

Who Runs the International System? Power and the Staffing of the United Nations Secretariat

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Abstract

We construct a 60-year dataset, by nationality, of senior positions in the United Nations Secretariat and use it to examine the influence of nations in the international system. Countries jockey for positions in the Secretariat and seem to use them for national advantage. We find that the most disproportionately overrepresented countries are small, rich democracies like the Nordic countries; the overrepresentation of the West as a whole is constant over time, in spite of the growing GDP and population share of other countries. Statistically, democracy, investment in diplomacy, and economic power are predictors of senior positions—even after controlling for the U.N. staffing mandate of competence and integrity. This suggests that exercising influence via a multilateral institution is a complement to exercising it through traditional unilateral diplomacy. Viewing the staffing of the Secretariat as a globalized power struggle, we extend our measure to take alliances between nations into account by weighting positions by similarity of preferences between nations. We then apply this extended measure to examine the influence of the United States, and find that U.S. influence has been in decline since the formation of the United Nations. We propose a related measure of bias in an international institution, and find that in spite of low U.S. affinity with other countries, the Secretariat remains more U.S.-friendly than the world at large.

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1 Introduction

This paper examines the nationality of the most senior officials in the United Nations Secretariat over the last sixty years, with the goal of understanding which nations have been successful in controlling this institution, and what factors have allowed them to do so. There is intense competition among nations over the staffing of these positions, and once in these positions, there is evidence that officials act in the interests of their home nations.

Because of the contested nature and scarcity of these positions, Secretariat staffing data can be used to inform at least two significant discussions. The most direct application is to understand who runs the United Nations itself. While the United Nations is arguably the world's most representative international organization, it was set up by a particular set of nations, the victors of the second world war, with the goal of sustaining a certain kind of world order. Our staff nationality data provide a time-varying proxy for the importance of each nation at the United Nations. Our results suggest that the post-war balance of control at the United Nations has been largely sustained, in spite of significant changes in the balance of global economic power over this time.

A second application is to treat the staffing of international institutions as an outcome of the distribution of power across nations. According to John Mearsheimer, realists maintain that international institutions are “basically a reflection of the distribution of power in the world” (1994). There is a substantial literature on the measurement of power (Nye, 2011b), and a vigorous debate on whether power is even measurable (Guzzini, 2013). By identifying the distribution of positions in the Secretariat, we provide an objective measure across all nations of a zero-sum dimension of power that appears to be of significant concern to governments around the world. This novel method of comparing power across nations addresses some of the critiques in the literature on the empirical measurement of power, particularly the critique that a focus on military capability is too narrow in scope.

As is well known, the United Nations is the primary international organization responsible for maintaining peace and facilitating cooperation among nations to resolve issues that require collective action. The United Nations' executive arm is the Secretariat, and it plays a key role in agenda-setting for the various deliberative U.N. organs, as well as managing global peacekeeping operations. The Secretariat also houses the U.N. Department of Political Affairs, which is essentially a ministry of foreign affairs with active policy around the world.

The Secretariat is staffed by nationals of the United Nations' 193 member states. In theory, the Secretariat is to be staffed according to the competence and integrity of individual candidates, with an additional mandate of achieving broad representation of nations, but in practice the top positions are highly contested in an intensely political process. The struggle for influence over the appointment of the most recent Secretary General, Ban Ki-Moon, for example, was widely covered (Thant and Scott, 2007), with different nations throwing their weight behind different candidates. Ban's appointed top management team was, according to the *Financial Times*, "dominated by officials from powerful countries" (2007). Among them was then-U.S. ambassador to Indonesia Lynn Pascoe who was to head the political affairs department despite other countries' objections that he was "a State Department guy" (Turner, 2007). Three years later, when Briton and former Blair cabinet member Valerie Amos was appointed under-secretary general for humanitarian affairs, a source to the Guardian newspaper observed: "This is a massively significant job, one of the top five at the U.N. [...] It would be unthinkable for Britain not to have one of the top five jobs" (Watt, 2010). Competition over other high-level positions occurs blatantly as governments support the candidacy of their own nationals (Deen, 2012; The Economist, 1989).

Once secure in their position, staff have the ability to influence affairs in the interests of their home nation. The United Nations reported in its own newsletter, "The United Nations has increasingly become a political arena where high officials engage in political give-and-

take and where ‘interest groups’ lobby for their country’s interests... Political appointees are frequently not loyal to the United Nations, but to their respective governments, upon which they depend for further reward or punishment” (Finger and Hanan, 1980).

We assembled data on the approximately 80 most senior positions in the Secretariat (out of some 43,000 total staff members today, United Nations 2012), as published in the U.N. Yearbook from 1947-2007. We researched the nationalities of these senior officials to generate time series data on the countries controlling the executive arm of the United Nations. This dataset allows us to analyze how positions are allocated, and to use the allocation of positions as a window into the influence, or power, of states in the international system.

We introduce the notion of “excess representation” in the Secretariat, which is the number of senior Secretariat positions held by a country, over and above what would be expected if positions were held in proportion to countries’ populations. Ranking countries by excess representation, we find that the five most overrepresented countries in the Secretariat are Sweden, Norway, Finland, New Zealand, and Ireland. The United States is overrepresented, and China is significantly underrepresented. The top of the list is dominated by rich democracies.

We then test for the factors that predict a country’s representation in the United Nations. We first model the staffing mandate of the United Nations, which requires staff to be selected on criteria of competence and integrity, with some regard for equal geographical distribution. We proxy competence with the national stock of university graduates and integrity with a measure of freedom from corruption. Both variables are significant predictors in the expected direction, as is the assessment of dues to the U.N.. We next examine additional factors, including total GDP, per capita wealth, military spending, diplomatic contacts, and democracy. With the inclusion of these additional variables, we find that diplomatic contacts, wealth, GDP and democracy are all significant predictors of influence.¹ The results

¹As we describe in the results, it is difficult to disentangle military expenditure, human capital, assessment

suggest that investment in diplomacy can bring institutional power, and that rich countries and democracies are more successful in exerting their power overseas.

Next, we consider the role of alliances. If two countries have similar preferences over international policies, they may benefit from having each other in powerful positions. In order to capture the direct and indirect power (i.e. power held by allies) of a country, we construct a measure of national influence that takes into account the similarity of preferences to other influential nations, as proxied by similarity of U.N. General Assembly voting records (Gartzke, 1998).²

Finally, we use these measures to describe the influence of the United States in the Secretariat over the last 60 years. We find that American influence seems to have declined over time, but less than would appear by looking at U.S. representation alone, which declined dramatically from the 1960s. The decline in U.S. positions has been largely substituted for by an increase in positions among other rich democracies. While the world population share of Western Europe and its offshoots fell from 18% in 1965 to 13% in 2005, their share of Secretariat positions remained largely constant, falling from 46% in 1965 only to 45% in 2005. To the extent that U.S. and European international views have diverged, however, this change represents a significant loss in American soft power. In spite of that decline, we calculate that the Secretariat remains slightly tilted towards an American perspective when compared with the perspective of the world at large, and much more so than a runaway U.N. agency like UNESCO in the 1970s.

These findings—as well as the broader methodology of measuring the outcome of diplomatic struggle by looking at staffing outcomes—contribute to the extensive literature on

of dues to the United Nations and GDP, because they are so highly correlated with each other. We report this result as GDP not because we think GDP is a more important factor than the other three, but because it is the most commonly used proxy for the large set of indicators highly correlated with GDP.

²The methodology is sufficiently flexible to incorporate measures of alliance other than voting affinity, such as membership in similar intergovernmental organizations, which yields broadly similar results in our applications.

power in international relations (reviewed in Baldwin 2013).

An earlier literature sought to generate objective measures of power that were comparable across nations. From the eighteenth century (Gulick 1955, cited in Baldwin 2013, and reflected in Morgenthau (1948), an industry arose that produced objective univariate and multivariate measures of power. These capability-based measures became ever more complex, culminating in Ray Cline's formula (1975) which was a nonlinear combination of population, territory, income, energy, minerals, manufacturing, food, trade, as well as strategy and will. Cline's measure was used by the U.S. army among others to estimate long run trends in other country's capabilities (Tellis et al., 2000).

This capability-based approach has been critiqued by scholars across a number of disciplines, who argue that power is situationally specific and relational and therefore "not objectively measurable" (Guzzini, 2009). Contrary to the analysts who count national manpower and resources, Guzzini argues that power is not fungible; what generates power in one context may not generate power in another. For example, U.S. military resources may not be usable against friends as they would be against enemies. Baldwin 2013 summarizes the "relational power" approach as viewing power as an "actual or potential relationship between two or more actors... rather than a property to any one of them."

A key development in this literature over the last half century has been the description and categorization of types of power beyond Dahl's 1957 definition, including the agenda setting power introduced in Bachrach and Baratz (1962), the structural power of Lukes (1974) and the typology of Barnett and Duvall (2005). While the power exercised by the U.N. Secretariat corresponds most closely to Barnett and Duval's notion of institutional power, all of these types of power may be at play in determining who controls the U.N. Secretariat, justifying the wide scope of our empirical analysis. With reference to Guzzini (2009), the extent to which an institution like the United Nations shapes the capabilities of nations at all is in itself an outcome of the distribution of state power; while our paper does

not directly address this aspect of power, the distribution of influence within the United Nations remains an important arena of struggle, even if it takes place within a particular structural context that is also of interest.

Analyzing U.N. Secretariat positions may appear similar to the largely realist approach of ranking states according to their capabilities of exerting compulsory power.³ However, the association in the literature between empirical measures of power and the focus on compulsory power is largely due to the absence of appropriate empirical measures for other dimensions of power. Multi-dimensional thinking about power does not obviate the value of measurement, so long as our outcome is defined clearly. Our approach can therefore be seen as an attempt to bring together two traditions of scholarship that are usually seen as being incongruent.

Our scope is narrow. We focus on the realization of a single dimension of state power: power in international institutions. We cannot predict whether one nation can exert power over another in a general sense (e.g. in a war), and our measure is only relevant to the extent that control over international institutions is perceived by nations as being important.

With that qualification, our method has several desirable characteristics. First, we are measuring a global outcome that involves nearly all countries in the world, measured with equal accuracy for all countries. Second, it is a continuous measure, available each year that we observe the senior staff positions in the Secretariat, allowing us to observe changes over time. These features give researchers a new opportunity to study the expression of an arguably increasingly important dimension of power in a panel data setting.

The main weakness of this measure is that countries do not equally value the United Nations, so some will exert less effort to secure senior positions in the organization. While the Secretariat is one of the most representative and central institutions of the international

³Barnett and Duvall (2005) define compulsory power analogously to the original definition of Dahl (1957): “the ability of A to get B to do what B otherwise would not do.”

system, it is clearly not the case that every country is putting in the same level of resources to get staff into key positions. The measure is therefore a combination of the desire and the ability to influence international outcomes. Nevertheless, countries that can obtain these positions at a lower cost can be considered more powerful (Harsanyi 1962, cited in Baldwin 2013), and they are likely to obtain more positions, all other things equal.

Besides the work on the United Nations and on power, this paper contributes to several different literatures. One, within the broader field of international organizations, is the study of how individual nations exert influence within international institutions (Robert and Jacobson, 1973). Much of the recent work in this field focuses on the role of major powers in shaping outcomes including loans, concessions, votes, or peacekeeping scope (Stone, 2004; Kuziemko and Werker, 2006; Kaja and Werker, 2010; Kilby, 2011; Lim and Vreeland, 2013; Allen and Yuen, 2013). A small but growing area of literature takes advantage of the unique institutional environment of the United Nations to answer broader questions (Gartzke, 1998; Fisman and Miguel, 2007). Finally, there is a literature on international bureaucrats (e.g. Johns 2007, Urpelainen 2012) that has little direct crossover with this paper, but reinforces the notion that international bureaucrats retain some allegiance to their home countries.

The rest of the paper is organized as follows. Section 2 describes what the Secretariat does and how it is staffed. Section 3 explains the Secretariat position data and the empirical specification. Section 4 reports results on the determinants of representation in the Secretariat and the countries that are most overrepresented. Section 5 examines alliances, and applies our methodology to the case of the United States. Section 6 concludes.

2 Political Economy of the United Nations Secretariat

2.1 What does the Secretariat do?

The United Nations is organized into six major organs: (i) the General Assembly; (ii) the Security Council; (iii) the Economic and Social Council; (iv) the defunct Trusteeship Council; (v) the International Court of Justice; and (vi) the Secretariat. The U.N. Secretariat is the executive arm of the United Nations. It serves the other bodies of the U.N., administers operations initiated by those bodies, conducts surveys and research, and communicates with non-state actors such as media and non-government organizations.

While the decision-making powers of the U.N. reside within its deliberative bodies (the General Assembly, Economic and Social Council, and Security Council), the Secretariat plays a key role in implementation and in setting the agenda for those bodies. The content of the resolutions debated in the deliberative bodies originates in the Secretariat, and many of the programs are implemented by organs of the Secretariat. The Secretariat is the main source of economic and political analysis for the General Assembly and Security Council, and operates political field missions which provide knowledge to those bodies.

The Secretariat prepares the technical assessments that precede peacekeeping operations and appoints the leaders of peacekeeping operations. These Heads of Mission report directly to an under-secretary general in the Secretariat, and the deliberative bodies have no further role in implementation of peacekeeping operations.

Given this range of roles, the Secretariat has more decision-making power than its de jure status as a “member to serve the other organs” suggests. In a 1955 address, Secretary General Dag Hammarskjöld described this power as follows:

The United Nations is what member nations made it, but within the limits set by government action and government cooperation, much depends on what the Secretariat makes it... [it] has creative capacity. It can introduce new ideas. It

can, in proper forms, take initiatives. It can put before member governments findings which will influence their actions (Kelen, 1968).⁴

The staff of the Secretariat are ostensibly international civil servants who serve the goals of the United Nations rather than their home countries. However, the spoken and unspoken struggle between nations to place their nationals in senior positions at the United Nations speaks both to the importance of this creative power of the Secretariat, as well as the widespread belief that Secretariat staff continue to favor the interests of their home nations.

2.2 Staffing the Secretariat

2.2.1 Official Procedures

The Secretary General (SG) heads the United Nations Secretariat, and is selected by the Security Council, with approval from the General Assembly. The next layer of hierarchy consists of under-secretaries general, who are largely selected by the SG and then appointed if approved by the General Assembly. The General Assembly also plays a significant role in determining the number and sphere of influence of under-secretaries. The remaining approximately 43,000 staff of the Secretariat are appointed by senior Secretariat officials without direct interaction with the deliberative bodies (Wynes and Zahran, 2011).

Appointment of Secretariat officials is guided by two criteria stated in the Charter of the United Nations:

The paramount consideration in the employment of the staff and in the determination of the conditions of service shall be the necessity of securing the highest standards of efficiency, competence, and integrity. Due regard shall be paid to

⁴Many were troubled by this normative view of the Secretariat, and perceived Hammerskjold as too activist a Secretary General; upon his death, he was replaced by U Thant who was expected to guide the Secretariat to a more subdued role. The case serves to demonstrate that nations place significant importance on the behavior and composition of the U.N. Secretariat.

the importance of recruiting the staff on as wide a geographical basis as possible (United Nations, 1945).

Since 1958, internal documents discussed a “desirable range” of staff that should come from each country, a range which would be based on membership (i.e. some minimum number of positions per country), population, and assessment of dues, with the largest weight on assessment.^{5,6} These desirable ranges apply to the total stock of positions and do not consider seniority; in practice, it has been observed that the nationality distribution of senior positions departs more significantly from the desirable range than the distribution of all positions, a situation which the General Assembly has on occasion discussed (Meron, 1982).

2.2.2 Unofficial Jockeying

It is widely recognized that nations lobby to place their staff in senior positions in the Secretariat. Indeed, there is a 600-page book on the subject, titled Politics of Staffing the United Nations Secretariat (Ameri, 1996).⁷ The appointment of Secretaries General, which takes place approximately every ten years, is watched carefully by international analysts. The selection of under-secretaries was an important arena of conflict in the Cold War, and frequently discussed in the General Assembly, with Soviets pushing for a transparent division of powers with three under-secretaries representing respectively the Western Block, the Eastern Block and the Non-aligned countries (Reymond, 1967). Such a division would make more explicit the allegiance that Secretariat staff often retained to their home countries.

The U.S. Senate Select Committee on Intelligence routinely published a report entitled,

⁵From about 1960 to 1975, the relative target weights on membership, population and assessment were 20%, 9%, 71%. The formula has changed several times since then; current documents suggest respective weights of 40%, 5% and 55%.

⁶Membership dues owed by members of the United Nations are proportional to their GDP, with a progressive ceiling to lower the cost of membership to poor nations and limit one nation (the United States) from paying too large a share. Many nations have failed to pay their full dues at various times; staffing formulae are based on assessment, not on actual dues paid.

⁷Additional references include Finger (1980) and Reymond (1967).

“Soviet Presence in the U.N. Secretariat,” (United States Senate, 1985) which claimed,

Soviets in the Secretariat function reasonably well as adjuncts of the Soviet Foreign Ministry and intelligence services [...] The 800 Soviets assigned to the United Nations as international civil servants report directly to the Soviet missions and are part of an organization managed by the Soviet Foreign Ministry, intelligence services, and the Central Committee of the Communist Party. [...] They are involved in shaping conference papers, controlling the flow of news to staff and delegations, influencing delegations seeking Secretariat advice, and aiding Soviet diplomats during conference and other deliberations. [...] Approximately one fourth of the Soviets in the U.N. Secretariat are intelligence officers and many more are co-opted by the KGB.

The Committee Report implies that the United States did not exert the same measure of control over Americans at the United Nations; nevertheless the importance of placing nationals of aligned countries in senior positions is evident.

3 Data and Specifications

3.1 Constructing the Database of Secretariat Positions

We compiled data on Secretariat staffing from the annual Yearbook of the United Nations, which summarizes the annual activities of all the organs of the U.N., and was published from 1947 to 2007.⁸ The Appendix of the U.N. Yearbook lists the names and titles of the most senior staff in the Secretariat and Specialized Agencies, beginning with the Secretary General. The number of Secretariat positions listed in a given year ranges from 26 in 1950 to just over 100 in 2000.

⁸The last available copy of this publication is from 2007. It is not clear whether more recent editions are still forthcoming or whether the United Nations has ceased publication of annual yearbooks.

Using the name and position of each person listed, we researched their nationality, drawing on directories (such as *Who's Who in the United Nations*, 1975; 1992; 1951), media articles and other historical documents. Figure 1 displays the number of positions listed over time, along with the number of those positions for which we were able to verify the nationality of the position-holder.⁹

[Figure 1 about here.]

To verify that our list accurately captured the most senior positions in the Secretariat of the United Nations, and to rank the positions in terms of importance, we hired two independent experts on the United Nations.¹⁰ Both experts confirmed that our list did not have significant lacunae, and independently assigned each position a weight on a scale of 1 to 6 reflecting the relative importance of that position. The Secretaries General were assigned a ranking of 6, the under-secretaries were assigned 5, and so on. Using the mean importance rank of the two experts, we created a second measure of Secretariat representation, which is the share of positions held by each nation in a given year, weighted by the importance of each position held. We rescaled this measure so that it sums to one in each year.

We compiled country-level data from several other sources. In addition to data on GDP, population and military spending from World Development Indicators and the Penn World Tables, we used a measure of the stock of people with tertiary education from Barro and Lee (2012), the Worldwide Governance Indicators (of which freedom from corruption is a component) (Kaufmann et al., 2011), the Combined Polity Score measure of democracy from the Polity IV database (Marshall and Jaggers, 2002), and an annual count of the number of foreign embassies operated by each country as a measure of national investment in international diplomacy (the Diplomatic Contacts database from Rhamey et al (2010)).

⁹The rise in positions from 1950 to 1980 is likely influenced by a growth in the scope of the U.N.. However, the decline in positions listed after 2000 likely represents an editorial choice to list fewer positions, given that the size or scope of the U.N. did not change significantly in this period.

¹⁰Each expert had decades of experience in the U.N. system, and preferred to remain anonymous given the potential political sensitivity of this study.

We calculated assessments of dues to the United Nations using data on national GDP, population, U.N. membership and the formulae described in Section 2.2.1.

The governance measure is missing data before 1994, so we impute backward from the earliest available year to avoid dropping a large number of observations when we include this variable. Results on corruption are therefore more relevant in the cross section than in the time series.

[Table 1 about here.]

Table 1 displays summary statistics of all measures used.

3.2 Measuring Representation

3.2.1 Measuring Excess Representation

We define a country’s raw representation as the weighted or unweighted share of Secretariat positions held by that country’s nationals. We define excess representation as the ratio of a nation’s raw representation to its share of world population in a given year, minus one. Our reference point is thus a notion of the United Nations as a kind of global democracy, with each person in the world equally represented. If representation were “equal” in this sense, then China and India would together control more than a third of the positions in the Secretariat, and the measure of excess representation would be zero for all countries.

3.2.2 The Staffing Mandate of the United Nations and Other Factors Influencing Representation

Two anecdotes from the early years of the United Nations (both from Ameri 1996) highlight the challenges of achieving fair geographic coverage of top officials. In the early years of the United Nations, citizens of the United States held a disproportionate share of positions in the Secretariat—from 20-25% of all senior positions in the 1950s. A factor contributing to

this was that the location of headquarters in New York made it far more difficult to recruit nationals of other countries.¹¹

A second widely observed anecdote in early staffing decisions was that many nations had a scarcity of individuals with sufficient education and experience to able to fill a senior position at the United Nations. Governments were often invited to recommend their nationals for senior positions, but declined to do so on the grounds that they did not have capable staff to spare.

The main criteria for staff selection, as inscribed in the Charter, are “efficiency, competence, and integrity,” with an equitable geographic distribution being a secondary factor. Our data do not allow us to see the caliber of individual bureaucrats in the Secretariat. However, we can to some extent control for the pool of available candidates from each country with country-level measures that proxy for the staff selection criteria. To proxy for efficiency and competence, we use a measure of human capital, or the number of people with tertiary education (often a pre-requisite for employment at the United Nations). To proxy for integrity, we use the freedom from corruption measure from the Worldwide Governance Indicators (Kaufmann et al., 2011). The latter is motivated by Fisman and Miguel (2007), who found that U.N. diplomats’ law abidance in New York was correlated with the corruption level in their home countries. Finally, we include the assessment of dues, given its key role in the desirable representation formulae.

Our model takes the form:

$$Y_{it} = \beta_0 + \beta_1 * POPULATION_{it} + \beta_2 * EDUC_{it} + \beta_3 * CORRUPTION_{it} + \beta_4 * DUES_{it} + \zeta X_{it} + \epsilon_{it}, \quad (1)$$

Where Y_{it} is a measure of representation, $POPULATION$, $EDUC$, $CORRUPTION$ and $DUES$ reflect the staffing mandate of the United Nations, and X_{it} is a vector of additional

¹¹It would be incorrect to view this as a historical accident; the locating of U.N. headquarters in New York occurred because of the United States’ position as the dominant world power; the location of main offices of U.N. agencies is one way in which nations exert influence over the organization.

factors that we would like to test, which are wealth (GDP per capita), traditional international power (military spending), diplomacy (as proxied by the number of embassies run by countries), and democracy.

A desirable empirical specification should have two main characteristics. First, all predictive factors should be treated as zero-sum, since the share of Secretariat positions is also zero sum. In other words, increasing a country’s population by 10% should not affect our prediction of that country’s representation if the population of all other countries has also increased by the same 10%. To achieve this, we rescale all observations on Secretariat positions, population, assessments of dues, human capital stock, military spending and diplomatic contacts to convert these to shares of the world total of each value. For instance, instead of gross military spending, we use share of global military spending. The remaining variables (democracy, freedom from corruption, GDP per capita) do not have a notion of a “global total;” to make these zero sum, we rescale them so that observations each year have a mean of zero and a standard deviation of one. Table 1 shows descriptive statistics of both untransformed and transformed variables.

Second, we need to control for the fact that many of the national variables we describe exhibit significant serial correlation, as do positions in the Secretariat, since they are often held for multiple years. To avoid overcounting highly similar observations, we cluster our standard errors by country in our time series regressions, and by decade in our country fixed effect regressions.

4 Who Runs the United Nations?

4.1 Descriptive Statistics

Figure 2 shows the excess representation of the United States, Germany, Russia, China, and Japan. As discussed above, the United States had a disproportionate share of positions at

the inception of the United Nations, a share which fell significantly but then stabilized in the 1980s. Japan and Germany had little representation following the end of the second world war, but have steadily risen in prominence, surpassing the United States in excess representation by the 1980s. The Soviet Union was almost never overrepresented at the United Nations, in part because of Stalin's significant efforts to undermine the institution in the early years (Finger, 1975). The fall of the Soviet Union led to a further drop in Russia's influence in the Secretariat. China has been and continues to be dramatically underrepresented in the U.N. Secretariat—with an average over all years of only 1% of senior positions in the Secretariat.

[Figure 2 about here.]

Figure 3 shows the world population share and share of U.N. Secretariat positions of the Western European powers and their offshoots Canada, the United States, New Zealand, and Australia. While the Western countries' share of world population and GDP have been steadily declining since the 1960s, their control over the U.N. Secretariat has been largely unmitigated; in 2007 they continued to hold 45% of Secretariat positions, while their world population share has fallen from 18% to 12%. This graph shows that in spite of the widely discussed rise to international prominence of middle income nations like the BRICs, Western Europe and its offshoots have not lost control over this key U.N. body.

[Figure 3 about here.]

Figure 4 displays scatterplots of the share of positions in the Secretariat against log population and log assessment.¹² There is a clear upward sloping relationship in both graphs, but many countries are far from the 45 degree line. The R^2 measure for the regression of Secretariat share on population share is 0.11, while for representation on assessment of dues it is 0.70. In the bivariate analysis, payment of dues appears to be a much better indicator

¹²We use logs on the X axis to display small and large countries on the same graph. We must then use a log scale for the Y axis in order for the 45 degree line (which indicates a notion of “equal” representation) to be straight.

of power in the Secretariat than population.

[Figure 4 about here.]

Table 2 presents excess representation in the Secretariat, by country, averaged over all years.¹³ Excess representation is defined as the ratio of a country's share of Secretariat positions to its share of world population minus one, and is proportional to a country's vertical distance from the 45 degree line in the top panel of Figure 4. Nordic countries dominate the list, occupying 4 of the top 6 positions. Since 1950, Sweden has had on average 0.1% of world population and 0.8% of world GDP, but has held 4.3% of senior positions in the Secretariat, including a Secretary-General from 1953-61.¹⁴ Western nations are also overrepresented, with the United States, Canada, and Great Britain all overrepresented by a factor of 2 or greater. Large, poor nations are significantly underrepresented; India, China, and Indonesia each have a world population share four or more times greater than their Secretariat position share.

[Table 2 about here.]

4.2 Evaluating the Staffing Mandate

Table 3 presents estimates from a time series regression of annual Secretariat representation on population, human capital, freedom from corruption, and assessment of dues to the United Nations as described by Equation 1. An observation is a country-year, and standard errors are clustered at the country level. Columns 1 through 4 add independent variables sequentially. Column 5 repeats the estimation with all variables included, using importance-weighted representation as the outcome variable.

[Table 3 about here.]

¹³Appendix Table A1 lists countries ranked by their total number of senior Secretariat positions, without taking population into account.

¹⁴These measures are not importance weighted, so we treat the SG equally to all other senior positions. Using importance-weighted measures does not substantively change the list.

The first row further weakens perceptions of the United Nations as a global democracy. The coefficient on population is insignificant across all four columns. Human capital enters positively with statistical significance. A 1 percentage point increase in a nation's share of the global stock of people with tertiary education is associated with a 0.2 to 0.4% increase in representation in the Secretariat. The freedom from corruption indicator is also positive and significant in all specifications, suggesting that countries with low corruption and good governance are better represented in the Secretariat. Assessment of dues also enters positively and significantly. Column 5 indicates that these results are robust to using importance weighted measures of Secretariat representation.

The results lend weight to the importance of the staffing mandate of the United Nations, suggesting that the supply of individuals of high competence and integrity plays a key role in the composition of the U.N. Secretariat, as does the assessment of dues.

The analysis thus far uses both cross-sectional and time series variation in representation. Table 4 presents estimates from a model with country fixed effects, and thus controls for any unobserved country-level variables (but also eliminates the interesting variation between countries). The results on population, assessment of dues and human capital are sustained; the effect of corruption is not visible in the time series alone, likely because it is available for only a third of the years and does not change significantly over time.

[Table 4 about here.]

We now examine the role of factors beyond the official staffing mandate of the United Nations.

4.3 Factors Beyond the Staffing Mandate

Table 5 shows correlations between Secretariat representation and per capita wealth, military spending, investment in diplomacy, and democracy, controlling for the variables used in the staffing mandate regressions above. Human capital, military expenditure, GDP and

assessment of dues are all highly colinear, which makes it difficult to separate their individual effects.¹⁵ Columns 1 through 3 show that these variables are positive, significant and very similar in magnitude when included separately. When all are included together (column 4), the education variable dominates, but we are reluctant to infer too much from this since it is based on a small amount of variation between these three measures.

[Table 5 about here.]

Diplomacy enters with positive and highly significant point estimates, suggesting that investment in soft power is a key factor in determining representation in the U.N. Secretariat. A 1 percentage point increase in a country's share of the world's embassies is associated with a 5 to 7 percentage point increase in Secretariat representation. Democracy and wealth are also positively correlated with representation, but not significant in all specifications.¹⁶ When fixed effects are included (Appendix Table A2), results are upheld for all variables except diplomacy, which does not change significantly over time.¹⁷

Table 6 shows how the correlates of U.N. Secretariat representation have changed over time, by estimating the main specification separately for each decade. Estimates are noisier due to the smaller sample sizes, but we find that diplomacy has a consistent and large effect over time. Population and freedom from corruption are insignificant in all decades. Among the colinear variables of assessment (GDP), human capital, and military spending, we find that human capital wins the horserace in the 1970s and 1980s while assessment wins for the 1990s and 2000s. Meanwhile, democracy wanes in importance while wealth rises in importance. Taken together, these results suggest that the staff were initially drawn more from educated democracies, but as global education and governance levels have risen over time, economic strength has played a larger role.

¹⁵The correlation coefficients are $\rho_{GDP,dues} = 0.98$; $\rho_{dues,tertiaryed} = 0.92$; $\rho_{dues,militaryshare} = 0.89$; $\rho_{militaryshare,tertiaryed} = 0.84$.

¹⁶As above, results are robust to the use of the weighted representation measure, as well as to the exclusion of the United States. These tables are available upon request from the authors.

¹⁷Country fixed effects explain 89% of the variation in diplomatic contacts.

[Table 6 about here.]

5 Extension: Power, Alliances, and the Pax Americana

As in military matters, alliances in the struggle to control international institutions are important. Consider the campaign to prevent global warming. Countries form coalitions to advance their shared interests. This suggests we may have a problem of measurement error if we restrict our attention to a country's own representation in an international organization and ignore the combined power of its alliance. Palau, for instance, might be equally satisfied between holding a Secretariat position itself or having Maldives hold a position, since both low-lying island nations share the same goal of preventing climate change. The United States might be content to have Canadians and New Zealanders staff the peacekeeping department, since their outlook, strategy, and judgment would likely be similar to their own.

We can extend our analysis by taking alliances into account. We use the term alliance loosely, recognizing that our statistical measures can only serve as imperfect proxies for true underlying alliances or coalitions. In this section we will augment the basic count of Secretariat positions with an alliance-weighted measure. As a demonstration of the potential to use Secretariat staffing as a measure of power, we consider the case of the United States.

One of the most public debates in the field of power and international relations is whether the United States' power is in decline. As Joseph Nye wrote in a provocatively-titled essay, "The Decline and Fall of America's Decline and Fall" (2011a), America's decline has been frequently anticipated: first the Soviets in the 1950s and 1960s, then the Japanese in the 1980s, and now the Chinese have all been predicted to "get the better of America." Taking the long view, Paul Kennedy had predicted decline (1989) but even by 2012 many prominent writers were unconvinced (Kagan, 2012; Lieber, 2012). A parallel, and sometimes overlapping

debate has been occurring on whether we are in an era of “American Empire” (Nexon and Wright, 2007). The breadth of opinions leaves open the question of whether America’s power is in decline, fluctuating, or indeed in ascent. Our measure of Secretariat representation offers an objective and consistent methodology for contributing to this debate.

As Figure 2 depicts, the United States was significantly overrepresented in the early years of the United Nations’ existence. Its share of positions declined steadily until around 1980, and has since remained relatively constant and modest. At first glance this appears to be a fall in institutional power from 1950 through 1980, as other nations, notably Germany and Japan in the figure, increased in prominence. This is consistent with the Kennedy view.

However, this raw scoring ignores the fact that the United States structured the international system after W.W.II to help enforce the so-called Pax Americana. With the United Nations and the Bretton Woods organizations, the United States, wrote John Ikenberry, “spun a web of institutions that connected other states to an emerging American-dominated economic and security order” (Ikenberry, 2001). The plan may never have been to dominate the individual institutions once they matured but rather to share them with other nations who subscribed to the American worldview. We must thus consider the possibility that U.S. allies might have held, or gained ground, in the Secretariat even as the United States’ individual representation has fallen, as suggested by the steady share of positions held by Western countries, visible in Figure 3. If these countries’ international bureaucrats share American objectives and preferences, then it may be that the interests of the United States are no less represented in the international system than they were in 1960 when U.S. staff representation was at its peak.

While this view seems plausible for the Cold War years, the notion of a “Western Europe and offshoot” alliance in recent international affairs is less obvious. The United States often has significant disagreement with European countries in matters of international organization, with Americans becoming increasingly unilateralist and Europeans multilateralists

(Rubenfeld, 2004). Our data can shed light on these issues.

5.1 Alliance-Weighted Representation

Taking alliances into account allows us to more comprehensively answer the question of whether the United States is in decline, by examining whether closely allied nations have acquired the positions that America has lost.

Measuring alliances as they relate to the multi-faceted job of running the United Nations is not easy. Restricting our attention to data that could be analyzed in panel form, we could use several possible proxies—any of which could be used in the methodology that we describe below. We proxy preference similarity by focusing on U.N. voting records, since we think it comes the closest to measuring the relevant dimension of alliances for the management of the Secretariat. We repeated the exercise using common membership in intergovernmental organizations (Pevehouse et al., 2004) as another measure of alliance, with broadly similar results.¹⁸ Other possible variables, such as formal military alliances or international public opinion data could also be used.

We use U.N. General Assembly voting data (Gartzke, 2006) to generate a unique, dynamic, and synthetic alliance for any country. The assumption behind our formulation is that bureaucrats from two countries with identical preferences over General Assembly resolutions will behave in the same manner if given senior positions in the Secretariat. Alternately, one country has just as much alliance-weighted representation when its close ally holds a position as when the country itself does. Pairs of countries with weaker correlations in voting behavior receive correspondingly less benefit from each others' positions.

We model country j 's alliance-weighted influence as:

$$INFLUENCE_{j,t} = \sum_{i \in I} POSITIONS_{i,t} * AFFINITY_{i,j,t} \quad (2)$$

¹⁸Results available from the authors upon request.

Where $POSITIONS_{i,t}$ is the share of positions held by country i at time t and $AFFINITY_{i,j,t}$ is a measure of the similarity of voting in the General Assembly between countries i and j in year t , with $AFFINITY_{i,i,t} = 1$. Specifically, for any given year, $AFFINITY_{i,j} = 1 - 2 * \frac{d}{d^{max}}$, where d is the number of times that i votes against j , and d^{max} is the number of General Assembly votes.¹⁹ In words, a country j 's alliance-weighted influence is a weighted average of the influence of all countries in the world, where the weighting is determined by how much country j votes like the other countries.

This alliance-weighted measure is slightly unrealistic as an indicator of national power in that it describes a small country and a large country with identical voting records (for instance “Iceland” and “Sweden”) as being equally powerful. Surely, Sweden exerts more control over the United Nations than Iceland. Yet from the perspective of an individual Swede or Icelander, there is no difference in terms of whether one country or the other makes the initiative. Moreover, to capture the difference between Iceland and Sweden here, it would suffice to look at each country’s raw representation in tandem with their alliance-weighted representation.

The other concern with our approach is that General Assembly voting might not be an adequate measure of the difference between two countries’ preferences. There are some documented weaknesses in such use of the data but it is nonetheless the methodology of choice in dozens of papers in political science in economics (Voeten, 2013). For those scholars who would prefer a different dyadic measure of preference similarity, that variable could be substituted for $AFFINITY$ in equation 2.

Assigning the United States as “country j ” we graph U.S. influence in the Secretariat over time in Figure 5, along with the unadjusted U.S. Secretariat representation measure. The measures track each other until the mid-1960s. From 1965 to 1980, the number of positions held by Americans steadily declines, but America’s alliance-weighted representation remains

¹⁹ $AFFINITY$ and $INFLUENCE$ are thus both bounded between -1 and 1.

constant, as those positions are filled by American allies.

[Figure 5 about here.]

Around 1980, there is a precipitous drop in U.S. alliance-weighted influence in the Secretariat, with affinity falling below zero, indicating that the average senior official in the Secretariat is from a nation that is an opponent of the U.S. rather than an ally. From 1981 to 2007, Secretariat affinity with the U.S. remains largely negative, with a slight upturn during the Clinton administration and a monotonic fall during the subsequent Bush years.

These changes in alliance-weighted representation could be driven by either a change in composition of the Secretariat or a change in General Assembly voting behavior of countries. In other words, a country loses influence when (i) it or its allies lose Secretariat positions; or (ii) countries that already have positions become more opposed to the country in question. When we repeat this analysis holding affinity constant (not reported), the long run decline is considerably mitigated, indicating that this loss in American influence is less about the composition of the Secretariat, and more about a loss of affinity with other nations that control a large share of Secretariat positions.

This exercise suggests that U.S. influence in the United Nations has significantly waned over time, such that the Secretariat is no longer a projection of U.S. power. But perhaps the institutions the United States helped to create in the 1940s may have not only constrained the rest of the world, but also future American governments. To the extent that the United Nations influences U.S. policy, it may make the post-1980 administrations more “Wilsonian” than they would otherwise be.

5.2 Measuring Institutional Bias

We have shown that U.S. power as expressed through the staffing of the Secretariat has declined since 1950, most dramatically around 1980, with much of the fall driven by a drop in affinity between the United States and other powerful nations. Given that the United

States has become more isolated according to the affinity measure, it remains conceivable that the Secretariat has a pro-U.S. bias relative to the world, even while the influence measure of the United States is negative.

We extend our methodology to measure the international bias of an institution, defined as the difference between the institution-country affinity measure and a population-weighted measure of the world’s affinity for the country.

First, we create a variable analogous to *INFLUENCE* above but instead of weighting with Secretariat positions, we weight with world population. This gives us a population-weighted measure of the affinity of the world for a given country:

$$OPINION_{USA,t} = \sum_{i \in I} POPULATION_{i,t} * AFFINITY_{i,USA,t}, \quad (3)$$

where $POPULATION_{i,t}$ is country i ’s share of world population at time t . We then define the bias of an institution—the U.N. Secretariat—toward the views of a country as the difference between the country’s affinity with the institution and the country’s affinity with the world:

$$BIAS_{USA,t} = INFLUENCE_{USA,t} - OPINION_{USA,t}. \quad (4)$$

We plot *BIAS* for the United States over time in Figure 6. The figure shows that relative to the world as a whole, the U.N. Secretariat has been consistently biased toward the United States. If the staffing of the Secretariat were proportional to country populations, the U.S. would have even less influence over the institution. In other words, despite increased U.S. isolation (as expressed by voting alone in the General Assembly), the United States benefits from a relatively friendly Secretariat. The U.S. has lost influence in the U.N. Secretariat since 1980, but it has fallen even further in the eyes of the world. The Pax Americana seems to look after the United States after all.

[Figure 6 about here.]

This methodology can be used to create an affinity measure between any country and international organization, given data on the nationalities of key officials. As an example, we analyze the bureaucratic leadership of the United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) during the 1970s and early 1980s. This U.N. specialized agency was only the second U.N. agency from which the United States withdrew, in 1984²⁰ (Joyner and Lawson, 1986). UNESCO’s General Conference regularly adopted anti-Israel resolutions, sponsored disarmament activities that the Americans thought were biased in favor of Soviet positions, and promoting restrictions on the freedom of the press through the controversial New World Information and Communication Order (NWICO) (Jacobson, 1984; Puchala, 1990). UNESCO’s Secretariat played a decisive role in the organization’s stance and direction (Joyner and Lawson, 1986). In Figure 7 we compute UNESCO’s pro-U.S. bias and compare it with the U.N. Secretariat through 1988, the last year for which we have leadership data on UNESCO. As can be seen in the figure, UNESCO is notably less pro-American than the Secretariat. This imbalance would be significantly greater if not for a single directorship held by the United States for most of this period, a position which likely played a role in scuttling the NWICO effort.

[Figure 7 about here.]

6 Conclusion

In this paper we constructed a time series dataset on the nationality of senior officials in the United Nations Secretariat. We argue that countries with the interest and ability to influence international organizations are more successful in placing their nationals into senior positions. Since these positions are scarce and central to the operation of the United Nations, the resulting allocation gives us information on countries’ ability to compete for influence in

²⁰The U.S. withdrew from the International Labor Organization from 1978-80.

the international system. In spite of the modesty of its setting, this measure of power has some advantages over traditional capability-based measures.

We find that democracies, countries with large national diplomatic corps, and rich countries are the most effective at placing staff in the Secretariat—even after controlling for monetary contributions to the U.N. and the staffing mandate of competence and integrity. This suggests that exercising influence via a multilateral institution is a complement to exercising it through traditional unilateral diplomacy. Examining our measure over time, we find that Western Europe and its offshoots have retained control over a disproportionate share of positions in the Secretariat, even while their share of global GDP and population has fallen.

Going further, we put forward a measure of representation that takes alliances between countries into account. We examine the alliance-weighted representation of the United States and find that American influence has been in decline since the formation of the United Nations, with a large drop around 1980. However, in spite of low U.S. affinity with other countries, the Secretariat remains weakly biased toward the interests of the United States, when compared with the interests of the world as a whole.

This paper is not a conclusive operationalization of power, or a comprehensive answer to the question of who runs the world. Rather, it attempts to plumb the rich information hidden in plain sight, which is the national composition of the senior staff of the world's most global institution. This information offers a quantifiable approach to help understand how nations interact in a globalized context.

Table 1
Summary statistics

Variable	Mean	Standard Deviation	Min	Max	N
Number of senior Secretariat positions	0.4	1.0	0.0	11.0	8933
Share of senior Secretariat positions	0.01	0.02	0.00	0.28	8933
GDP (million USD)	128,862	640,398	30	13,983,709	6120
GDP share	0.01	0.03	0.00	0.45	6120
Population (millions)	29.9	103.5	0.1	1,311.0	8519
Population share	0.01	0.02	0.00	0.23	8519
Population with higher ed (million)	0.72	3.11	0.00	56.16	7338
Human capital share	0.01	0.03	0.00	0.43	7338
Inverse corruption index	-0.1	1.0	-2.2	2.6	1198
Inverse corruption (rescaled)	0.0	1.0	-2.0	2.7	1198
UN Fee Assessment	0.01	0.03	0.00	0.33	6120
Military expenditure (thousand USD)	4,510	24,619	0	552,568	6732
Military spending share	0.01	0.04	0.00	0.52	6732
Democracy (Polity)	0.3	7.5	-10.0	10.0	6857
Democracy (Polity, rescaled)	-0.0	1.0	-2.2	1.7	6857
GDP Per Capita	3,789	7,649	38	82,020	6120
GDP Per Capita (rescaled)	-0.0	1.0	-0.9	6.0	6120
Diplomatic contacts	36	29	0	156	6080
Diplomatic contacts (share)	0.01	0.01	0.00	0.04	6080

Table 2
Secretariat representation, all years, excess over population

Rank	Country	Share of positions	Share of world population	Excess Representation
1	Sweden	0.0428	0.0015	20.67
2	Norway	0.0180	0.0007	17.69
3	Finland	0.0206	0.0009	16.90
4	New Zealand	0.0114	0.0006	14.97
5	Ireland	0.0109	0.0006	12.67
6	Denmark	0.0150	0.0009	11.43
7	Panama	0.0050	0.0005	10.68
8	Jamaica	0.0047	0.0004	8.72
9	Switzerland	0.0118	0.0012	6.93
10	Uruguay	0.0053	0.0005	6.68
11	Sierra Leone	0.0056	0.0007	6.44
12	Jordan	0.0037	0.0008	6.27
13	Canada	0.0382	0.0051	5.93
14	Ghana	0.0178	0.0032	5.75
15	Botswana	0.0015	0.0003	5.63
16	Greece	0.0149	0.0018	5.62
17	Chile	0.0161	0.0025	5.38
18	Austria	0.0117	0.0013	5.38
19	Tunisia	0.0083	0.0016	4.70
24	United Kingdom	0.0581	0.0097	3.28
36	France	0.0343	0.0097	1.72
38	United States	0.1292	0.0464	1.46
44	Italy	0.0264	0.0094	1.00
46	Egypt	0.0173	0.0115	0.70
52	Pakistan	0.0259	0.0227	0.37
53	Poland	0.0100	0.0063	0.23
63	Germany	0.0158	0.0135	-0.16
67	Japan	0.0206	0.0208	-0.22
68	Nigeria	0.0131	0.0205	-0.22
69	Russian Federation	0.0237	0.0240	-0.26
80	Saudi Arabia	0.0013	0.0034	-0.43
83	Brazil	0.0131	0.0286	-0.51
85	Turkey	0.0045	0.0109	-0.56
89	India	0.0447	0.1670	-0.71
90	Indonesia	0.0055	0.0337	-0.83
95	China	0.0086	0.2075	-0.96
96	Israel	0.0000	0.0010	-1.00

Table 3
Correlates of U.N. Secretariat representation

	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)
Population share	0.211 (0.141)	-0.005 (0.065)	0.011 (0.069)	0.018 (0.077)	0.008 (0.075)
Human capital share		0.398 (0.014)***	0.370 (0.014)***	0.168 (0.110)	0.229 (0.089)**
Inverse corruption (rescaled)			0.004 (0.001)***	0.003 (0.001)***	0.003 (0.001)***
UN Fee Assessment				0.259 (0.142)*	0.217 (0.115)*
Constant	0.005 (0.001)***	0.004 (0.001)***	0.004 (0.001)***	0.004 (0.001)***	0.004 (0.001)***
N	8519	7306	7170	5464	5464
r2	0.08	0.47	0.52	0.55	0.57

* $p < 0.10$, ** $p < 0.05$, *** $p < 0.01$

The table shows coefficients from estimation of Equation 1, with the share of positions in the United Nations Secretariat as the dependent variable. Each observation is a country-year. Columns 1 through 4 add covariates sequentially. The dependent variable in column 5 is the share of weighted secretariat representation, with weights equal to expert rankings of the important of each position. Population, human capital and assessment of dues are represented as world shares. The freedom from corruption index is rescaled to have a mean of 0 and standard deviation of 1 in each year. Standard errors are clustered by country.

Table 4
Correlates of U.N. Secretariat representation (Country Fixed Effects)

	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)
Population share	0.835 (0.719)	-0.043 (0.555)	-0.021 (0.564)	0.524 (0.581)	0.402 (0.534)
Human capital share		0.594 (0.137)***	0.621 (0.140)***	0.405 (0.118)***	0.474 (0.115)***
Inverse corruption (rescaled)			0.000 (0.001)	-0.000 (0.001)	0.000 (0.001)
UN Fee Assessment				0.509 (0.127)***	0.473 (0.109)***
N	8519	7306	7170	5464	5464
r2	0.65	0.69	0.69	0.72	0.73

* $p < 0.10$, ** $p < 0.05$, *** $p < 0.01$

The table shows coefficients from estimation of Equation 1, with the share of positions in the United Nations Secretariat as the dependent variable, and country fixed effects. Each observation is a country-year. Columns 1 through 4 add covariates sequentially. The dependent variable in column 5 is the share of weighted secretariat representation, with weights equal to expert rankings of the importance of each position. Population, human capital and assessment of dues are represented as world shares. The freedom from corruption index is rescaled to have a mean of 0 and standard deviation of 1 in each year. Standard errors are clustered by country-decade pairs.

Table 5
Additional Correlates of U.N. Secretariat Representation

	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
Population share	0.039 (0.066)	-0.009 (0.054)	0.029 (0.075)	-0.007 (0.056)
Inverse corruption (rescaled)	-0.000 (0.001)	-0.000 (0.001)	-0.001 (0.001)	-0.000 (0.001)
GDP Per Capita (rescaled)	0.002 (0.001)	0.002 (0.001)**	0.002 (0.001)**	0.002 (0.001)*
Diplomatic contacts (share)	0.529 (0.157)***	0.676 (0.163)***	0.761 (0.169)***	0.667 (0.159)***
Democracy (Polity, rescaled)	0.001 (0.001)	0.001 (0.001)	0.002 (0.001)**	0.001 (0.001)
UN Fee Assessment	0.289 (0.058)***			0.011 (0.088)
Human capital share		0.259 (0.017)***		0.239 (0.073)***
Military spending share			0.217 (0.018)***	0.012 (0.051)
Constant	0.001 (0.001)	0.001 (0.001)	0.001 (0.001)	0.001 (0.001)
N	5023	4615	4937	4552
r ²	0.51	0.54	0.51	0.53

* $p < 0.10$, ** $p < 0.05$, *** $p < 0.01$

The table shows coefficients from estimation of Equation 1, with the share of positions in the United Nations Secretariat as the dependent variable. Each observation is a country-year. Columns 1 through 4 add covariates sequentially. Column 5 excludes the United States. Population, human capital, assessment of dues, diplomatic contacts and military spending are represented as world shares. The freedom from corruption index, Polity score and per capita wealth are rescaled to have a mean of 0 and standard deviation of 1 in each year. Standard errors are clustered by country.

Table 6
Coefficients on Secretariat Representation Over Time

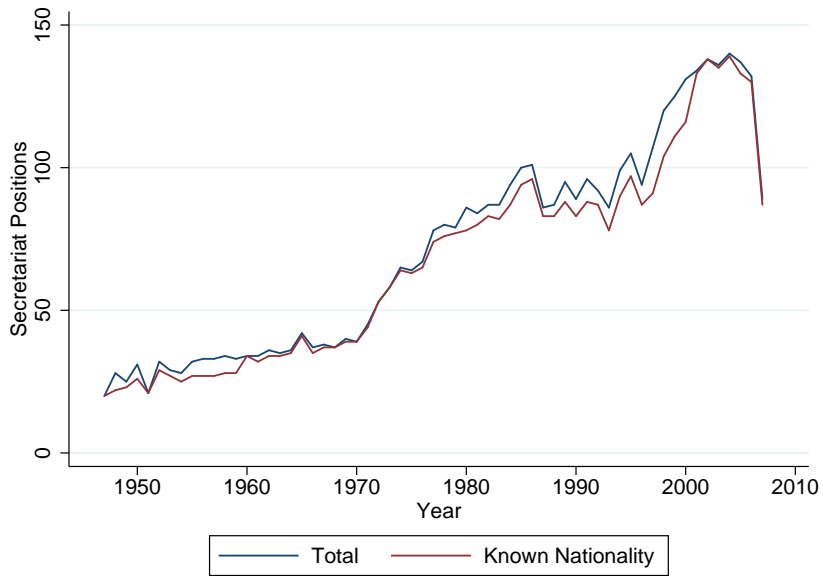
	1960	1970	1980	1990	2000
Population share	-0.017 (0.123)	-0.030 (0.041)	0.066 (0.058)	-0.003 (0.060)	-0.011 (0.070)
Human capital share	0.093 (0.279)	0.499 (0.095)***	0.235 (0.132)*	0.044 (0.126)	-0.041 (0.128)
Inverse corruption (rescaled)	-0.002 (0.002)	0.000 (0.001)	-0.000 (0.001)	-0.001 (0.002)	0.001 (0.001)
UN Fee Assessment	0.164 (0.243)	-0.353 (0.065)***	-0.044 (0.093)	0.162 (0.065)**	0.252 (0.099)**
GDP Per Capita (rescaled)	0.003 (0.002)	0.000 (0.001)	0.002 (0.002)	0.002 (0.001)**	0.001 (0.001)
Military spending share	0.178 (0.341)	0.044 (0.133)	-0.057 (0.082)	-0.013 (0.077)	0.024 (0.039)
Diplomatic contacts (share)	0.581 (0.271)**	0.933 (0.189)***	0.506 (0.209)**	0.866 (0.208)***	0.690 (0.192)***
Democracy (Polity, rescaled)	0.001 (0.001)	0.003 (0.001)**	0.003 (0.001)**	0.001 (0.001)	-0.001 (0.001)
Constant	0.000 (0.002)	0.000 (0.001)	0.003 (0.002)*	-0.000 (0.001)	0.001 (0.001)
N	712	927	974	1117	822
r ²	0.68	0.60	0.47	0.49	0.57

* $p < 0.10$, ** $p < 0.05$, *** $p < 0.01$

The table shows coefficients from estimation of Equation 1, with the share of positions in the United Nations Secretariat as the dependent variable, and the sample split by decade. Each observation is a country-year. Population, human capital, assessment of dues, diplomatic contacts and military spending are represented as world shares. The freedom from corruption index, Polity score and per capita wealth are rescaled to have a mean of 0 and standard deviation of 1 in each year. Standard errors are clustered by country.

Figure 1

Number of positions listed and identified in U.N. Yearbook



The figure shows the number of positions listed in the Appendix of the U.N. Yearbook, “Key Staff of the U.N. Secretariat,” along with the number of those position-holders that were matched to nationalities. Our main measure of representation is the share of positions held by each nation in a given year.

Figure 2
Secretariat Representation of World Powers Over Time

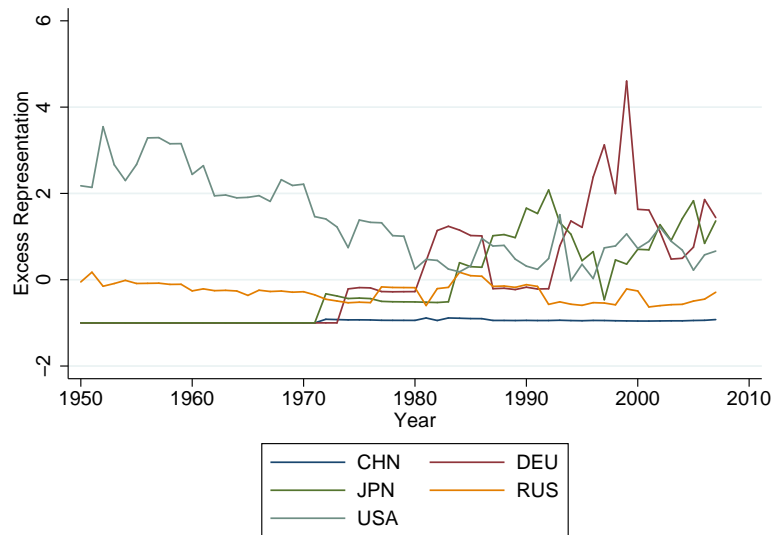


Figure 3
Secretariat and Population Share of Western Europe and Offshoots

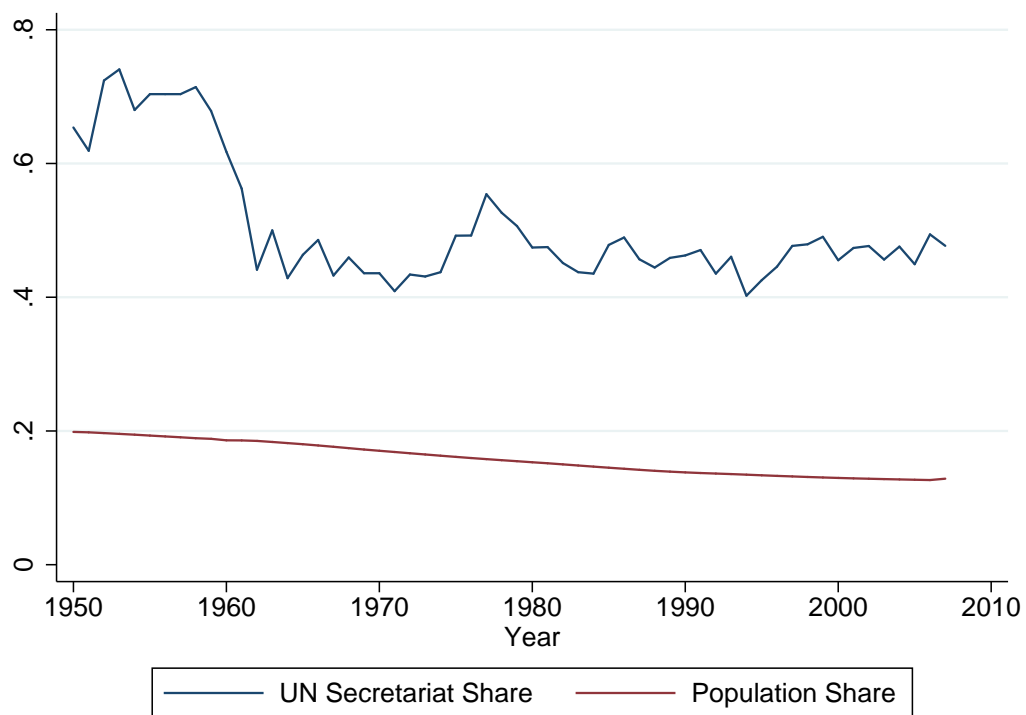
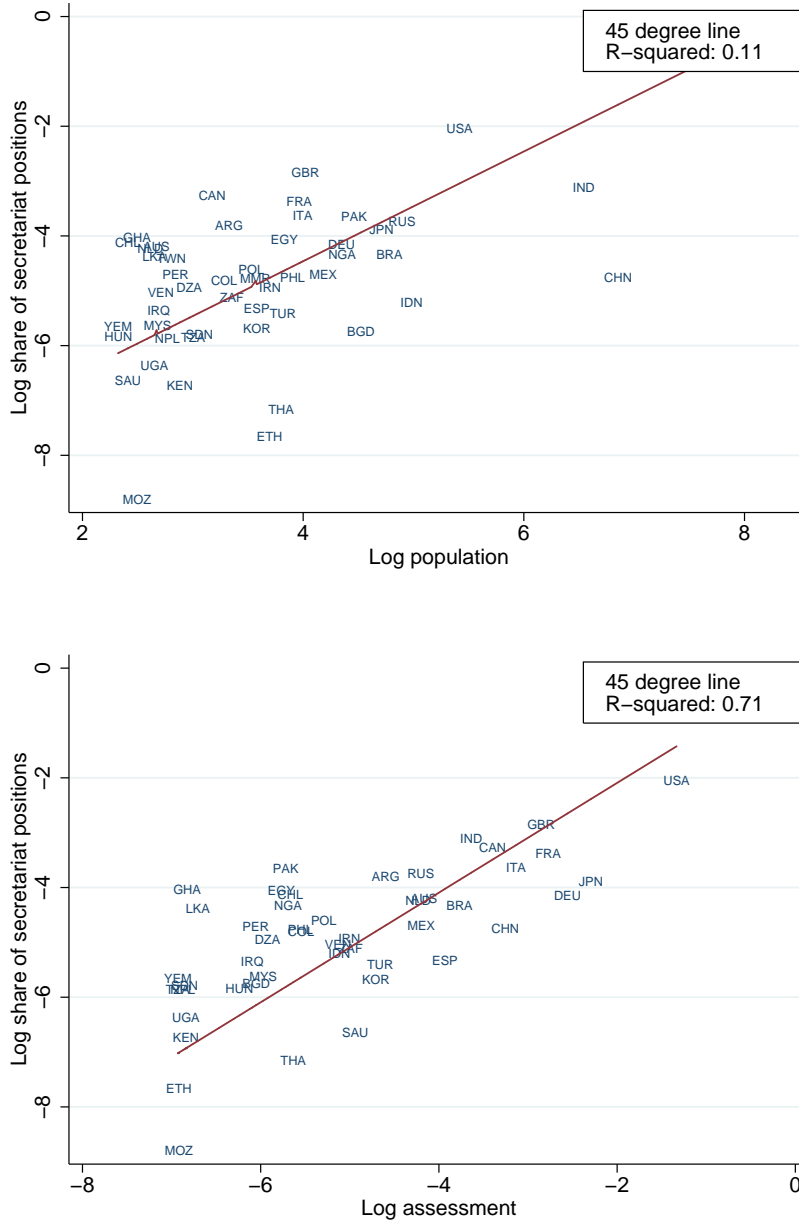
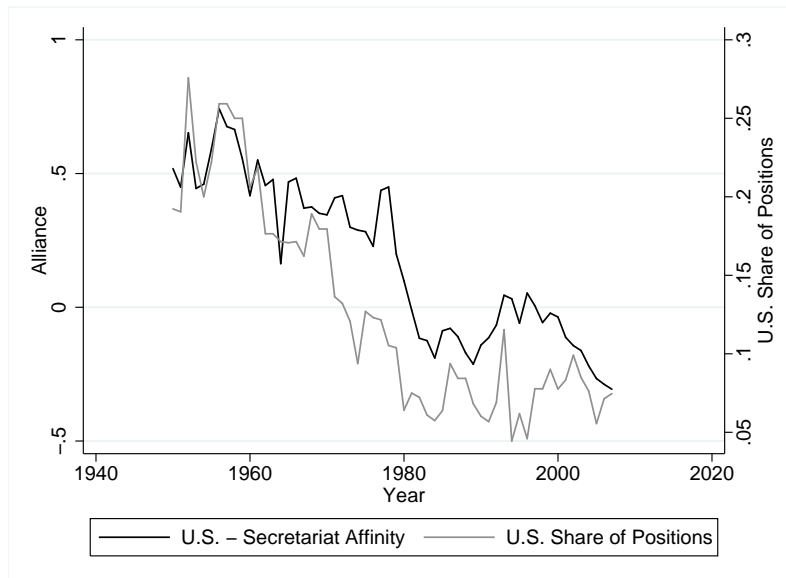


Figure 4
 Secretariat representation vs. population and GDP



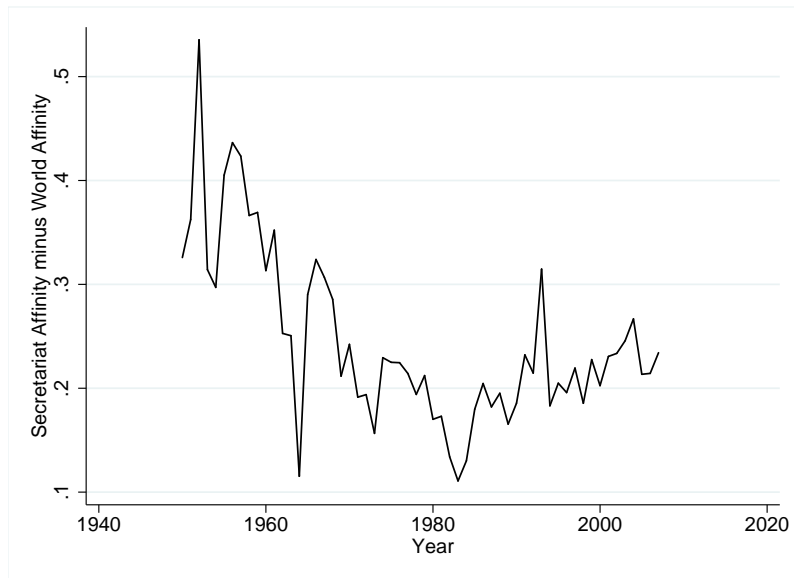
The top panel of the figure shows a scatter plot of the average log share of secretariat positions held across all years against the average log population of a country in all years. The solid line is not a best fit, but a 45 degree line. Countries above the line are overrepresented in the secretariat relative to their population, while countries below the solid line are underrepresented. The share of secretariat positions is presented in logs in order to keep the 45 degree line straight. The bottom panel of the figure shows the same plot, but with assessment of fees to the United Nations on the x axis.

Figure 5
Secretariat affinity for USA



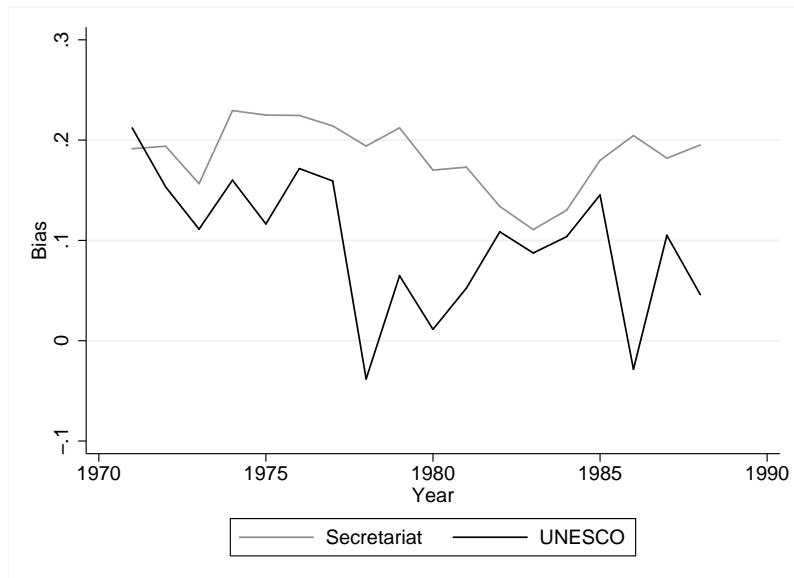
The figure shows the change of the affinity between the U.N. Secretariat and the United States. The y axis measures the affinity of all nations with respect to the U.S., based on voting in the U.N. General Assembly, weighted by their annual representation in the U.N. Secretariat.

Figure 6
Secretariat bias toward USA



The graph shows the bias in representation of the U.N. Secretariat to nations with affinity for the United States. The y axis measures the difference in each year between the affinity of the world for the United States (based on population weighting) and the secretariat of the U.N. (based on staff positions).

Figure 7
U.S. Bias of UNESCO and Secretariat



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A Appendix

Table A1

Secretariat representation, average share over all years

Rank	Country	Share of positions
1	United States	0.1292
2	United Kingdom	0.0581
3	India	0.0447
4	Sweden	0.0428
5	Canada	0.0382
6	France	0.0343
7	Italy	0.0264
8	Pakistan	0.0259
9	Russian Federation	0.0237
10	Argentina	0.0224
12	Finland	0.0206
13	Japan	0.0206
14	Norway	0.0180
15	Ghana	0.0178
16	Egypt	0.0173
17	Chile	0.0161
18	Germany	0.0158
19	Australia	0.0150
20	Denmark	0.0150
21	Greece	0.0149
22	Netherlands	0.0146
23	Nigeria	0.0131
24	Brazil	0.0131
25	Sri Lanka	0.0125
26	Taiwan	0.0122
27	Switzerland	0.0118
28	Austria	0.0117
29	New Zealand	0.0114
30	Ireland	0.0109
31	Poland	0.0100
32	Mexico	0.0091
33	Peru	0.0091
34	China	0.0086
35	Philippines	0.0085
36	Myanmar	0.0085
37	Tunisia	0.0083

Table A1

Secretariat representation, average share over all years

Rank	Country	Share of positions
38	Colombia	0.0082
39	Iran	0.0072
40	Algeria	0.0071
41	Belgium	0.0070
42	Senegal	0.0068
43	Czech Republic	0.0067
44	Venezuela	0.0065
45	South Africa	0.0060
46	Sierra Leone	0.0056
47	Cameroon	0.0055
48	Indonesia	0.0055
49	Uruguay	0.0053
50	Burundi	0.0052
51	Panama	0.0050
52	Niger	0.0050
53	Spain	0.0048
54	Guatemala	0.0048
55	Iraq	0.0047
56	Jamaica	0.0047
57	Somalia	0.0047
58	Turkey	0.0045
59	Jordan	0.0037
60	Ecuador	0.0037
61	Malaysia	0.0036
62	Yemen	0.0035
63	Korea, Rep.	0.0034
64	Bangladesh	0.0032
65	Burkina Faso	0.0032
66	Sudan	0.0030
67	Hungary	0.0029
68	Tanzania	0.0029
69	Nepal	0.0028
70	Haiti	0.0028
71	Costa Rica	0.0021
72	Syria	0.0020
73	Singapore	0.0020
74	Mali	0.0018
75	Uganda	0.0017

Table A1

Secretariat representation, average share over all years

Rank	Country	Share of positions
76	Portugal	0.0016
77	Bolivia	0.0015
78	Botswana	0.0015
79	Bulgaria	0.0014
80	Saudi Arabia	0.0013
81	Kenya	0.0012
82	Slovak Republic	0.0012
83	Guinea	0.0012
84	Cuba	0.0012
85	Zimbabwe	0.0011
86	Lebanon	0.0010
87	Namibia	0.0009
88	Liberia	0.0008
89	Thailand	0.0008
90	El Salvador	0.0007
91	Togo	0.0005
92	Ethiopia	0.0005
93	Chad	0.0003
94	Eritrea	0.0003
95	Lesotho	0.0002
96	Mozambique	0.0002
97	Afghanistan	0.0000
97	Angola	0.0000
97	Albania	0.0000
97	United Arab Emirates	0.0000
97	Armenia	0.0000
97	Azerbaijan	0.0000
97	Benin	0.0000
97	Bosnia And Herzegovina	0.0000
97	Belarus	0.0000
97	Central African Republic	0.0000
97	Cote D'Ivoire	0.0000
97	Congo, Rep.	0.0000
97	Dominican Republic	0.0000
97	Estonia	0.0000
97	Georgia	0.0000
97	Honduras	0.0000
97	Croatia	0.0000

Table A1

Secretariat representation, average share over all years

Rank	Country	Share of positions
97	Israel	0.0000
97	Kazakhstan	0.0000
97	Kyrgyz Republic	0.0000
97	Cambodia	0.0000
97	Kosovo	0.0000
97	Kuwait	0.0000
97	Laos	0.0000
97	Libya	0.0000
97	Lithuania	0.0000
97	Latvia	0.0000
97	Morocco	0.0000
97	Moldova	0.0000
97	Madagascar	0.0000
97	Macedonia	0.0000
97	Mongolia	0.0000
97	Mauritania	0.0000
97	Malawi	0.0000
97	Nicaragua	0.0000
97	Oman	0.0000
97	Papua New Guinea	0.0000
97	Puerto Rico	0.0000
97	Korea, Dem. Rep.	0.0000
97	Paraguay	0.0000
97	Romania	0.0000
97	Rwanda	0.0000
97	Serbia	0.0000
97	Slovenia	0.0000
97	Tajikistan	0.0000
97	Turkmenistan	0.0000
97	Trinidad And Tobago	0.0000
97	Ukraine	0.0000
97	Uzbekistan	0.0000
97	Vietnam	0.0000
97	West Bank And Gaza	0.0000
97	Congo, Dem. Rep.	0.0000
97	Zambia	0.0000

Table A2

More correlates of U.N. secretariat representation COUNTRY F.E.

	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
Population share	0.327 (0.898)	-0.255 (1.015)	0.357 (1.187)	-0.224 (0.884)
Inverse corruption (rescaled)	0.000 (0.001)	0.001 (0.002)	0.001 (0.001)	0.000 (0.002)
GDP Per Capita (rescaled)	0.002 (0.002)	0.004 (0.002)*	0.005 (0.003)*	0.002 (0.002)
Diplomatic contacts (share)	0.250 (0.357)	0.197 (0.334)	0.513 (0.496)	0.166 (0.294)
Democracy (Polity, rescaled)	-0.000 (0.001)	-0.000 (0.001)	-0.000 (0.001)	-0.000 (0.001)
UN Fee Assessment	0.494 (0.238)**			0.233 (0.160)
Human capital share		0.430 (0.135)***		0.383 (0.186)**
Military spending share			0.080 (0.034)**	0.124 (0.100)
Constant	0.002 (0.007)	0.006 (0.005)	0.001 (0.009)	0.005 (0.005)
N	5023	4615	4937	4552
r ²	0.68	0.68	0.66	0.69

* $p < 0.10$, ** $p < 0.05$, *** $p < 0.01$