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AN ETHICAL IMPERATIVE: INTERNATIONALIZING INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

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For both ethical analysis and political decision-making, two equally indispensable sources of data are historical reflection about goals and contemporary research about current conditions. It is primarily from theologians, philosophers, and historians that we receive insights into goals and general guidelines. It is primarily from physical and social scientists that we gain reliable knowledge about existing situations, including various possible strategies for improvement. Responsible policy decisions involve a compounding of these two contributions. We need to know both where we want to go and how to get there, both what we have learned from past experience and what we know about our present situation. Maneuvering through the complexities of modern decision requires more than moral fervor about inherited ethical insights. Wise decision requires also prudent calculation about effective means under existing circumstances. At the same time, expertise about means becomes disastrous when linked to demonic ethical goals.

For the greatest reliability, both ethical norms and sociological analysis need to be empirically (i.e., experientially) based. This is a commonly accepted test for descriptive sociological data. It is also an appropriate test for ethical insights. Even ethical codes attributed to divine inspiration are conditioned by the past experience of those reporting the inspiration, and their reports have been modified or confirmed by later historical experience. Many of the ethical goals and guidelines taught by religious groups have met the test of continued appropriateness to changing world realities. They have become a valuable part of our social heritage.

THE RELATIONSHIP OF ETHICS TO SOCIAL POLICY

It is now widely recognized that our value systems do inevitably influence our policy decisions, and that indeed they should do so. Peace and freedom and opportunity will never be achieved unless we recognize them as important goals, and

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unless in moving toward such goals we utilize guidelines growing out of historical experience, such as caring instead of indifference, participation rather than domination, and cooperation rather than mutual destruction. At the same time, such general guidelines do not have clear meaning for immediate policy without an accurate understanding of our concrete present situation, including alternatives open to us and the probable consequences of each. Decision-making then becomes a process of choosing that alternative the probable consequences of which would move us closest to our ethical goals.

The concept of the closest possible *approximation* to more ultimate goals is important. We are betrayed both by lack of ultimate vision and by utopian expectations. The extent to which we can now completely practice the full range of our highest goals is limited by unavoidable factors like the following:

(1) The regularities of nature and the existing state of human knowledge about how to utilize those regularities. As a doomsday device is exploding we cannot instantaneously transport our population to the moon.

(2) The actions of other persons. When another country invades our homeland, we cannot both preserve our freedom and carry on business as usual.

(3) The multiplicity of our goals. Given antinomies like peace and justice, of freedom and order, maximum realization of one value often requires limiting another value. Our task becomes discovering the best possible balance between often contradictory claims, and to opt for the best possible total situation obtainable under existing circumstances.

Existing situations place limits on our options. We are always compelled to act in a particular time and place. We search for a realistic approach which is pragmatically effective. Yet that does not mean surrendering prematurely to an unnecessary second-best. Nor does it allow rationalizing selfish interests at the expense of greater social losses. Social policy is always to be the *very closest possible* approximation to our goals.

Persons advocating drastic alterations may be utopian because they do not recognize limitations imposed by existing conditions like widespread personal egoism, or by national or tribal loyalties. On the other hand, there is a kind of utopianism among conservatives which expects too much improvement from too little change. Steps forward which are too few

or too long delayed easily result in long slides backward under the avalanche of events.

For example, just war theory (or a "just revolution" theory) illustrates that the ethical norm of nonviolence may on occasion need to be compromised. The just war approach recognizes that war is always evil, but that it may be waged as the lesser of evils if it is waged with good intent, by properly constituted authority, for a just cause, by acceptable means, as a last resort, and with a strong probability of gaining more than is lost. These criteria are still relevant. They may still justify some forms of limited violence. Yet under modern conditions, these same criteria severely limit the range of acceptable compromise. Our question now becomes: Can any war using modern conventional or nuclear weapons any longer be justified? Or, can *any* war between sizeable powers, with its possibilities for escalation, be considered a just war? Accepting a comprehensive enough list of just war criteria may today outlaw all war.¹

Programs which make the greatest possible contribution in meeting severe social crises must include comprehensive innovations. An improvement which seems impossible if considered in isolation may become possible as part of a larger complex of reinforcing changes. For example, evaluation of possibilities in the United Nations depends on the framework of total foreign policy within which it is set. From the standpoint of a foreign policy emphasizing unilateral military power and national economic interest, the United Nations has glaring limitations and invites comparatively less support. Within a framework of total policy including disarmament, common security, and Third World development, the United Nations becomes a most promising agency, deserving much greater support. For this reason I am setting discussion of the United Nations in a broader framework of other related aspects of foreign policy.

Equally serious to policy decisions are a vacuum of vision and a neglect of contemporary conditions. Without both normative ethics and descriptive science we will continue to live perilously under the smog and the bomb. Without both ethical insight and contemporary research we have only a partial picture of things as they are. Willful blindness about important aspects of reality can be just as suicidal as stepping into a

1. For a succinct discussion of just war criteria, see the pastoral letter of the National Conference of Catholic Bishops, *The Challenge of Peace*, United States Catholic Conference, 1983, par. 80-110.

busy street having looked in only one direction, and being hit by a truck speeding from the other direction.

In a truly holistic approach to international problems, the full range of relevant ethical norms might be summarized in six points:

- (1) Nonviolence and peace.
- (2) Freedom and economic justice, with equal opportunity for all.
- (3) Care and preservation of natural resources for this and future generations.
- (4) Universal concern for all humanity, especially the poor and needy.
- (5) Mutually helpful, cooperative relationships for the common good.
- (6) The power of understanding and caring relationships to overcome evil.

It is not only a matter of including all of these values in a coherent whole. Differences among us may also appear in the depth of our commitments. Religiously inspired persons often go beyond even humanitarian secularists. These ethical convictions become even more demanding when they are related to the intentions of God and the central purposes of our lives. If all persons are seen as children of God, then killing becomes fratricide or sororicide. If the world is God's creation, then destruction of natural resources becomes rebellion against the central power of the universe.

Differences in degree of commitment may be illustrated by three basic enquiries for personal value clarification. (1) How deeply does one feel the hurts of others? Deep sharing of the pains of others requires a more altruistic, outgoing concern which includes the poor, the needy, and the enemy, rather than egoistic emphasis on one's own comfort and achievement. (2) What values does one supremely seek? A holistic view of human fulfillment would add greater emphasis on social and spiritual possibilities, instead of a heavy preoccupation with only the material and physical. (3) How far-sighted are the consequences taken into account? An adequate basis for choices includes a long-run view, including generations yet unborn, rather than an obsession with "me now" immediacy.

In a summary outline which roughly parallels the six ethical considerations listed above, a careful study of our contemporary social situation might identify characteristics such as:

- (1) Destructiveness of modern weaponry.
- (2) Totalitarian threats to peace, freedom, and justice.
- (3) Increasing depletion of natural resources.
- (4) Discontent and turmoil in poorer nations.
- (5) Greater international interdependence.
- (6) New technologies of tyranny, terror, and torture.

An adequate consideration of international issues must take all of these realities into account. Any policy which neglects crucial items is so fundamentally flawed as to prove fatal. Yet essential elements are easily omitted in the oversimplifications of public controversy. "Doves" with an international-organization perspective, tend to overlook totalitarian threats and new technologies for crushing dissenters who rely on reason and goodwill. Nationalistic "hawks" often underrate or neglect modern weaponry, depletion of resources, and the role of poverty as a cause of conflict. Any acceptable foreign policy must deal with all of the above modern conditions and at the same time move as rapidly as possible toward the full range of our value goals. This assignment I will attempt to fulfill in the remainder of this paper.

Even though there may be considerable agreement about the general relationship between normative considerations and contemporary data, there is nevertheless vigorous disagreement about what this would mean for contemporary international relations. While there are many sub-variations, two general approaches to United States policy have emerged. One emphasizes reliance on our own resources in military preparedness, national political sovereignty, and economic and cultural nationalism. The other approach would stress possibilities in international organization and more international economic and cultural structures. In the remainder of this paper I propose to deal with basic issues in the military, political, and economic areas. My thesis is that both our ethical heritage and contemporary social research support a reduction in our present concentration on narrowly self-interested unilateral action, and an increased participation in international organization and action.

AN ETHICAL EVALUATION OF MILITARY DETERRENCE

In current controversy between greater reliance on national strength or increased cultivation of international security, the issue of military deterrence is central. At first glance through the eyes of ethical norms, the deterrence approach appears to be highly problematic and to carry a heavy burden

of proof. Building more destructive weapons seems directly contradictory to keeping the peace. Preparing instruments which may destroy civilization seems a curious way to improve civilization. Emphasis on armament policy encourages belligerent rather than cooperative attitudes. Financial and human resources diverted to arms production cannot be used to feed the hungry or to eliminate the causes of poverty. Instead of beating swords into plowshares, we are beating plowshares into swords. Thereby, very realistically speaking, we do starve the hungry and deprive the sick of medical care. President Dwight Eisenhower said it well, "Every gun that is made, every warship launched, every rocket fired signifies, in the final sense, a theft from those who hunger and are not fed, those who are cold and not clothed."²

On ethical grounds, the only possible way of defending present-day military deterrence is as stemming from our very imperfect current circumstances. If indeed this is the only way to deal with modern totalitarianism and military threat, then the policy becomes an unfortunate necessity. But if there emerges a better way to realize more of the total values we seek, then we need to rush to accept that superior alternative. Decision about the possibility of a better way requires examination of whether military deterrence (1) deters war, (2) facilitates disarmament negotiations, and (3) protects our freedom and security.

First, those who are convinced that deterrence is an effective way to prevent war, argue that no nation will attack us if it is convinced that it will be defeated, or that victory will be bought at the price of unacceptable damage. Therefore it is necessary to increase both quantity and quality of our arms, including the development of new or more effective weapons, lest we lose parity or superiority over our chief rivals. This approach is seen as having worked in the past and as being largely responsible for the peace we now enjoy. As Winston Churchill once said, "One sword holds another in its sheath." Nations do weigh consequences, and military power is a language they understand. We therefore build more powerful weapons in order that we will not need to use them. We prepare for war in order to prevent war.³

Opponents of this position point out that past attempts at

2. Address to the American Society of Newspaper Editors, April 16, 1953.

3. Cf. Vegetius, *Epitoma Rei Militaris*, *Prologium*, "Qui desiderat pacem, praeparet bellum."

military deterrence have only temporarily postponed war, while at the same time they have made eventual outbreak of hostilities more certain and more destructive. This is because military buildup by one nation motivates its opponents also to arm further in order to "keep up." The resulting arms race breeds fear, suspicion, and hostility - attitudes which fertilize rather than destroy the seeds of war. What we intend as deterrence other nations see as threat. We thereby strengthen the political influence of the most war-prone in adversary nations. Whereas we would like to increase the influence of "doves" in the ruling councils of competing nations, we do just the opposite.

Furthermore, even proponents of deterrence are likely to admit that increased arms do not deter attack due to accidental failure of intricate equipment, or to crazed or irrational leaders who do not dispassionately weigh consequences. Also, military deterrence does not remove many basic causes of discontent and conflict. It merely clamps the lid on steaming pots without turning off the gas - which is a rather reliable recipe for explosion. It is not necessary here to recapitulate the consequences of such an explosion in physical destruction, loss of life, loss of civilization, lack of medical facilities for relieving pain, damage from radioactive fallout or to the ozone layer, and a possible "nuclear winter" over the earth. Another reality is that a continued race in research and development will produce still more horrible weapons, perhaps biological, chemical, meteorological, laser beams, sound waves, or satellite launchers. Instead of the above quotation from Winston Churchill, many might prefer the words of Jesus, "All who take the sword will perish by the sword."⁴

Second, Does greater military power increase the likelihood of successful diplomatic negotiation? Presumably both sides to the deterrence argument would prefer to see international differences settled in this nonviolent way. It is also argued that if we had enough military strength we would hold more "bargaining chips" in negotiation and could gain more concessions from opponents. In their own interests other nations are more likely to heed our words if they see our military muscle. Or other nations might make more significant concessions if we have driven up military budgets to so high a level that they cannot continue the competition. For all these reasons it is concluded that we must increase our military

4. Matthew 26:52. 242.

strength before we negotiate. We arm in order to parley.⁵

In very important respects, however, greater military strength makes fruitful negotiation less probable. In a competitive and belligerent atmosphere, with both sides fearful and suspicious, significant concessions are less likely to be made. No nation wants to reach an agreement while it sees itself as militarily weaker. At the same time, the stronger side sees less reason to make concessions in negotiation. There is then seldom an auspicious time for really significant and genuine good-faith bargaining. Nations may simply go through the motions of disarmament talks, or make superficial agreements, simply to appease public opinion. Or, if a settlement is imposed by a stronger nation, it lasts only as long as it takes the weaker nation to circumvent the agreement. Instead of "respect" for mere power, a much better atmosphere for fruitful negotiation is a climate of friendship and cooperation, involving profound recognition of a common problem and sincere recognition of the legitimate interests of the other side.

Third, does emphasis on military deterrence protect our freedom and security? Those advocating increasing armament are likely to argue that without such power we would be defenseless. We would be forced to become essentially a satellite of any powerful nation which simply threatened invasion of war. Our population would be effectively held hostage by any power using "nuclear blackmail." This might be considered a slavery worse than death. Furthermore, another powerful nation might take over essential resources in other parts of the world, thus strangling our economy and destroying the basis for our power and accustomed livelihood. Against all such calamities we have an obligation also to protect weaker allies and friendly nations under our "nuclear umbrella." To abandon nations which depend upon us would be heartless and cruel, as well as weakening our strength in international affairs.

These are strong arguments, but they are not as cogent as they initially appear to be. Instead, they become powerful reasons for disarmament agreements which greatly reduce or eliminate the world's most threatening weapons. Arms as numerous and powerful as they now are, make possible the very calamities we are trying to avoid. Possible destruction

5. Cf. Winston Churchill, B.B.C. Broadcast, October, 8, 1951, "I do not hold that we should rearm in order to fight. I told that we should rearm in order to parley."

through nuclear war becomes our ultimate earthly insecurity. Insofar as an arms race leads to war, what we intend as a protection for ourselves and our allies actually makes us all less safe. In addition, as more and more countries feel the need for their own protection, we compound all the problems of nuclear proliferation.

We need also to remember the threats to future freedom and security imposed by draining scarce natural resources into arms production. We are now being deprived of peacetime use of these resources just as surely as though a hostile nation had captured part of our land and oil wells. This natural wealth, along with much of our human energy and inventive skill, is now being lost to us for meeting urgent human problems, like hunger. Many of these neglected needs become causes of revolution and of war, especially as great powers support different sides in revolutionary struggles. As we funnel natural and human resources into arms production instead of additional hospitals and increases in food production, we illustrate the words of Pope Paul VI, "The arms race kills without firing a shot."

Do increases in weaponry deter war or make war more likely, facilitate or retard negotiation, contribute to security or to insecurity? How are we to choose between two such contradictory opinions? Two ethical as well as sociological insights seem to be particularly helpful. One is that moral decisions are always to be made in relation to the realities of a particular time and place. Answers which were appropriate in the past may no longer be valid under present circumstances. It was easier to argue for military deterrence when we lacked in our weaponry the dimensions of destruction we now possess. Repeated past breakdowns in deterrence, disastrous as they were, still were not as ominous as they have now become. In earlier days it was easier to conclude that the risks of armaments were a necessary evil to a greater good. Now, even though many of the same hostile threats remain to be opposed in the world, a new element has been added with respect to the method of opposing them. Albert Einstein was right in saying, "The unleashed power of the atom has changed everything except our way of thinking We shall require a substantially new manner of thinking if mankind is to survive."

A second helpful insight is that what was beneficial up to a point may become harmful beyond that point. Economists might refer to this as the law of diminishing returns. Medicine that is curative in prescribed dosages may become

poison in larger quantities. The first couch in the living room is a comfort; the tenth couch in the same room becomes intolerable crowding. Whatever we may have believed about deterrence in the past, there are now strong reasons for concluding that "enough is enough" and that further development would defeat the purposes we are trying to achieve. when we can already obliterate opponents several times over, the only purpose of additional fire-power would be to rearrange the rubble. In accepting the Albert Einstein Peace Prize, George F. Kennan spoke of our present "levels of redundancy of such grotesque dimensions as to defy rational understanding."

The principle of diminishing returns is now also applicable as nations are developing weapons sufficiently powerful and accurate to wipe out most of an opponent's launching sites. Under such circumstances it becomes vitally important that any nation be the first to strike before its opponent does. Under such "hair trigger" conditions, any sign or rumor of an approaching confrontation could initiate a nuclear attack. No nation would then be secure. What started out as deterrence then becomes powerful stimulus to war. By spending our wealth for such "defenses" against war and tyranny, we become defenseless.

It is not surprising that their careful combining of traditional ethical insight with contemporary scientific study should lead the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops to say, "The arms race is one of the greatest curses on the human race; it is to be condemned as a danger, an act of aggression against the poor, and a folly which does not provide the security it promises."⁶ Likewise, the 1983 Assembly of the World Council of Churches rejected the concept of nuclear deterrence as "morally unacceptable and as incapable of safeguarding peace and security in the long run."⁷

Both ethical and political analysis point to the urgency of eliminating redundancy in weapons and reversing the arms race through drastic multilateral and verifiable reductions in all types of armament. This does not mean complete disarmament, immediately or unilaterally. The above analysis points to the present need for limited and responsible military strength. In addition, various forms of political and economic

6. National Conference of Catholic Bishops, *op. cit.*, par. 13 and par. 128.

7. Official Report, VI Assembly, Geneva: World Council of Churches, "Gathered for Life," par. 20, d (1983).

pressure would still remain available.

Gentle reason alone is not enough in dealing with selfish interests and concentrations of power in the present world. Some coercive measures are still necessary. The problem is to keep measures political and economic without exploding into military action. Some uses of political and economic sanctions may be ineffective or self-defeating. Yet on other occasions, especially if applied internationally by groups of nations or through the United Nations, effective options may be found. These may include refusal to bargain further, withdrawal of funds, breaking of diplomatic relations, adverse world-wide propaganda, or cutting off desired trade. Pressure may also be exerted through promised rewards, or through a combination of "carrot" and "stick" tactics.

Granted there are risks in such a policy of arms reduction, limited military strength, and political and economic pressures. But realistic analysis suggests that the risks in our present policy are vastly greater. The alternative policy here proposed has an even greater chance for success since reversing the arms race becomes only one part of a more inclusive, mutually-reinforcing program. Other aspects of this alternative total program are discussed in the next two sections of this paper.

AN ETHICAL EVALUATION OF NATIONAL SOVEREIGNTY

The future of humankind is now shaped within a web of connecting ties composed of commercial transactions, raw material shipments, idea transmission, or political contacts. The complex interdependence of the modern world sends us searching for promising guidelines in ethical norms growing out of historical experience. Crucial among these is an appropriate balance between the values of world-wide communitarianism and the values of individualism or nationalism. As the world becomes more of a neighborhood, selfish and chauvinistic policies prove to be so infected with immorality as to become disastrous. As resources to be divided become more scarce, interclass and international competition for a larger share becomes more intense. As available means for coercion become more destructive, the results of conflict become more devastating.

On the early frontier, so long as the nearest neighbors were miles away and trees existed in such abundance as to allow clearing the land at will, individualism could remain comparatively unchecked. All persons could substantially do

what seemed right in their own eyes. But as settlers crowded the area, competition developed for water and the best farmland. Those who came to dominate the community might be the most efficient, but they also might be the most fortunate or unscrupulous or best armed. Most residents could then exercise full freedom only at the sufferance of the dominant few. A similar sequence emerged as completely unregulated laissez-faire industry allowed the growth of monopoly, or as absolute national sovereignty made possible the present domination of the world by a few great powers. Being realistic about the mixture of motives within individuals, with most of us hovering somewhere between the completely egoistic and the completely altruistic, attempted anarchy (in the sense of absence of social regulation) tends to be transformed into its precise opposite, namely autocracy.

The cure in the frontier community was found in the election of a sheriff and the passing of laws, the beginnings of democratic government. A democratic system does include some coercion of minorities. Yet by such regulations democracy also provides the maximum possible freedom realistically available under existing circumstances. Liberty, peace, and opportunity for most individuals and small groups disappear unless larger communities check the depredations of irresponsible smaller units. This applies to global, as well as to national and local situations. The undue prolongation of what is essentially international lawlessness now threatens the peace and freedom of each of us, and even our habitat here on the earth.

Under the ethical guideline of subsidiarity, appropriate functions are to be assigned to a hierarchy of organizations extending from small local groups to all-inclusive world agencies. Smaller units do have legitimate claims so long as they do not seriously harm the larger whole. At the same time, larger units have an obligation to act on important matters affecting the whole. The loyalties of citizens are to be distributed accordingly. By all means, let the flags fly and the patriotic cheers ring out for our own land. We have past heroes to honor and national virtues to celebrate with enthusiasm. But at the same time, other lands have skies as fair as ours. There is a United Nations flag to thrill to, and international rights to be defended, and wars to be eliminated. We also patriotically honor our own country when we ask it to live up to its highest aims of peace and justice for all peoples. Especially in the modern world, parochialism must yield to cosmopolitanism, and isolation to international participation.

Providing security, peace, freedom, and economic opportunity are functions commonly listed as reasons for the existence of governments. No nation acting alone can any longer provide for its citizens security, peace, and freedom so long as other nations can launch military attacks. Nor can any nation guarantee economic prosperity so long as another nation can touch off world-wide depressions. No single nation can preserve the natural environment of its citizens if other nations are free to waste and pollute. Also beyond the control of any single nation are important non-political organizations of world-wide power, like transnational corporations, media networks, crime syndicates, and terrorist groups. On all these matters world-wide cooperation has become imperative. Providing the essential functions of government now requires greater reliance on various forms of international action. Traditional nationalistic policy is now both obsolete and suicidal. We are now forced to organize a global society because we care about the welfare of single individuals.

A caring attitude in the contemporary world includes feeling the perplexity and suffering of millions on the other side of the globe as though they were members of our one human family. Their present condition is now significantly a part of my condition, and their future a part of my future. Every war becomes a civil war. Every pain demands therapeutic attention.

What are the implications for a United States foreign policy which would more adequately express a communitarian, caring attitude, recognize subsidiarity, and better fulfill the functions of government in an interdependent world? Features like the following might be listed.

1. *Diplomacy which is resourceful, creative, and anticipatory.* Whether between nations or within multinational organizations, diplomatic agreements are our chief continuing resource for peaceful settlement of international conflict, reduction of political tensions, and development of positive cooperation. Yet we have habitually left unused many of the resources offered by negotiation. Diplomacy easily becomes routine, traditional, unimaginative. Diplomacy which is creative and resourceful will be innovative rather than rigid. It will be responsive to changes in the world instead of simply trying to defend customary arrangements and systems. It will be sympathetic with the aspirations of the poor and neglected, problem-solving instead of narrowly selfish regarding power and privilege. It will search for ways to meet the legiti-

mate grievances and aspirations of other nations without endangering our own legitimate interests. It will offer the "carrot" of inducements as well as the "stick" of threatened losses. It makes the most of similar interests, such as prevention of nuclear war, transferring armament expenditures to raise the standard of living of the domestic population, or preserving the world environment from waste and pollution.

Diplomacy which is anticipatory will attempt to deal with troublesome issues before they become acute. It will try to get at causes rather than simply consequences. It will recognize the long-run negative effects of belligerent rhetoric. Objection to specific practices of an opponent does not need to become generalized hostility, self-righteousness, or name-calling. We can learn from business and community experience, as well as from international relations, that continuously expressing enmity makes cooperation less likely.

Diplomacy can be fatally infected by an immoral egocentrism, or by insistence on total victory rather than reasonable compromise. In cultural, economic, and political matters we are gradually learning the genuine values in tolerable forms of pluralism. So long as they do not seriously harm us, we may learn from the experimentation of other groups. We do not need to make the world in our own image, especially not in non-essential details or in matters of purely domestic concern. While we may criticize and compete, we can live with a variety of political and economic systems without explosion into war. While we may properly do what we can to extend freedom, for example, we do not need to require conformity with our particular political or economic system. Especially as we deal with smaller nations, insistence on the dominance of our own opinions easily becomes a throwback to imperialism in a post-imperialist world.

2. *International organization with limited but essential powers.* Again, one's opinion on this frequently controversial question is colored by both ethical and sociological considerations. If one finds moral grounds for competitive individualism, and if one believes that everyone profits most as each tries to rise above others, then one may endorse independent national action in comparative isolation, and glory in the superior advantages reaped by those who rise to the top. In contrast, if one's ethical convictions stress a world-wide community of common opportunity, then one is likely to be more deeply concerned about the welfare of neglected distant neighbors

and to work more energetically for international structures to facilitate mutual aid for all peoples.

In sociological terms, greater international interdependence means that sovereign nations now exist in a new context. When no single nation can any longer completely fulfill the basic functions of the state, structures for international decision and action become essential. Pope John XXIII said it well:

Today the universal common good poses problems of world-wide dimensions, which cannot be adequately tackled or solved except by the efforts of public authority . . . which is in a position to operate in an effective manner on a world-wide basis. The moral order itself, therefore, demands that such a form of public authority be established.⁸

Our most promising available approach to such "global systems of governance" lies in strengthening and improving the United Nations. When anyone advocates getting "the U.N. out of the U.S. and the U.S. out of the U.N.," that person might well be asked from how much of the United Nations he or she intends to withdraw. Anyone who ever expects to mail a letter or take a plane abroad will want to support those specialized United Nations agencies which arrange international postal regulations, and air safety and flight control procedures. Not to allocate radio frequencies internationally would lead to chaos in communications. Without standards set by the International Atomic Energy Agency, disposal of nuclear wastes would contaminate us all even more than they now do. We have been willing to turn to international agencies when a limited range of needs became overwhelmingly obvious. Our reluctance has been great enough, however, that the list of needs grows faster than our willingness to act together.

There are, of course, dangers in granting too much power to international authority, just as we rightly object to national governments adopting unnecessary regulations. The rights of decision and powers of enforcement by international authority should be limited to serious international threats and to actions that could not threaten the existence of any individual nation. Limited action on such comparatively few matters could actually extend rather than restrict the freedom of nations. This is quite clear with respect to such

8. Pope John XXIII, *Peace on Earth*, par. 137 (1963).

matters as prevention of nuclear holocaust or collapse of the global environment.

We may correctly point out weaknesses in the United Nations, such as inability to control actions of great powers or the great increase in votes by small nations (though effects of the latter could be alleviated if we showed greater sympathy for Third World needs). Improvements are called for in the United Nations, even as the United States Constitution requires repeated amendment. Yet all the while American citizens remain supportive of their nation. With all its imperfections the United Nations is making essential contributions in peaceful settlement of disputes, relief of human suffering, defusing great power confrontations, and providing a continuous forum for discussion of difficult issues (including those of importance to the Third World). The United Nations, even in its present form, could do a great deal more if the United States gave it more support and made more frequent use of its agencies. Instead of weakening international organizations at their points of strength, we need to strengthen them at their points of weakness. In contrast, the recent record of the United States is characterized by neglect or reduction of support, or even (as in World Court jurisdiction over mining Nicaraguan harbors) rejection of United Nations aims and procedures.

3. *Nongovernmental agencies for international citizen interaction.* It is possible to exaggerate the immediate importance of private citizen contacts in the face of national concentrations of military and political power. Nevertheless, a potentially significant long-run contribution is being made by people-to-people exchanges, sometimes referred to as "diplomacy at the grass roots." International meetings or organizations of scientists, business people, academicians, religious leaders, athletes, artists, and others - or international tours by musical groups, youth groups, or zoo animals - or sister city programs - can help to build friendships, understanding, and appreciation for other cultures. Sponsored by either government or private agencies, enough such contacts could significantly change the public attitudes which help to change foreign policy.

International interaction between cultures as a whole may help us identify weaknesses in our own heritage and superior resources in others. We might come to see the poverty of our affluence with its rootlessness and restlessness of the

upwardly mobile, its personal psychological problems and social conflicts, its materialistic preoccupations in competition for the "good life." We might learn from Eastern or Third World cultures the riches of simpler living, closer social relationships, deeper spiritual experiences, and enhanced quality of life. At the same time that we reduce our super-affluent material expectations and cultivated superior values, poorer nations might receive from us the process of democracy and the technology of manufacturing and food production which would provide them with the necessities and simple comforts which contribute to authentic human living.

This kind of sharing involves a creative synthesis between what ethicists sometimes call "scarce" and "abundant" values. Material and physical goods are "scarce" in the sense that they diminish as they are divided. When two persons share ten dollars, each has only five. In contrast, social and spiritual values are "abundant" in that they are multiplied as they are divided. When we share ideas, esthetic appreciations, or religious experiences, all of us can possess them equally. We do not have to fight, personally or internationally, over "abundant" values. Instead of struggling for larger pieces of the available pie, we can all have the whole pie!

It is possible that out of international cultural interaction there might eventually emerge a new era in human civilization, characterized by such unprecedented concentration on wholistic quality of life as to be comparable to the social transition associated with the Industrial Revolution? In view of increasing alienation, resource depletion, and destructive conflict, it becomes an assignment to the present generation to explore every avenue toward hastening such intercultural enrichment.

4. *Possibilities in less-used forms of nonviolent resistance.* Even though populations are not yet prepared to use them in major confrontations, the distinctive methods of nonviolent resistance deserve continued exploration. There is a strand in ethical and religious tradition which goes beyond the usual diplomatic negotiations and coercive pressures in order to emphasize returning good for evil, accepting punishment and suffering for dissenting action, and thereby overcoming evil with good. Examples can be found in Jesus, the early Christian church, later struggles for religious tolerance, Tolstoi, Thoreau, the militant wing of the woman suffrage movement, Gandhi, and Martin Luther King, Jr. There are now convincing reasons for rejecting nonviolent resistance as pub-

lic policy in international affairs. Therefore the positive program I am suggesting does not include unilateral disarmament, but does speak of responsible military strength. For one thing, complete nonviolent resistance in international conflicts is now politically impossible, given the lack of understanding and support in public attitudes. For another thing, ultra-optimistic views about the adequacy of nonviolent resistance may overlook the uncaring resoluteness of opponents, and new techniques for torture and terror, for censoring news about suffering resisters, and for manipulating public opinion.

Yet history records enough extremely difficult victories won by nonviolent resisters in the past that we may well encourage experiments and exploration into the method, as in the recently established Harvard University program on Non-violent Sanctions in Conflict and Defense. Even the proposed federally funded Institute of Peace might explore use of the method, for one example, as contingency planning for populations invaded or occupied by hostile powers.

The need for taking nonviolent resistance more seriously becomes more evident as we recognize that the method does involve powerful coercive as well as persuasive power. Dramatizing the suffering of undeserving victims does appeal to consciences, but in addition to that, merchants in the civil rights struggle, for example, were also more willing to make concessions in order to end the boycotts. At this point there is an overlap between nonviolent resistance strategies and the policies of governments for nonviolent political and economic sanctions against opposing nations. As another point of similarity, governments have successfully used unilateral initiatives toward disarmament, even though they rejected complete unilateral disarmament. Such unilateral initiatives, or confidence-building measures, involve a moratorium on development or deployment of certain weapons, perhaps with the announcement that if the other nation reciprocates the first nation is prepared to take still another step. Under appropriate circumstances such unilateral action might more often be taken.

At any rate, on matters of strategy we dare not remain prisoners of the past. The perils of the present are stimulus enough to keep us searching for better alternatives for both the immediate and the distant future. We can more completely incorporate into foreign policy the spirit, if not all the techniques, of nonviolent resistance. We could be more practically effective if we more often put aside past enmities,

clearly stated our differences, listened carefully to the viewpoints of our opponents, and patiently worked toward nonviolent solutions. We need more unanimously to see that security and peace are best based on foundations of friendship and understanding. It is true that hostility is best eliminated not by mutual destruction but by mutual reconciliation - the goal described by ethical wisdom and approachable through practical diplomacy.

AN ETHICAL EVALUATION OF ECONOMIC NATIONALISM

A basic ethical insight is that the resources of the earth are not to be wasted, exploited, or destroyed. The gifts of nature are to be used for the fullest possible realization of the potentialities of all persons, now and in future generations. Going beyond the ocean resources of which the Law of the Sea treaty spoke, all natural resources are the common heritage of humankind. Even though private ownership of such resources is often defensible, they should, as Thomas Aquinas put it, be used as though they were held in common. He further insisted that possessions that were superfluous belonged to those who needed them.⁹

To say that all persons have a right to economic goods sufficient to satisfy genuine needs is not to say that there should be equality in distribution. That would often deny satisfaction of needs. Persons who through no fault of their own have suffered unusually costly illness, or a natural disaster like earthquake or drought, or whose vocational training is unusually expensive, require more economic goods for equal opportunity. Whether or not they reject or use that opportunity is their decision, and they are due the just consequences of their choice. But all persons, by virtue of their humanity, have a right to equal opportunity to utilize available economic goods toward the fullest development of their physical, mental, and spiritual capacities. Our cherished founding documents speak of such inalienable rights of all persons and of the duties of government to provide for the common welfare. This is extended to the "huddled masses" of the world in the invitation to opportunity inscribed on the base of our Statue of Liberty.

Another appropriate ethical emphasis is on the obliga-

9. Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Theologica*, London: Burns, Oates and Washbourne, Ltd., 1929, Vol. 10, pp. 232-233. For a further discussion of property ownership see my *Ethical Resources for Political and Economic Decision*, Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1972, pp. 55-63.

tion of the rich to share with the poor. This is perhaps most apparent in Judaic and Christian scriptures. Among the many possible illustrations are the Deuteronomic code's special provision for the poor, for example in the instructions for leaving part of all harvests to be gleaned by "the poor and the sojourner";¹⁰ or references in the wisdom literature like, "He who oppresses a poor man insults his Maker";¹¹ or repeated prophetic condemnations of those who "trample upon the poor";¹² or various teachings of Jesus, including the prediction of punishment for the rich man who did nothing overtly to injure poor Lazarus at his gate, except to continue enjoying his own riches.¹³ In view of such historical tradition it is not surprising to hear modern theologians advocate a preferential economic option for the poor.

Ethicist John Rawls has argued that justice requires that social policies be in the interests of the least privileged persons in society.¹⁴ Any society is to be judged by what is happening to the most disadvantaged within it. This emphasis on the responsibility of the rich is recognized in progressive taxation on the principle of equal sacrifice or equal burden - even as on a family hike healthy adults carry a heavier pack than small children. The emphasis is also applied in personal decision by those whose life style reflects the conclusion of the Australian biologist Charles Birch who said, "The rich must live more simply that the poor may simply live." This principle is to be applied between nations as well as within nations.

Attempted defenses for present inequality of opportunity turn out to be very weak. Some of the arguments commonly used to justify inequality within the United States also have an international version. One contention is that the rich deserve what they have because their ability is greater and their labor more arduous. But we can scarcely claim credit for superior inborn capacities since we exercised no prudence in choosing our grandparents! We did not make sure that our parents were American rather than Abyssinian. With respect to arduous work, few top executives in the United States would want to trade places with a day laborer anywhere in

10. Leviticus 19:9-10, Deuteronomy 24:19-22.

11. Proverbs 14:31.

12. Amos 2:6-7, 5:11-12; Isaiah 3:14-15, 58:1-7.

13. Luke 16:19-26.

14. John Rawls, *A Theory of Justice*, Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1972, pp. 13-15.

the world. The wealthy may actually be working less hard and feeling less burdened by responsibility than many a conscientious unemployed person desperately trying to find a nonexistent job, and seeing spouse and children suffering from lack of necessities. So far as this nation is concerned, Lester Thurow reminds us that our national achievements were possible to a considerable extent because of the rich mineral, energy, and climatic resources that our ancestors found here. Describing our nation, Thurow says, "We are not the little poor boy who worked his way to the top, but the little rich boy who inherited a vast fortune."¹⁵

Even more basic, ability and work alone are not sufficient justification for indefinite accumulation of income and wealth. John Locke defended private property as the fruit of labor. He held that whatever a person "removes out of the state that Nature hath provided and left it in, he hath mixed his labour with it, and joined to it something that is his own, and thereby makes it his property." But Locke imposed an important limitation to the amount accumulated, namely that there be "enough, and as good left in common for others."¹⁶

A second argument for present inequality is that our superior wealth as a nation is necessary to provide incentive for people in other lands to work harder to approach a similar status. This argument makes the doubtful assumption that all cultures consider our degree of material luxury to be a value. The argument is also weakened since psychologists see human motivation as complex and including other powerful incentives like prestige, power, or satisfaction in creativity. Nevertheless, given persons as they are, some material rewards are also necessary to insure maximum productivity - though not the present enormous gap between rich and poor. West Germans work hard with 36% less of an earnings gap between the bottom and the top 10% of the population than our corresponding gap. Japanese work perhaps even harder with 50% less inequality than ours.¹⁷ If the present inequality gap between nations is likewise unnecessary, it becomes even more morally indefensible.

The present range of inequality is vast. World Bank president Robert McNamara described the condition of millions

15. Lester C. Thurow, *The Zero-Sum Society*, New York: Penguin Books, 1981, p. 4.

16. John Locke, *Two Treatises of Civil Government*, London: J.M. Dent and Sons, Ltd., 1924, pp. 130-131.

17. Lester C. Thurow, *op. cit.*, pp. 7-8.

of the world's poor as "so deprived as to be below any rational definition of human decency."¹⁸ While the number one nutritional problem in areas inhabited by two-thirds of the world's population is malnutrition, our chief nutritional problem is obesity. Six percent of the world's population (in the United States) uses about forty percent of world production of mineral resources.

In a world of such unequal opportunity how may the driving ambitions of nation states be reconciled with the deeper unities of world society? Relating ethical guidance to contemporary economic realities again leads in the direction of a more internationalist foreign policy. In addition to the four political policies already discussed, five additional economic recommendations seem to be both ethically more responsible and practically more effective.

1. *Increased United States economic assistance to poorer nations.* As we are moved to aid persons suffering from sudden natural disaster, so even more would it seem essential to assist larger populations which suffer from continuing economic disaster. If we are not prepared to do this on altruistic grounds, at least it becomes the obligation of government in order to protect its own citizens against the wars which easily emerge from turmoil in other parts of the world, and against limitation on our own economic prosperity which is imposed by nations which cannot produce or buy. In a closely interdependent world nations are roped together like mountain climbers. When one slips, all feel the tug.

Government assistance funds are necessary to supplement private capital. The need is greater than any smaller group of citizens can meet. Many essential projects (like building an economic infrastructure of highways, harbor improvements, irrigation, and basic education) do not yield a profit and therefore are not attractive to private investors. Yet instead of providing increased economic assistance (as distinct from military aid), the United States has sunk to fourteenth among the seventeen leading industrial nations in the percent of gross national product devoted to development assistance.¹⁹

It is true that economic assistance may be associated with

18. *Newsweek*, September 15, 1975, p. 37.

19. John W. Sewell, *The United States and World Development: Agenda 1980*, Praeger for Overseas Development Council, 1980, p. 224.

waste, corruption, and enrichment of the rich in receiving nations. We should indeed insist upon efficient projects which effectively help the poor. Yet calling attention to these standards is not an argument for reducing or abandoning economic assistance, but rather for improving and increasing it. A business firm would not abolish its sales department because some past policies were ineffective. Instead, the firm would make necessary policy changes and strengthen the sales department to make up for lost time.

International administration of government grants through United Nations agencies often has the advantage of avoiding "welfare imperialism." International organizations can enforce standards with less negative reactions against individual donor nations. Also, international agencies can better transform one-way aid into a measure of mutual assistance as receiving nations return such nonmaterial cultural gifts as they can. Industrialized nations would benefit from Third World contributions in music, art, literature, and philosophy through a common world pool of reciprocal sharing.

Nationalistic public attitudes in the United States are too much impressed by the rationalization that our attempt to help everyone would actually help no one. It is claimed that limited resources would be spread so thin as to impoverish everyone, ourselves included. Trying to take every drowning person into our lifeboat would sink the boat and all would drown. Aside from the fact that this does not excuse us from helping as many as possible, there is still the embarrassing question about what right we have to be the lifeboat rather than someone else. Furthermore, it is utterly unrealistic to say that ours is a rowboat. Our craft is more like a luxury cruise liner with a small passenger list and much excess baggage. Or perhaps an even better comparison is to make ours a battleship with still more extensive space if we scuttled some of the guns. In addition, most of those drowning are within reach of the shore, if we enabled them to swim. Provision for such self help leads to a second economic priority for an internationalized foreign policy.

2. *Limit economic nationalism in a new international economic order.* Enabling poorer nations to help themselves includes monetary and trade policies which allow them access to raw materials and markets for selling their products at stable and fair prices. Otherwise we find ourselves sending monetary aid to a nation, and at the same time depriving that nation of even more money by our trade policies. Poorer nations also

have a right to a voice in international economic decisions which vitally affect them, as for example, in international agencies disbursing development funds. Our promise of liberty to other nations must include freedom from military invasion, political imperialism, and also from economic exploitation.

Economic nationalism at best makes the welfare of the rest of the world a secondary consideration. At worst it makes the exploitation of other parts of the world a primary purpose. We have yet fully to learn the lesson of history that inconsiderate domination produces rebellion. In national policy and within international organizations the United States needs to prove itself an understanding ally, actively supporting the just aspirations of the Third World. In the modern world and in the long run the only way to preserve privilege is to share it. We need to recognize the world-wide implications of what President Lyndon B. Johnson said of our laggardly assistance to Latin America, "Time is not our ally."

3. *Develop international networks of interlocking interdependence.* In our quest for a better life we have discovered advantages in increased trade and global for a better life we have discovered advantages in increased trade and global division of labor. As we become more vitally dependent on a complex network of relationships, we will hesitate to break the ties of international organization which have become the delivery systems for values we prize highly. Nations will then have more vested interests in avoiding disruptive war. Tensions will continue, yet they are less likely to explode into violent confrontation. Accommodation will be encouraged because the rewards of peaceful living will have become greater at the same time that the horrors of war have become worse.

Of course, some types of interdependence could leave us at the mercy of supplying nations. By threatening to cut off our total supply, another nation might compel assent to its demands. This would not be true, however, if cutting off our supply would not leave us helpless, but simply inconvenienced, and if the other nation would thereby also cut off an import valuable to it. For example, we would be helpless if all our required energy sources were cut off. But we would not become subservient if a supplementary source of natural gas were cut off, and such a cutoff would be less likely if the supplying nation thereby denied itself an important source of foreign exchange funds.

4. *Diplomatic support of Third World governments and movements genuinely seeking greater justice for the poor, instead of support for regimes or revolutionary movements that would prolong present political and economic inequalities.* At the same time that we work for cessation of all outside military intervention, including our own, we need clearly stand on the side of basic reforms toward eliminating poverty. Instead of mere superficial changes, adequate justice now requires serious land and tax reform, along with effective action against corruption. Our support for reform movements is also more effectively made in concert with appropriate international organizations.

Legitimate demands by oppressed peoples are becoming ever more insistent. Our neglect of ethical concern in national policy leads to consequences directly opposite to those we intend. Our reluctance to accept necessary economic reform increases the influence of Communism in other countries, since reformers feel compelled to turn to Communist nations as their only source of help. Continued denial of justice in the Third World also endangers our peace and security. This is particularly true since revolutions against injustice always threaten violent confrontation between great powers as they support different factions in revolutionary struggles. Insofar as we acquiesce in prolonged oppression, we invite such destabilizing revolutionary turbulence. We need to heed the prediction of President John F. Kennedy, "Those who make peaceful revolution impossible will make violent revolution inevitable."

5. *A domestic program to make the United States a more impressive example of political freedom, economic opportunity, and cultural progress.* Such a convincing demonstration would enhance the attractiveness of our system to all nations, which would become a defense against the spread of threatening totalitarianisms, and would enhance our influence within the United Nations and other international bodies.

We do demonstrate a high degree of political freedom, but we are handicapped so long as we leave doubts about economic justice. We are not as free as we might be of poverty, cycles of inflation and depression, and great inequalities of wealth and income. The quantity of our goods has not been sufficiently correlated with the quality of our life. Third World distrust of our policies and the world-wide problem of diminishing natural resources has been increased by our wasteful pursuit of superluxuries and our reluctance to con-

serve and to shift to the use of replaceable resources. In all these respects we may be charged with preaching to others what we do not practice ourselves. Thereby we weaken the moral and political leadership to which we aspire.

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

Unless international policy is closely related to both ethical considerations and contemporary social data, our actions become both pragmatically foolish and morally wrong. Such mistaken policies contribute neither to the long-run interests of our nation nor to the widest service to humanity.

Our choice in foreign policy is between emphasizing unilateral approaches through military deterrence, national sovereignty, and economic nationalism - or greater reliance on multilateral participation in arms control, international negotiation and organization, and more equitable international economic practices.

Our best ethical tradition stresses social and spiritual goals, altruistic motivation, and long-run as well as immediate consequences. Standing against this is a life pattern which emphasizes material values for ourselves in the short-run. The Governing Board of the National Council of Churches vividly reminded us that ever since the beginning of our history, there has been a struggle between the vision of "America as private opportunity and empire" and "America as public responsibility and compassionate neighbor."²⁰ Now crucial to the future of all humanity is our choice between these two views of ethical goals and political policies.

Our choice is easily distorted because our view of reality is restricted by the confines of our own situation. We in the United States experience political freedom in a powerful nation. Except for the very poor among us, we live in an environment of wealth in comparison with Third World populations. The practices of our associates and the propaganda of our media make it extremely difficult to know what a curse poverty and powerlessness can be. What we see depends on what we are looking at, and what we hear is determined by whom we listen to. To avoid becoming a prisoner of a limited environment requires standing more often beside the victims of present situations.

We also need to avoid entrapment in denial and apathy

20. *A Message to the Churches: The Remaking of America?*, May 15, 1981, sections II and III.

as an attempted escape from the stressful horror of nuclear threat. These psychological mechanisms for avoidance Robert A. Moyer sees as "the enemy within" which jeopardizes our peace and security "as surely as do missiles and bombers."²¹ Instead of such negative reactions we can recognize the hopeful possibility of an alternative foreign policy and increase our active support of strategic programs and groups working for change. Participation in such public interpretation and action becomes a clear responsibility especially of scholars, professional persons, religious groups, and other opinion leaders.

Our present reliance on nationalistic policies will in the long run prove to be self-defeating with consequences quite the opposite of those we intend. We now agree that it was an utter contradiction of our professed values to defend human slavery in idealistic terms. We may yet come to see just as clearly that it is now a prostitution of our best impulses to defend political domination and economic exploitation of other peoples. A change of direction becomes especially persuasive now that scientists tell us we have more than enough nuclear weapons to trigger world-wide climatic changes. These would threaten life in both southern and northern hemispheres, and would destroy the attacking nation even if those attacked did not retaliate.²² In striking contrast to this scenario, there is the peaceful possibility of unprecedented human enrichment in an interacting, multicultural world, and in such a realization of social and spiritual values as to introduce a new era in world history.

While taking tradition seriously, the thrust of ethics is toward personal and social improvement. The vocation of the scholar is to analyze and reflect upon the lessons of history and possible alternatives for the future. The spirit of the explorer, the pioneer, and the builder has been basic to the amazing accomplishments of this nation. Expressing the spirit of American industry at its best are the reported requirements for employment in the research department of one large corporation: good character, adequate training, and "not the slightest suspicion anywhere in the back of the head that there is anything in this world that is as good as it might be." It is the National Archives building in Washington which

21. Robert A. Moyer, "The Enemy Within," *Psychology Today*, January, 1985, pp. 30-37.

22. See Carl Sagan, "Nuclear War and Climatic Catastrophe," *Foreign Affairs*, Winter 1983/1984, pp. 257ff.

carries the inscription, "What is past is prologue." It is this conviction which drives us to search for more creative innovations in internationalizing international relations.