

Increasing clout of Secretary-General

Point number four: the emerging role of the Secretary-General. This is a new kind of Secretary-General, a man who is redefining the office in the contemporary world. We have not seen his like since Dag Hammarskjöld. And that is terribly important to understand.

I had the pleasure of accompanying Pérez de Cuéllar on a three-day state visit to Canada in early March. He is an immensely impressive and formidable advocate one-on-one and in small groups. I observed him talking with my Prime Minister, with my Minister of External Affairs, with a number of senior public servants, and every time he met them in argument he did not retreat. He engages in an advocacy which is quite unrelenting and effective.

What it has done for Pérez de Cuéllar and the United Nations, I think, is to have created a sense of interventionist diplomacy on the one hand, and preventive diplomacy on the other, both of which are giving a new raison d'être to the United Nations system. It does not always work, but what in this world does? But when Pérez de Cuéllar wanders off to Southeast Asia to try to deal with Kampuchea; when he deals with the Soviet Union and Pakistan over Afghanistan; when he makes visits to Iran and Iraq; when he deals with the parties in Cyprus; when he moves heaven and earth to sustain the Contadora process in Central America, what Pérez de Cuéllaris doing is bring-

ing the force of his office under Section 99 of the Charter to bear in a way which is ultimately helpful and civilizing. Pérez de Cuéllar's endless wanderings around the planet are of immense value. Occasionally, they result in a cessation of bombing civilian populations in a war such as Iran/Iraq; sometimes even, reconciliation in a place like Cyprus — perhaps in the next year or two. That would be an enormous achievement for the United Nations. Sometimes his efforts bring parties back to a discussion together which they would not otherwise contemplate. Always those efforts prevent, to some extent, a mere fire from becoming a conflagration.

In the context of the United Nations, of the international community, all of that is terribly important: just keeping nations talking. Winning trust, as Pérez de Cuéllar does, is of immense significance. Pérez de Cuéllar is trusted by everyone. Ambassador Jeane Kirkpatrick trusted Pérez de Cuéllar; Mr. Troyanovsky, the Soviet Ambassador, trusts Pérez de Cuéllar; Botha of South Africa trusts Pérez de Cuéllar. Pérez de Cuéllar is a man who is giving a new definition to the role of the Secretary-General. That role is not to be lightly impugned or disparaged.

Steady achievement

Finally, point five: the continuing process, year after year in the General Assembly and in the committees associated with it, where we achieve concrete things. That, too,



Ambassador Stephen Lewis presenting his credentials to UN Secretary-General Perez de Cuellar last year