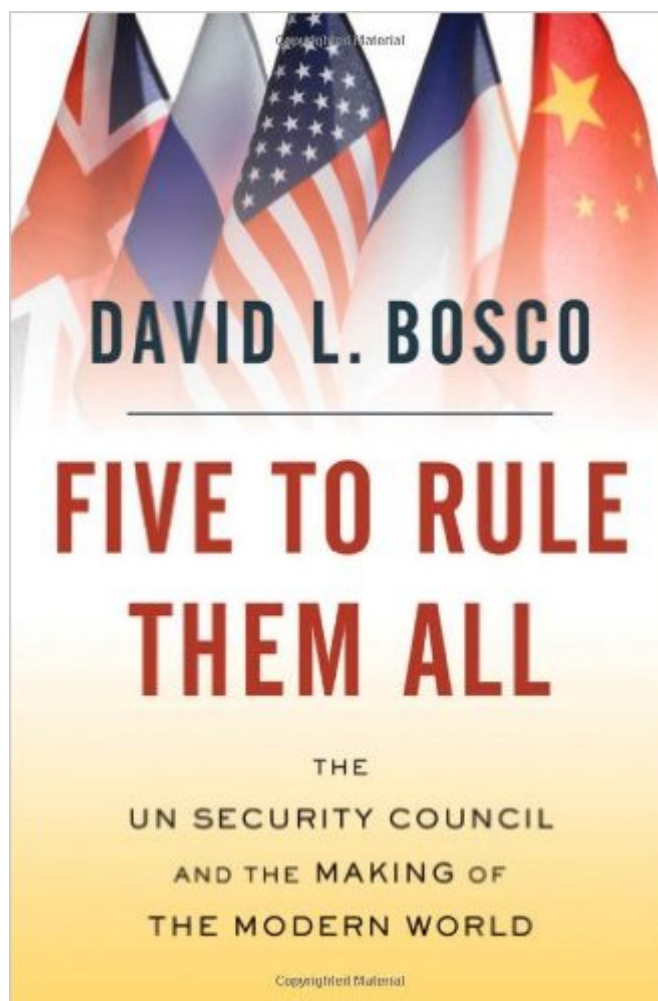


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Five To Rule Them All: The UN Security Council And The Making Of The Modern World



Synopsis

From the Berlin Airlift to the Iraq War, the UN Security Council has stood at the heart of global politics. Part public theater, part smoke-filled backroom, the Council has enjoyed notable successes and suffered ignominious failures, but it has always provided a space for the five great powers to sit down together. *Five to Rule Them All* tells the inside story of this remarkable diplomatic creation. Drawing on extensive research, including dozens of interviews with serving and former ambassadors on the Council, the book chronicles political battles and personality clashes as it opens the closed doors of its meeting room. What emerges here is a revealing portrait of the most powerful diplomatic body in the world. When the five permanent members are united, David Bosco points out, the Council can wage war, impose blockades, redraw borders, unseat governments, and levy sanctions. There are almost no limits to its authority. Yet the Council exists in a world of realpolitik. Its members are, above all, powerful states with their own diverging interests. Time and again, the Council's performance has dashed the hope that its members would somehow work together to establish a more peaceful world. But if these lofty hopes have been unfulfilled, the Council has still served an invaluable purpose: to prevent conflict between the Great Powers. In this role, the Council has been an unheralded success. As Bosco reminds us, massacres in the Balkans and chaos in Iraq are human tragedies, but conflicts between the world's great powers in the nuclear age would be catastrophic. In this lively, fast-moving, and often humorous narrative, Bosco illuminates the role of the Security Council in the postwar world, making a compelling case for the enduring importance of the five who rule them all.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

This is an outstanding book. In "Five To Rule Them All", David Bosco seamlessly weaves together a series of pivotal events to create a compelling, informative, and thoroughly entertaining narrative of the UN Security Council. The account was clearly well-researched, but it is Bosco's natural gift as a story-teller that makes this book a terrific read. From the very beginning, when Churchill, Roosevelt, Stalin and their respective diplomatic representatives first conceive of a new and improved League of Nations, Bosco brings the characters to life, illustrating how personality differences and personal and national interests nearly quashed the formation of the United Nations. Bosco describes the disputes among the global leaders, such as the "X-Matter", with such depth that I felt as if I were actually at the negotiating table with the participants. At the same time, the author is able to put all of these discussions within an historical context so that the implications and consequences of the Security Council's decisions can be easily understood. With its long history and complicated subject-matter, the UN Security Council poses many challenges as a book topic. Bosco makes a strong case for the Council's inherent value, but he also writes a balanced account that documents the many failures of the organization and includes multiple perspectives on events throughout the book. Ultimately, he makes a persuasive argument that, while the Security Council has fallen short in achieving many of its goals, it has succeeded in accomplishing its primary objective: to avoid conflict (i.e. war) among the Great Powers. You don't have to be an historian, journalist, or academic to like or appreciate this book. You just have to enjoy reading exciting stories about individuals and events that have helped to shape the modern world. Jon Cross, Brooklyn, NY

I read this book a while back when I was taking an international relations course and it only now occurred to me that I should have written a review for it. What the book does well is give insight into the actors behind the important decisions historically, and lays the seeds throughout the book for the argument that the UNSC was created in order to keep the permanent members from going to war with each other. There is an incredibly low barrier of entry to those looking to learn about UNSC in this book but a high ceiling of insight for those looking to delve deeper into its themes and the challenges this organization presents by its very existence. Please read this book.

Mr. Bosco does a great job in telling the history of the world from 1945 to the present through the history of the Security Council. From giving brief histories of all the diplomats that have had a

profound impact on the world, to reliving events like Serbrenica Massacre to Colin Powell's bungling of showing any proof of WMD's in Iraq, it is a good way to see the world in a different perspective. Find some time to read it, although it is 7 chapters, they are heavy on detail.

This is an excellent work that provides a useful history of the United Nations Security Council, and its role and authorities. This is a great introductory work for scholars, lawyers and lay persons with an interest in the council.

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