptance by the administrations of the principle of proceeding to a review of the level of post adjustments four times a year.
  2. Increase, by the General Assembly, of the assignment allowance for field duty stations.
  3. A particular effort of information and de-isolation: two issues of the "FICSA Field Bulletin" were sent to the field as well as the "FICSA vacancy notices" which draw the attention of the field staff to some of the openings in the common system.
  4. Interventions in case of "repressive" or unfair management practices.

UNSP: And the working conditions for the general service staff?

BR: FICSA action this year was concentrated on the following:

1. Safeguarding the principle of best prevailing local rates as the basis for the determination of salaries.
2. Elaboration of proposals in view of establishing a single category of the staff (a proposal is before the Council).
3. Safeguarding the principle of direct negotiations of local employment (this principle has been seriously shaken by the famous article 12 of the Statute of the International Civil Service Commission, but was not challenged in practice).
4. Greater security of tenure, i.e. replacement of the system of repeated short-term or fixed-term contracts by long-term contracts; consultations have started with the administrations.
5. Recruitment of International General Service staff at "international" conditions; after an intervention by FICSA the administrations have agreed that it was contrary to the spirit and intent of the staff rules that an organisation should by advertisement or otherwise induce non-local persons to travel to a duty station at their own expense and accept employment on the conditions applicable to locally recruited staff.
6. Resistance to the attempt to discontinue payment of the non-resident allowance (attempt initiated by FAO); the administrations have agreed with FICSA in the assessment that this step was contrary to the common system.

UNSP: At the beginning of this interview we had asked you to identify the most encouraging developments. Which were the least encouraging?

BR: The need to engage in "job actions" in order to have changes accepted. It is regrettable that our employers felt it necessary to test the determination of the staff on important issues instead of judging our arguments on their proper value. Good personnel policy and good staff/management relations should not become a matter of muscles, but should remain a matter of reasoning.

UNSP: Thank you.

## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Dear Editor,

I have read several International Women's Year "manifestoes" about the role of women in the society. Perhaps I have not read all the "manifestoes", but I have not seen any mention about the up-bringing of our children so that they do not become "teddy-boys" or drug addicts, embezzlers, ingenious swindlers, bank robbers, etc. I guess men can do the job of bringing up the children efficiently while the women-folk work in offices. Or should the job rather be shared between women and men - one in the morning and the other in the afternoon, or on alternate days while each has only part-time job? Don't forget that maids and nannies are also women and should rightly seek similar employment with their opposite sex.

The emancipation of our African women should include relieving them of the burden of cooking, drawing of water and collection of fire-wood. I have no doubt that the men can excel in these activities - given time - especially those men who lie on swinging hammocks or easy-chairs while their wives sweat in the farm with their babies tied to their backs or otherwise left lying under some natural shade in the farm. That reminds me: it is becoming increasingly difficult to obtain the services of girls to take care of the children because they, like boys, have to go to school; and if the mothers also take up similar jobs as the fathers, who suffers? Could our women please tell me whether this is not a very good case for birth control.

An Observer

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THANKS

I wish to thank my friends and colleagues who visited me during my recent illness. Their companionship during this difficult time was very encouraging.

A.R.M. Tahir

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### STUDIES AND POLICIES SERIES

The Editor wishes to bring to the **attention of the staff** the issuance of No. 3 of the Studies and Policy series on "Continuing Staff Training, life-long education and career development for International Civil Servants". If interested, please contact the Editor, Mr. Mensah, in Room 606, who will request copies from the FISCA secretariat in Geneva.

# OUR READERS HAVE TALENT

(An amusing or would you say mischievous? - extrapolation by Stan Dryer, from Look Magazine, October 1969 - with our grateful acknowledgements to Mr. John H. Dalton, who obligingly supplied it)

## A feasible flying machine

After four years of experimenting in their spare time, two bicycle repairmen named Orville and Wilbur Wright flew the first powered airplane in 1903. Their cash outlay was about \$1,000.

What would have happened if the Wright Brothers had built their airplane under a modern, government-financed, research and development contract? The record might read as follows:

To: J.L. FLAILER, Vice-President in charge of research,  
Mammoth Bicycle Corp.

From: ORVILLE WRIGHT, Manager, Kitty Hawk  
Test Station

Little progress was made on the flying machine this week. Wilbur was at the Symposium on Flying Machine Progress and I was tied up in paper work. Monday I completed employee-evaluation reports. Tuesday I checked procurement vouchers. Wednesday I signed security clearance forms. Thursday and Friday were used up in meetings.

I am worried about your plan to double the size of the test station. Although I realize that under our Army contract this could double our profits, I cannot see that it will speed things up. I favor leveling off the work force to a technical staff of about 100 with a support staff of not over 700.

The men you have been sending for interviews seem to be overly concerned with what you call the "systems approach". I think you should stop running that ad in the bicycle trade journals which shows a hand holding the earth like a baseball and says: "The flying machine is an integrated system". The machine we are working on will have four wings, a motor, two propellers and some control surfaces. All we want to do is make it fly. I do not need any more bright young men who talk about ops analysis and systems configurations. However, if you can spare Joe, the mechanic in the motor pool, send him down.

The union problems seem to be settled. We're agreed that members of the electricians', mechanics', chainbenders', carpenters' and seamstresses' unions will all be on the launch team.

To: ORVILLE WRIGHT

From: J.L. FLAILER

Regarding your report of November 3, I am worried at your insistence on directing work toward production of equipment. Frankly, I would be happier

to see more concept-orientated work. Remember that our contract calls for a feasibility study and does not specify hardware development. From the standpoint of obtaining future study contracts, a good report in the hands of the right people in Washington is worth far more than the production of hardware.

In regard to our expansion plans, I have retained the Co-ordinated Research Institute to assist this effort. Their team of research methodology consultants will visit the facility this week.

To: J.L. FLAILER

From: ORVILLE WRIGHT

Wilbur returned Monday and was angry when he found one wing had been put on the flying machine upside down. Our staff psychologist was upset when Wilbur chewed out the engineer in charge. He feels that Wilbur has "disrupted the stability of the command structure" by taking direct action at two levels below his own in the hierarchy. Nonetheless, the engineer got the wing on right side up in one day.

Your research methodology people say they have "delineated a satisfactory dynamic organizational phaseover philosophy". My general feeling is that expansion is a mistake and I strongly object to their recommendation that Wilbur and myself be separated in the management structure.

To: ORVILLE WRIGHT

From: J.L. FLAILER

I have read the C.R.I. report. As it points out, a management partnership of brothers may fail due to latent sibling rivalry. I am therefore moving ahead with its recommendations to break the facility into East Coast and West Coast divisions, with each of you heading one division.

Our biannual report on flying-machine feasibility is due in two weeks. Your last biannual report was very terse, and this should make up for that deficiency. I suggest a minimum of four pounds of single-spaced typed material.

To: J.L. FLAILER

From: ORVILLE WRIGHT

As you have probably read in the newspapers, about 50 people picketed the front gate yesterday. Gus Hanks, our public-relations specialist, informed me that these were two sets of protest marchers who had gathered in response to a rumor that we were about to test a flying machine. A scuffle broke out between the group carrying the "FLYING MACHINES ARE A THREAT TO WORLD PEACE" signs and the group carrying the "WORLD PEACE THROUGH AIR POWER" signs. We had to call the police to restore order.

The irony is that there was no possibility of any test flight. Although the body and wings of the flying machine have been completed, no engine has



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yet been provided. The propulsion-systems analyst you hired just completed a massive report titled "Power Plant Selection for Heavier Than Air Flying Machines". I hoped it might contain at least the specifications for an engine, but it seems to be only a proposal for a two-year feasibility study.

To: ORVILLE WRIGHT

From: J.L. FLAILER

Newspaper accounts of the episode at the test facility have produced some extremely bad publicity for the company. I have had calls from stockholders who are disturbed about potential effects on our bicycle sales, and have assured them that an announcement will be made that no testing of flying machines is currently planned. I trust you will issue the necessary press release.

I read the report of Ed McGurty, the propulsion-systems analyst whom you criticized, and I find it a well-written exposition of the problems inherent in the selection of a power plant for a flying machine. A two-year study of this area does not seem to me to be at all out of order. I must emphasize again that our contractual task is the study of the feasibility of heavier-than-air flying machines. Let me remind you that the biannual progress report is due in my hands next week.

TLX REPORT TO: J.L. FLAILER

FROM: ORVILLE WRIGHT

HEAVIER THAN AIR FLYING MACHINE A REALITY. WILBUR  
AND I MADE FOUR FLIGHTS TODAY. AVERAGE SPEED 31 MILES  
AN HOUR. LONGEST FLIGHT 59 SECONDS.

To: J.L. FLAILER

From: ORVILLE WRIGHT

As you may find my telegram somewhat unbelievable, I want to fill you in on the details. Last Friday, when Wilbur returned from committee meetings, we discussed the engine problem, and he suggested we might use the engine from one of the guards' motor scooters.

Saturday morning we went to the deserted facility, removed the engine from a scooter, bent some mounting brackets and installed it in the flying machine. We had two of the security guards help us move the machine out to the south parking lot. I climbed aboard and Wilbur started the engine. After a run of about 100 feet, the machine became airborne. The first flight lasted 12 seconds. As we became more adept, the flights became longer, with the longest lasting 59 seconds. On the final flight a rough landing

damaged one wing and forced abandonment of the tests. I think you will agree that these flights prove the feasibility of a heavier than air flying machine.

In place of a biannual report, I am enclosing:

- (1) A two-page description of our test flights.
- (2) Two photographs taken by one of the security guards of the flying machine in the air.
- (3) Complete plans of the flying machine.

To: ORVILLE WRIGHT and WILBUR WRIGHT

From: J.L. FLAILER

I regret to inform you that as of this date you have been terminated as employees of the corporation. The reasons for this decision are as follows:

- (1) You conducted tests of the flying machine after specific orders from me not to do so.
- (2) Your substitute report is inadequate in size and concept.
- (3) The Zootscoop model 4G-78 motor-scooter engine you specify as the power plant is not manufactured by the Mammoth Bicycle Corp., which does manufacture a line of low-horsepower engines for its motor bicycles. Company policy requires that in-house equipment be used whenever possible in systems developed by the company.
- (4) Government property was removed from the test site without approval, and was damaged.
- (5) Guards took photos without authorization.

I regret that this decision is necessary, particularly in view of your long service with our firm. Please feel free to utilize our personnel office for assistance in obtaining new positions.

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### S a • r e d C O W S

New version of old political definitions, currently popular in Stockholm:

Socialism: You have two cows, and you give one to your neighbour.

Communism: You have two cows, the government takes both of them and gives you milk.

Fascism: You have two cows, the government takes both of them and sells you milk.

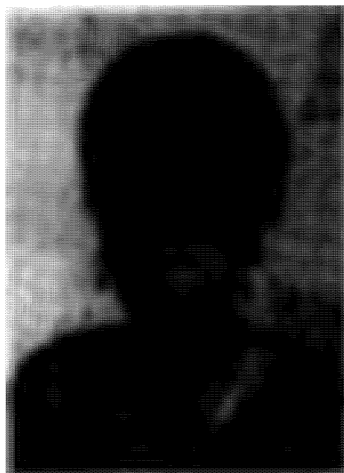
Nazism: You have two cows, the government takes both of them and shoots you.

Bureaucracy: You have two cows, the government takes both of them, shoots one of them, milks the other and pours the milk down the drain.

Capitalism: You have two cows, you sell one of them and buy a bull. FT, 5.5.75

IN AND AROUND ECA

IN MEMORIAM



7 mars 1940 - 19 avril 1975

"Et rose, elle a vécu ce que vivent les roses,  
L'espace d'un matin ....."

Cet inoubliable passage de Ronsard, tiré de l'Ode à Marie a parfaitement exprimé notre pensée à l'annonce de la triste nouvelle du décès prématuré de Mme Rose Marie, née Dunglas, épouse de notre collègue et ami Louis Darboux secrétaire de la Commission.

Rose s'est éteinte doucement dans la nuit du 18 au 19 avril 1975 après un accouchement difficile.

Qui au secrétariat ne se souviendra de ses apparitions discrètes, seulement signalées par le remuant Edouard, son fils bien-aimé, intelligent et polisson qui, dès qu'il était lâché savait si bien abuser de la douceur incomparable de sa maman en lui jouant mille et un tours de cache-cache.

Le deuil cruel qui frappe notre collègue Darboux est aussi le nôtre. Nous souhaitons à Louis beaucoup de courage, sachant bien qu'il n'en aura jamais trop, car il pleurera longtemps une telle compagne, une épouse qui n'avait que des qualités et qui savait si admirablement mouler son caractère sur celui de son mari.

Encore une fois, toutes nos condoléances à notre ami Darboux et aux deux familles si durement éprouvées.

Le Rédacteur

-X-X-X-X-X-X-X-X-X-X-X-

1975 Annual Session of FICSA

The XXVIIIth Session of the FICSA Council opened on 12th May at ILO Headquarters in Geneva and closed on the 16th. The ECA Staff Association's representatives were Mr. Kingsley Dube and Ato Wondimu Alemaheyu, who left Addis Ababa on 11th May to attend this important meeting.

## NEWS FROM THE BOOKSHOP

Tired of the same food, day after day? Come to the ECA Bookshop and choose a cook book of your choice.

- Mastering the art of French Cooking (£6.00)
- The home book of Greek cookery (£4.70)
- The meat and poultry cookbook (£3.75)

There are cookbooks for special diets, such as:

- The low calorie diet (£3.75)
- The salt-free diet cookbook (£3.50)
- Tasty cooking for ulcer diets (£8.00)
- Recipes for allergies (£7.00)

Need to lose weight? Buy a cookbook and try their recipes.

- 500 recipes for slimmers (£3.00)
- The Slimmer's cookbook (£2.90)

If you don't care how far you are, buy:

- The dessert lover's cookbook (£9.00)

There are even books for children:

- The Pooh cookbook (£12.00)
- The Beginners' cookery book (£3.30)

Here is a bonus recipe for you:

#### RECIPE— TUNA FISH PASTE (serves 4)

This can be served with hot toast, or as a filling for brown bread sandwiches. Served in little china pots with watercress and lemon quarters, it also makes a good first course.

One-half lb. tinned tuna fish, well drained; 4 oz. butter (room temperature) 3 tablespoons olive oil; 1 tablespoon of lemon juice; 1 level teaspoon of dried mustard powder, 1 level tablespoon of grated onion, 2 or 3 pinches of cayenne pepper, salt and nutmeg.

Put the drained tuna and butter into a basin, add the grated onion, lemon juice and mustard powder, then mash to make a really smooth, thoroughly blended paste. Then add the oil a little at a time, beating each lot well in before adding the next. When all the oil is in, add a little salt and cayenne and some freshly grated nutmeg. Taste to see how much seasoning you need. Now press the paste either into one terrine or into four little ramekin dishes. Cover with foil or cling-film until firm before serving.

### SHORTHAND CLASSES

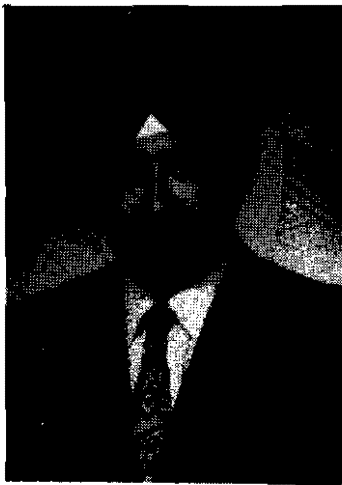
The Staff Council has been greatly concerned over the high failure rate of staff members taking the shorthand examination which is necessary to establish eligibility for promotion to GS.8 level. Because of the importance of this examination, the Staff Council urges all staff members registered in shorthand classes to attend regularly!

Remember only you can prepare yourself for advancement in your career.

Ed.

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In the previous issue of the Africa UN Staff News we informed our readers that Mr. Bhutani, of the Population Programme Centre, had won first prize in an essay competition organized by Radio Voice of Germany - Africa Service. This thought-provoking essay is now reproduced in its entirety.



### WORLD POPULATION

Uncontrolled population growth is the most pressing problem of the century, and it is widely recognized now that excessive global population widens the gap between rich and poor nations, distorts international trade increases the likelihood of famine in the relatively near future, adds to the environmental problems, produces unemployment, enlarges the danger of civil unrest and promotes aggression endangering peace.

But decline in fertility is a function of prosperity and in order to deal effectively with the vast world problem of poverty, hunger, ignorance, disease, hatred, fear and violence, the problem of population should also be tackled at the same time. Prosperity, in other words, is the best contraceptive.

In view, however, of the many ramifications that population trends have, it has to be the concern of the international community as a whole. Many Western experts now acknowledge that there is something fundamentally wrong and highly dangerous in a situation where a third of the world's population absorbs 85% of its annual production of resources.

But the affluent countries have no more than a moral responsibility. Population control is an immediate imperative of the underdeveloped world.

Unfortunately, what has been done so far is worse than inadequate. The most urgently needed single action to reduce excess fertility is to provide general access to modern contraceptive methods, including non-clinical means - oral contraceptives and condoms; and clinical means - abortion, sterilization, and intrauterine devices - to all persons of reproductive age throughout the world, and family planning programmes should be integrated with community development. (250 words)

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Congratulations Mr. Bhutani on your superb essay. - ED.

We won another prize

First prizes seem to be prevalent among our colleagues these days, this time in horticulture. Ms. Marion Seiler of the Library, won first prize as well as "Best Exhibit of Show" for her indigeneous orchid which was exhibited at the Flower Show held on 26 April, at the Juventis Club in Addis Ababa.

ED.

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## ABSENTEEISM

It has become necessary for us to revise some of our policies due to frequent absenteeism of our staff. The following changes are in effect today:

## SICKNESS

No excuse . . . . We will no longer accept your doctor's statement as proof, as we believe that if you are able to go to the doctor, you are able to come to work.

## DEATH

(other than your own) . . . This is no valid excuse. There is nothing you can do for them, and we are sure that someone else with a lesser position can help attend to the arrangements. However, if the funeral can be held in the late afternoon, we will be glad to let you off one hour early, provided that your share of the work is ahead enough to keep the job going in your absence.

## LEAVE OF ABSENCE

(for an operation). . . . We are no longer allowing this practice. We wish to discourage any thoughts that you may need an operation as we believe as long as you are an employee here, you will need all of whatever you have and you should not consider having anything removed. We hired you as you are and to have anything removed would certainly make you less than we bargained for.

## DEATH

(your own). . . . This will be accepted as an excuse, but we would like to have two weeks' notice: we feel it is your duty to teach someone else your job.

Also, entirely too much time is being spent in the rest room. In the future, we will follow the practice of going in alphabetical order. For instance, those whose names begin with "A" will go from 09.00 to 09.15, "B" will go from 09.15 to 09.30 and so on. If you are unable to go at the time specified for you, it will be necessary to wait until the next day when your turn comes again.

## THINGS YOU SHOULD KNOW

Note: This very important article is culled from UNIDO Staff Journal, No. 52, of September 1974. We are pleased to publish it, and we hope our readers who missed this issue of the UNIDO Journal will appreciate it.

Ed.

### THAT EXTRA PINT

by S.M. Stainer

Blood - without it we cannot survive. So far, it has not been produced synthetically, nor is there any substitute for it. But a pint of "donated" blood can be life-saving.

In our bodies we have 12-13 pints (approximately 6 1/2 litres) of blood, 10 pints of which are in circulation, the rest stored as reserve. It is a complex mixture of cells and fluid (plasma) to the proportions of 45% cells and 55% plasma, of which nine tenths are water. This red fluid flows through our arteries, veins and capillaries and acts as cleanser, provider and protector. It conveys gases, minerals, salts, enzymes, nutrients, hormones and waste products, helps regulate our body temperature, defends us against harmful bacteria and prevents its own loss by clotting.

Throughout history people have been aware of the importance of blood to life: In ancient Rome the crowds are said to have drunk the blood of slain gladiators in the vain hope that they would gain their strength. Blood is frequently referred to in the Bible, and in the middle ages when barbers, sorcerers and witches practised "medicine and healing crafts" many potions contained human, animal or insect blood.

Blood-letting or -sucking were common treatments in the 18th and 19th centuries but blood transfusion to save life was not seriously considered until the middle of the 19th century.

The possibility of transfusing blood from human to human had been suggested in the 16 century but it was not until William Harvey discovered the circulation of the blood in 1628 that the interest in such experiments began to flourish. In 1665 an English physician, Richard Lower, transfused blood between two dogs, using quills as needles, and in 1667 Prosper St. Denys, a physician to the court of Louis XIV successfully transfused a small amount of lamb's blood to a young boy. However, despite some success, the failures of St. Denys and other doctors with such experiments using animal (dogs' and lambs') blood led to many countries prohibiting blood transfusion.

Thus, it was not until 1818, when James Blundell, an English doctor, performed a person-to-person blood transfusion that interest in the subject was reawakened.

Knowing what we know now, we can only presume that he was lucky to be successful, for it was not until 1900 that Karl Landsteiner (born 1868 in Vienna) discovered that blood could be separated into at least three main groups. In 1902 he discovered the fourth group and to this day we know them and use them in blood classification: groups A, B, O and AB. In fact, there are more than 11 separate group systems identifiable in the human blood and more than 100 factors are known, but for the purposes of blood donation and transfusion the A, B, AB, O, and the Rhesus systems are the most important.

Dr. Landsteiner continued his work on blood grouping until his death in 1943. He worked from 1922, in the Rockefeller Institute for Medical Research in the USA and in 1930 received the Nobel Prize for Medicine. In 1940, with Dr. Alexander Weiner, he discovered the Rhesus factor. His research and discoveries rank among the greatest and most important in the history of medicine.

However, despite all this research, blood transfusion in the early 20th century remained a hazardous procedure and it was many years before it was recognized that blood from the donor and the recipient had to be compatible.

Another problem overcome in the early years of this century was that of the blood clotting when exposed to the air for any length of time. Until 1914, when it was discovered that Sodium Citrate added to blood would prevent clotting (coagulation), blood transfusion was carried out by either joining the donors' and recipients' blood vessels or by pumping the blood through tubes linking the two persons. Stored citrated blood was first used during the First World War.

A person's blood group can easily be determined by a laboratory test, and this knowledge is important to have not only when planning a family but in case of emergency or accident. All human blood belongs to one of the four main groups. In the red cells there is some of one, both or neither of the A or B substance (agglutinin) and in the serum in the case of incompatible transfusions, agglutination or clumping together of cells, which in turn cause the body to react, sometimes fatally.

Group	Cells	Serum
A	A agglutinin	Anti B agglutinin
B	B agglutinin	Anti A agglutinin
AB	A and B agglutinin	No Anti A or Anti B
O	No A or B substance	Anti A and Anti B agglutinin

Should a person from Group A be given Group B blood, then the Anti B substance already in the Group A patient's blood will cause clumping (agglutination) of the B cells.

Persons with Group O blood are often referred to as "Universal Donors". Theoretically, they can give blood to anyone of the other groups as the Anti A and Anti B substances in the donated blood is usually too dilute to affect the recipients own cells. Thus, in cases of emergency, Group O blood is given to persons of the A, B, and AB groups.

Similarly, persons from the AB group are called "Universal Recipients", because their serum has no Anti A or Anti B and they can theoretically receive A, B, or O blood.

However, in neither case is it invariably so, and for real safety the donors' cells and the recipients' serum should be checked for compatibility - cross matched.

The second substance that must be checked for compatibility is the Rhesus factor. It is so called because of the Rhesus monkeys used during the research and discovery of this factor in 1940. In simple terms it refers to yet another agglutinin in the red blood corpuscles. It is present in some people, Rhesus-positive (Rh+) and absent in others Rhesus-negative (Rh-). Much publicity has been given to this factor, especially with regard to marriage and pregnancy. However, the danger of Rhesus problems only arises when a Rhesus-negative woman marries a Rhesus-positive man and this occurs in only a low percentage of marriages.

The problems do not always arise with the first child but can occur in further pregnancies as the pregnant mother's blood develops anti-rhesus bodies and becomes



Rhesus-sensitised in much the same way as a person with Rhesus-negative blood would when given a Rhesus-positive blood transfusion.

This does not happen when both parents are either Rhesus-positive or Rhesus-negative or when the father is Rhesus-negative and the mother Rhesus-positive. In the same way, a Rhesus-positive person receiving a Rhesus-negative blood transfusion rarely has complications.

Both a person's blood group and Rhesus factor are inherited (Mendel's genetic laws) and the predominance of any blood group can vary from country to country. But all human blood is essentially the same, regardless of nationality and is safely interchangeable. However, human blood is specific to the human race and animal blood cannot be used for donation.

Blood transfusions are now an established medical procedure and have enabled far-reaching advances to be made in medicine, especially surgery. Countries all over the world have blood donation schemes. Their methods, equipment, scope, requirements and regulations may vary but they all have the same aim- to save life.

Blood donated but not used within a certain period of time or because it has certain antibodies, is not wasted. From it can be derived Plasma or various plasm proteins, e.g. Gamma Globulin, Serum Albumin, Fibrinogen, etc.

There is an ever increasing demand for blood- every donated pint is of vital importance. You too can contribute to the reserves. You may save a life or someone may save yours.

The whole procedure does not take long, a short medical history is taken, a medical check made, the blood group determined and a blood test made before the unit of blood (440mls) is taken. Then follows a short rest and a light refreshment. You will replace your plasma loss in about two days, the cell volume in about six weeks. Some people donate blood every 2 to 3 months, but it is sensible not to be too generous and four times a year is usually considered a ~~more~~ than fair average.

It is advisable to avoid alcohol for about four hours before donation and although normal meals can be eaten on the day, excessively fatty food should be avoided.

Can you spare a pint?

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### Suggestions

The Staff Council suggests that the ECA Administration investigate the possibility of having a qualified technician perhaps from the Ethiopian Red Cross, or a hospital in the city, visit the ECA Clinic in order to type the blood of staff members and their families. This arrangement could be scheduled over a period of one or two hours per day for perhaps a week.

It would seem advisable that a card be issued by the ECA Clinic to each person tested, bearing his name and blood type. Such information could also be added to the medical files kept for each staff member by the Clinic.