

*United Nations Library**

GIFT OF THE FORD FOUNDATION

AT THE fourteenth session of the United Nations General Assembly, the Secretary-General announced receipt of a gift of \$6.2 million from the Ford Foundation for the construction of a new building to house the United Nations Library. This gift meets a pressing need. It will permit modernization and expansion of facilities essential to United Nations work in a building both functional and beautiful.

The United Nations Library has long played a constructive role in the United Nations effort to promote international peace and understanding and other major objectives of the UN Charter. To members of national delegations and officials of the permanent Secretariat it provides the factual basis they need for the discussion and resolution of the many complicated issues that come before various United Nations organs. In addition it has attracted an increasing number of scholars and writers from the academic world, non-governmental organizations and the world of journalism, business and industry.

The Library's usefulness and the increasing recognition it has received have, to a significant degree, been the result of the effort to create a highly specialized collection of books, documents and other publications. The aim has been to avoid competition with general libraries and to concentrate on the speedy acquisition and indexing of all available useful material relevant to the specialized subjects that concern the United Nations and its specialized agencies. As a result the Library now holds a special position among research libraries of the world.

The collection is still relatively small — about 200,000 volumes composed principally of books, periodicals and governmental and non-governmental documents of legal, political, economic and social interest. However, despite its limited size, the Library's holdings in such areas as political questions, worldwide economic and social development, and international law and social legislation are impressive. They are particularly outstanding for their comprehensive, multinational, multilingual character and for their usefulness as working materials. The collections of the documents and publications of the United Nations itself, the Specialized Agencies, the League of Nations and other international organizations are the most nearly complete and the best organized in the world.

Use of the Library has grown rapidly in recent years. Increasing membership of the United Nations, the greater scope of political questions, requirements of technical assistance, research into new problems of atomic energy and the exploration of outer space, and growing public interest have been contributing

*By Richard C. Monk, Department of Finance, Adviser to the Canadian Delegation to the fourteenth session of the United Nations General Assembly.