

issues. Each deals with basic horizontal, or cross-cutting, dimensions of Government policy. If External Affairs obtains leadership control of, say, international commercial policy, and maintains its sway over

international legal policy, its authority will have been sufficiently consolidated for it to move into the central-agency category. If it does not obtain enhanced powers, use of

a looser definition of central agency will not satisfy its aspirants. The central-agency debate is not really a semantic one — it concerns leadership controls.

United Nations

Ambassador Barton recalls term on Security Council

A personal reminiscence

by W. H. Barton

Just as the League of Nations was conceived as a response to the horrors of the First World War, the founders of the United Nations were motivated primarily by the need to provide mankind with an institution to prevent the recurrence of the madness of the Second World War. It was for this reason also that the drafters of the Charter of the United Nations listed as the first of its purposes the maintenance of international peace and security. Moreover, the Charter conferred on the Security Council, as the organ primarily responsible for the achievement of this aim, exceptional powers to act on behalf of all members of the organization.

The record of the Security Council in fulfilling its responsibilities during the past 33 years has been a mixed one, reflecting the reality of relations between the nations, particularly the major powers. But, for better or worse, the Council has been, and remains, the focus of power and centre of attention at the United Nations, and, indeed, in the eyes of the world, on those issues of peace or war that nations are prepared to have come before the world body.

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For this reason, and because service on the Council carries with it the assumption of special responsibilities by those governments selected for the assignment, it also confers on them the opportunity to play a particularly influential role in negotiations aimed at resolving some of the most threatening issues facing the world today.

The five permanent members of the Council carry this mantle of responsibility and influence as a matter of course, but for the 146 other members of the United Nations the opportunity to serve a two-year term can at best arise only at infrequent intervals and competition for the assignment is fierce. In Canada's case, notwithstanding its active participation in the UN and its leading role in peacekeeping, it has served on the Council only four times. At that time Canada is the first member of our geographical group to have served so often.

Responsibilities

The responsibilities and the distinction of membership on the Security Council are, of course, assumed by member governments, and in particular by their foreign ministers. But it is only rarely that ministers attend meetings of the Council, so that, although the Permanent Representative in New York is guided by instructions from his home office, a considerable burden devolves on him. George Ignatieff, who was Permanent Representative during Canada's last pre-