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The Once and Future Security Council

Thomas C. Wingfield

Bruce Russett

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ground to cover in under three hundred pages. It would have been better if the author had completed his thoughts at each point before moving on.

DREW HAMILTON
Lieutenant Colonel
U.S. Army

Russett, Bruce, ed. *The Once and Future Security Council*. New York: St. Martin's, 1997. 179pp. \$ 39.95

Bruce Russett of Yale University is best known for his signal work on the democratic-peace theory. He is the editor of this concise book on the nuts and bolts of United Nations Security Council composition and voting patterns. *The Once and Future Security Council* is a collection of eight essays that analyze the Security Council in light of its newly central role after the Cold War.

James Sutterlin gives a historical context to the discussion, describing the framing of the UN Charter and the debates that helped to create the Security Council. Far from being newly divisive, the issues of membership on the council, the length of terms, voting rules, and especially veto powers were bones of contention from the very beginning.

The next essay, by Bruce Russett himself, is a particularly helpful "big picture" approach to the

current debates. In it he presents ten "balances," or ideals in tension, that allow the student of the Security Council to evaluate all dimensions of a proposal for change. This chapter should be required reading in any course focusing on the organization or operations of the UN. Soo Yeon Kim and Russett co-authored the next piece, which is a technical analysis of voting blocs within the General Assembly, to provide a touchstone for examining Security Council actions in light of the larger body's tendencies and preferences. The editor having created the historical and theoretical frameworks in the previous two essays, the data in this and subsequent essays may be more effectively absorbed and understood.

Focusing specifically on voting patterns within the council itself, Barry O'Neill's essay contains a fascinating statistical analysis that yields the greatest surprise of the entire book—that changing the nonveto membership of the Security Council makes almost no difference in the relative powers of the veto-carrying and nonveto members. The disproportionate nature of the veto, necessary for great-power participation and perhaps desirable as a balance to the developing nature of the larger General Assembly membership, is the central fact of all Security Council decisions. Flowing from

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this insight is the inescapable conclusion that any substantive change in Security Council operations would require an antecedent change in the allocation of the veto power.

Perhaps the least interesting essays in the book are the next two, not because of their academic value but due to their narrow focus and the limited usefulness of their topics. Nigel Thalakada's chapter on Chinese voting patterns and Masayuki Tadokoru's essay on the Japanese desire for membership on the council are somewhat out of place in what is otherwise the definitive overview of the Security Council's structure and function.

Ian Hurd brings the focus back to the Security Council as a whole with his piece on proposals for reform. His principal contribution is in pointing out that problems that appear serious in a high school civics text are often less so in the real world, given the informal work-arounds that have grown up over the years. Specifically, European powers with strong economies and roles to play in world affairs often find their voices through informal, diplomatic means. These and other nations may affect the outcome of Security Council votes through the full spectrum of diplomatic tools, and they are not as limited as the member-nonmember or even veto-nonveto dichotomies would suggest. The Security Council, like so

many other structures in international law, has more moving parts than are apparent to the naked eye.

Russett, O'Neill, and Sutterlin conclude with a joint essay on the prospects for change. They acknowledge the large realities addressed earlier in the book: namely, that adding nonveto members would not appreciably change the character of the council, and that the permanent members are not inclined to expand or contract veto-carrying membership. Still, they propose a series of smaller changes that would strengthen the council's legitimacy without impairing its effectiveness. These include "expanding the number of nonpermanent members, permitting a nonpermanent member to be reelected immediately without missing a term, and slightly raising the proportion of affirmative votes required to pass a resolution, thus somewhat strengthening the hands of nonpermanent members, who can band together in a bloc. Other pieces of the package may include some narrowing of the scope of issues to which a veto may apply, deleting the anachronistic Charter references to 'enemy states,' and broadening the Council's procedures for consultation and transparency in decision making."

As this impressive list suggests, the editor has produced a very well

thought out analysis of what matters and what does not in the United Nations Security Council. The authors provide academics and diplomats with an excellent arsenal of options for fine-tuning the operation of the council. Any serious student of the Security Council should consider Russett's fine book a must read.

THOMAS C. WINGFIELD
Lieutenant Commander, U.S. Naval Reserve

Arbatov, Alexei, et al., eds. *Managing Conflict in the Former Soviet Union: Russian and American Perspectives*. Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, 1997. 556pp. \$25

This edited collection of essays is part of the International Security Studies series from the Center for Science and International Affairs. The subject is quite timely: we have the 1999 confrontation in Dagestan, continued controversy within the Russian government on how to handle the crisis, and the sacking of yet another Russian prime minister. The former prime minister (now acting president), Vladimir Putin, took a direct interest in resolving this latest challenge to Russian power in the Caucasus. The Dagestan crisis is in fact yet another lesson in the center's (Moscow's) management of the disintegration of the periphery—an

enduring theme in Russian federalism.

This work illustrates how the post-Soviet Russian government has dealt with would-be separatist governments within the Russian Federation and how other post-Soviet republics have, in their own way, handled separatism. In each instance, a narrative case study and an analytical commentary examine the development and the resolution of the conflict, or conflict avoidance. The pairs of essays are presented within a framework laid out by the leading editor, Alexei Arbatov, the arms control department head of the Institute of World Economy and International Relations, and current deputy chairman of the Duma's Defense Committee.

Perhaps the most interesting feature of the case studies is that they are presented from a Russian perspective. None of the authors is a member of the present administration or of any nationalist movement. They are researchers affiliated with the Analytic Center of the Council of the Russian Federation (the upper house of the Russian parliament) and so are well placed to tell the story of the continuing breakup of the former Soviet empire. To provide perspective, a written analysis is offered by a Western scholar. There is also a comparison piece on the Yugoslav conflict by Nadia Arbatova; her