



# Never Learn to Type: A Woman at the United Nations

Margaret Joan Anstee

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### **Never Learn to Type: A Woman at the United Nations**

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Never Learn to Type: A Woman at the United Nations Margaret Joan Anstee A fascinating account of a remarkable life that took the author, through hard work and determination, from rural England to the highest ranks of the United Nations

Dame Margaret Anstee was born in the 1920s to a poor family in rural Essex. With the support of her parents and through her own determination, she graduated from Cambridge with first class honours, and entered the Foreign Office where she worked with the spy Donald Maclean shortly before his defection with Guy Burgess.

Her career here ended as was customary at the time, when she married a diplomat and was posted to Singapore. As the marriage began to fail Margaret accepted a job at the United Nations in order to earn her fare back to England.

It was the start of a career that was to push the boundaries at every step. She became the first woman to be posted to her beloved South America, where she drove through the Andes in her VW Beetle, she headed up the first Government think tank during Harold Wilson's Government and she was the first woman to break the glass ceiling at the United Nations.

Dame Margaret Anstee served the United Nations for four decades, both at the New York Headquarters and in some of the poorest countries of the world attempting to help the victims of war, poverty and natural disasters. Throughout this time Dame Margaret has worked relentlessly to overcome the inequalities between the developed and developing world, a battle that she considers essential for the survival of both worlds.

- The first and only woman ever to reach this powerful position within the United Nations.
- Exciting, insightful and, on occasion humorous, travel writing as the author journeys through South America, Africa and the Far East.
- Charming account of village life and that of a young academic in Cambridge in the 1930s and 1940s.
- Gives an insight into the workings of the United Nations and the challenges faced both in conflict resolution and health and education programs.
- Features lively and amusing anecdotes with a cast of characters that includes many of the world's leaders, from Che Guevara to Margaret Thatcher as well as special appearances by MI6 and the CIA, set against a global backdrop.

Praise for Never Learn to Type:

'Her achievements are truly inspirational.'

The Rt Hon. Jack Straw MP, Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs

'The preamble of the UN Charter announces the commitment...to... "reaffirm the faith in the fundamental dignity and worth of the human person."...No one has lived for these principles more selflessly or diligently than Margaret Anstee. Her life...is inspirational, and her story is highly recommended.'

Jimmy Carter, Former President of the United States of America (awarded Nobel Peace Prize in 2002)

"...a true pioneer of the international community... an account of a rich and fascinating life, as well as the kind of insight only the insider can provide into the nature of conflict, development and the work for peace."

#### Kofi A. Annan, Secretary-General of the United Nations

- "...a remarkable and entertaining account of her adventures in many parts of the world."
  Boutros Boutros-Ghali, Former Secretary-General of the United Nations
- '...she became, with all my support and pleasure, the first woman Under Secretary-General.' Javier Pérez de Cuéllar, Former Secretary-General of the United Nations
- 'An extraordinary book about an extraordinary life. ... A story written with wit, charm and affection. ... Thank God she never learned to type but learned to think and care!

  Gonzalo Sánchez de Lozada, President of Bolivia
- 'A truly absorbing account of achievement and advent



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#### Rick Beard:

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