

December 26, 1946

Dear Mr. Cherrington:

I have your request of December 11, for my suggestions on what American school children should be taught about international affairs.

It has seemed to me from what little thought I have given this important question that the principal objective of elementary and secondary school instruction in the field of international relations should be some knowledge and understanding of the very numerous avenues for international cooperation. What I have in mind would be some quite elementary treatment of the obvious need for international cooperation in matters of aviation, health, finance, foreign trade, and labor, as well as in the more dramatic field of political questions. Teaching efforts directed at this end would have the desirable result of diverting the attention of school children from recent and past international conflicts, of which they will hear a good deal in any case, and lay the basis for adult understanding and good citizenship on the myriad questions of international cooperation that are certain to be with us for many years to come.

To be more specific, it would seem to me important that elementary and secondary school children should know not only that there is a Security Council and a United Nations Assembly dealing with political and other questions, but also an Economic and Social Council devoted to a wide range of international problems and, beyond this, a substantial number of special-purpose international agencies each devoted to international collaboration in some specialized field.

All of this is rather obvious and is no doubt already part of your program. However, I wanted to indicate my interest in your program by offering these few ideas.

Sincerely yours,

Wm. McC. Martin, Jr.  
Chairman

Mr. Ben M. Cherrington,  
Chairman,  
Committee on International Relations  
National Education Association of U. S., Wash., D. C.  
AM/baw

*Mrs. Chupka*