

I don't know whether it is possible to start this kind of conversation on the issues we were talking about here today. I maintain that if you don't do that, there is going to be a huge element of fraud in all the self-congratulations about what is happening in the UN now. We are going to get into the next crisis just as unprepared as we were for this one. It is not good for the United States to be out front on all these things. The other side of that is that if the United States isn't out front, nobody is, and therefore you have a whole lot of things which are simply left.

“Most African and Asian states feel intense interest in the sanctity of boundaries, however irrational, however drawn by heinous colonial forces.”

Wood: You've said sensible countries enough times, that I have to stress that some of us analyze this as being a situation where you have countries which have enough human capabilities that they can muster an appreciation and some leverage and some influence. They tend to have enough interests internationally, that their vital stakes are in play, but of course they cannot have any illusion that most of the time they can handle them unilaterally. Therefore, they are bound to multilateral cooperation from a self-interested point of view.

Schoettle: Not every middle-range power has always met the higher standard of being a sensible power. A very important definitional, operational requirement is that the middle power, in order to be sensible, has to undertake to bury its interests in these larger multilateral arrangements. Because it is precisely some of the middle powers, the larger ones, that have also had the capacity within their own regions to act as regional hegemony. One has to describe the set in terms not only of abstract population, but also in terms of behaviour.

Franck: That is what I would say in favour of the Japanese proposal, which is the expansion of the Council to bring those countries in on a permanent basis, albeit without a veto. But bear in mind that the French and the British haven't used their vetoes for twenty-five years or so now. It has been a very long time since France, China, and Britain have exercised a sole vote against to kill a resolution. They have not formally crossed the route, that is not to say they will never do it, but they really go out

of their way not to do it. That is another example of amendment through practice rather than an amendment through formal reopening of the Charter. So these are the legitimacy factors to be thought of in terms of broadening the Council in a formal structural way. I realize that is not at all what Brian had in mind. His point was that the best way to achieve this was by a dynamic system of consultation.

What's to be said against it, is that the present system has plenty of leeway to make the middle powers *primus inter pares* and that is the blocs. The bloc system to a large extent now makes very little sense. If

you're Czechoslovakia it makes no

sense for you to be in a bloc with Albania and Bulgaria and the Soviet Union.

And Czechoslovakia did in fact try to get out. They formally

made an attempt to join the Western Europeans and others, and were quietly

told, no we don't want you in

our bloc, stay in your bloc, you can do more good there and also you can have more good there. It is a point which I think they now understand. Czechoslovakia could be quite influential as an Eastern European country because Eastern Europeans still have their two members of the Security Council and various other proportionate participation in other bodies of the UN system.

The present system makes for a kind of a consultation process, which does not work very well, but at least has a potential for working better. That is, if Nigeria were always on the Council, there would be no need for Nigeria to consult and try to develop an African consensus. Now whether the Nigerians are on the Council or not, they enjoy a degree of importance that is concomitant with their power within the African bloc. Oddly enough, when they are off the Council they are more powerful than they look. When they are on the Council they are less powerful than they look because they can't simply cast a vote off the tops of their heads. They must – as the Canadians have formulated, vote as you please, but vote in good company. And the good company requires a certain amount of consultation. It would be a pity if that were lost.

Urquhart: One of the reasons that the international system and UN doesn't evolve in a

very striking way is an extraordinary lack of intellectual input or curiosity. There have been very few new ideas put into the UN since the Charter was written. The debate in the UN on its future is incredibly arid and not very interesting. That is something which the countries like Canada could do a great deal about. After all, you have in most of these countries, institutions which actually think about these kinds of things. It is time for an infusion of ideas and also an effort to bring the thing up to date a little. The UN in many respects is in the Middle Ages still, it is pre-industrial. And it is very frustrating if you work there.

Franck: One of the problems with the way the UN system is set up is that it manifests the Thatcher syndrome: the more successful it becomes the more you have a machine in operation which is removed from any kind of direct public accountability. And absent any direct public accountability, the public imagination is not going to be particularly fired. Somehow the UN has to get its roots into the political soil of the constituent parties of the system. In a recent paper I wrote, the most bizarre and imaginative thing that I could suggest was an elective second chamber in the General Assembly – directly elected, much like the Strasbourg Parliament. That would certainly interest the Toronto newspapers if you had people running for the General Assembly.

Urquhart: There is a two-dimensional quality about the UN which is extremely deadening. It is predominantly an inter-governmental organization. “We the people” appears once in the Charter then vanishes totally – bye bye, after the first words and not mentioned again. This is one of the reasons why it is so difficult to bring life into this organization. It isn't just

“Somehow the UN has to get its roots into the political soil of the constituent parties of the system.”

“the people” either because the truth of the matter is that the forces that are going to shape the future are not controlled by governments anymore. They are controlled, if at all, by private industry, scientists, transnational corporations, the media, communications. It is a very, very complicated subject, extremely easy to raise, and incredibly difficult to do something about. □