

voted for the General Assembly Uniting for Peace Resolution [GA Res. 377(V); 3 November 1950] which made provision for emergency action by the General Assembly if the Council was incapacitated by the use of the veto. On a number of occasions Canada has supported the shift of action from the Security Council to the General Assembly when the former had reached an impasse. The most important application of such a transfer occurred during the 1956 Suez war when Lester B. Pearson masterminded a solution to the crisis by proposing that the General Assembly dispatch a UN peacekeeping force to the area. Similar, though less dramatic, shifts from the Security Council to the General Assembly occurred during the 1958 Lebanon crisis, and in the aftermath of the 1967 Middle East war. In the former instance, the General Assembly produced a consensual resolution which linked the withdrawal of US interventionist forces to the strengthening of the contingent of UN observers. In the latter case, the General Assembly was unable to agree on a formula for the withdrawal and disengagement of Israeli forces from occupied areas, and returned the item to the Security Council. Eventually it was the Council which agreed on the pathbreaking Resolution 242 that linked the withdrawal of Israeli forces to a more encompassing security regime based on the respect for the sovereignty and territorial integrity of all states of the region.¹

As to the second provision, which concerns the eligibility of non-permanent members to the Security Council, Article 23 of the Charter juxtaposes the qualitative criterion with the principle of equitable regional distribution. In promoting its candidacy for the Council, Canada has emphasized the former, in particular its proven record of international conflict mediation and its major contribution to the creation and operation of UN peacekeeping forces. Relying on such a functionalist interpretation, Canada had originally anticipated something approaching a semi-permanent seat on the Council for itself and other countries in that same category. When the Security Council deliberated in December 1949 whether to extend General McNaughton's role as mediator of the Kashmir dispute after Canadian membership on the Council had ceased, the Soviet permanent representative sarcastically commented that there appeared to be three types of Security Council membership: permanent members, non-permanent ones, and "prolonged" members, a status which Canada appeared to cultivate for itself.

The qualitative criterion, which looks for evidence of a nation's effective contribution to world security, has not been entirely neglected. If it had, Canada would not have served so frequently. On the whole, however, the geographic principle has carried more weight in determining elections to the Council. For one, it is easier to apply than a subjective judgement concerning a nation's potential contribution. Furthermore, the geographic principle has been politically more popular with the Soviet Union, its allies and the non-aligned states. It has clearly been the dominant

criterion since 1957. This has diminished the influence of middle powers in the UN system and, by lowering the probability of their being concurrently represented on the same UN bodies, has also diminished their ability to harmonize policies.

While Canada has regretted this particular trend, one can make a case for the geographic principle, not merely on the basis of equity but also on its potential utility for the functioning of the Security Council. The late John Holmes, a distinguished Canadian diplomat and scholar of international relations, had a penchant for pricking orthodox opinions on Canadian foreign policy. He argued that the Security Council may, without advance warning, be called to deal with disputes in any part of the world, and will thus benefit from members with specific regional expertise. Holmes also noted that, in some circumstances, small powers can be just as constructive to UN diplomacy as middle powers. A Security Council, as initially envisaged by Canadian planners, on which Canada and a few other principal actors would have enjoyed a form of semi-permanent membership might have been less flexible than the one which has evolved.²

GENERAL CANADIAN ATTITUDES AND PRINCIPLES CONCERNING THE SECURITY COUNCIL

Both the Canadian government and the broader public have consistently maintained a favourable image of the UN as an essential instrument of international peace and security. The sharp fluctuations between support and growing hostility toward the UN, which can be witnessed in other countries like the United States, have no counterpart in Canada. The initial illusions soon gave way to more sober expectations and practical considerations. Efforts were mounted to salvage the organization during the Cold War. Preventive diplomacy took the place of the enforcement functions envisaged under the Charter.

One can discern certain general and durable principles which have guided Canadian policy on matters relating to the behaviour of the Security Council. One such general principle is that nations should make the widest possible use of the Security Council to settle international conflicts. While avoiding recourse to the Council for frivolous or purely propagandistic reasons, countries should be encouraged to submit serious disputes to the Council. By providing an official forum for stating their grievances, it may give claimants sufficient excuse not to resort to actions which might threaten international peace and security.

This prevailing principle of maximum use has occasionally been questioned on the basis of more immediate tactical considerations. Thus in 1958, the Department of External Affairs was engaged in an internal debate on the respective merits of involving the Security Council again in the long-standing Kashmir dispute. Chester Ronning, the Canadian High Commissioner to India, argued forcefully