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The United Nations at Fifty: Sovereignty, Peacekeeping, and Human Right

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THE UNITED NATIONS AT FIFTY: SOVEREIGNTY, PEACEKEEPING, AND HUMAN RIGHTS. Edited by Don M. Snider and Stuart J.D. Schwartzstein. [Washington D.C.: the Center for Strategic & International Studies] 1995. Pp. 80. \$10.95.

Also received from the Center for Strategic & International Studies (CSIS) is *The United Nations at Fifty: Sovereignty, Peacekeeping and Human Rights*. This volume encapsulates the reports given at a conference jointly sponsored by CSIS and The Robert R. McCormick Tribune Foundation in recognition of the signing of the U.N. Charter in June, 1945. The volume juxtaposes two authors of differing viewpoints to address each of the three identified areas of concern.

Using the U.S.-led mission in Haiti as a starting point for a discussion of sovereignty, Robert F. Turner proposes a U.N. which would enforce an individual's right to democratic government, even in the absence of threats to regional or international security. James C. O'Brien counters this view, arguing that only slow and gradual change in the U.N. mission is appropriate. The continuing controversy over the U.N. and the military role of peacekeeping is addressed by Hédi Annabi and Lt. Gen. Richard J. Evraire. Mr. Annabi seconds Secretary Boutros-Gali's call for a standing U.N. force which, in theory, would eliminate the confusion and transaction costs of forming coalitions prior to taking action. General Evraire argues that regional security organizations are both recognized in the U.N. Charter as important for peacekeeping and also are both militarily and politically more effective than coalition forces.

The last topic addressed by *The United Nations at Fifty* is that of human rights. John Shattuck stresses the importance of implementing "accountability" for human rights abuses through U.N. tribunals. Sarasin Viraphol cautions that the quest for "human rights" is not universally embraced, especially by some Asian cultures. Outside of egregious violations, Mr. Viraphol argues for engagement with authoritarian governments to effectuate a gradual transformation in the treatment of their citizens.

While this work accurately identifies the key issues confronting the U.N. at its fiftieth anniversary, the format and length of the volume preclude any comprehensive discussion of the issues raised by the title. In particular, citizens of the United States will most likely find the two chapters dealing with peacekeeping to be inadequate if they are looking for an authoritative discussion of the controversy in the United States regarding peacekeeping, a controversy that is sure to be exacerbated by the 1996 presidential campaign.

E.G.H.