

# Realism and Morality in Politics

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*Be good in thinking – this is the main principle of morality.*

– Blaise Pascal

Realism has always been considered an important virtue for a state leader. Understandably, a reputation of a dreamer, or even worse of an unrestrained adventurer, would not win anyone's support. It is particularly unsuitable for any man responsible for the destiny of a country.

Today realism in politics takes on special significance. The time of prophets and magicians has passed. The continued existence of life on this planet depends on the direct and consistent application of realistic principles to international relationships.

Concepts and practices of original realists in foreign policy, Niccolo Machiavelli and Hugo Grotius, or the "Realpolitik" of Austrian Prince Metternich are again achieving popularity in the modern world. This is understandable, since no one wants to run the risk of embarking on a totally unknown path in politics, particularly when the stakes are high. Under these conditions, the future is predicted by a straight-line extrapolation from the past. Present actions are then not determined by what might be, but by what has already happened or is happening at the moment.

Yet this kind of attachment to the past correlates very poorly with the real world. If this type of realism had been followed in science, in the arts, or in society in general, then civilization would have stagnated. Copernicus's concepts of orbital mechanics in astronomy cannot be logically deduced from Ptolemy's. Descartes's reasoning concerning the physical laws of nature cannot be extrapolated from Aristotle's thoughts. Nor can Einstein's observations of the laws of the universe be regarded as a direct consequence of Newton's. In a similar way Gauguin's paintings are not a modern day adaptation of Raphael's techniques, and Christ's teachings are not a direct result of the system developed by the ancient Greeks.

Realism in politics and dogma were never meant to be identical. Political realism, when practiced properly, first stood for an objective analysis of the existing political problem; then for the choice of the central or principle means for its solution; and finally, for a realistic estimate of the possibilities for achieving this aim and its subsequent implementation.

This means that the practice of realism can never be set in concrete. It has to be flexible and change with the character of political life and facts of history. What was good yesterday may be totally useless today. Today, what is accepted without question may appear senseless tomorrow. Today's success may lead to disaster, if used in the near future.

But a change of habitual patterns is often difficult, whether it involves the hard sciences or patterns of social life. In politics it is probably even more difficult. The applicability of a theory or practice in science can be demonstrated by performing an objective experiment. Findings can be compared after a series of observations and errors are evaluated. The opposite is true for the politician – history gives him only a single chance. The failure of a social experiment usually is not only a personal catastrophe for the individual politician, but of the basic concept he was fighting for, as well.

On the other hand, certain things are easier for politicians. Politicians don't need to spend nights in a laboratory or watch blips on a screen of an oscilloscope, pore over notes of previous experiments or depend on new insights from repeated statistical analysis of their data. The only thing usually needed is an alertness to the constantly asked question: Are we trying to introduce "Newtonian" politics into an "Einsteinian" world that has completely changed its manner of operation?

The world is constantly changing. Today the rate of that change has become so rapid as to require development of new approaches and decisions which are consistent with the times. Though it will not be possible to cover all events fully, it is possible to detail some of the phenomena which have become driving forces for new approaches in realism in foreign policy.

*The World Is Striving for Diversity.* It was never true that one could imagine various countries as identical billiard balls that were colliding with one another on the world political scene. Yet it is true that those countries which determined the nineteenth century's classical "balance of power" had much in common. They were united by a similar socioeconomic base, a common past (European), a common culture (Age of Enlightenment), and a common religion (Christianity). The ruling elites, whether in Petersburg or Madrid, also had a common language (French).

The situation is quite different today. The past few decades have failed to confirm predictions that the world is moving in a direction of greater standardization and unification and that modern-day economics and attendant political relations would wipe out historical modes of interactions, nationalism, cultural differences, and ideologies. Instead, it has become clear that with a certain level of social development, humanity can afford to choose different life-styles and approaches on the world scene. This in turn means the days of messianic universal dogmas and ideologic crusades are completely a thing of the past.

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Diversity denotes not only differences in function, but of interest, as well. Sometimes it is this diversity that is the source of greater stability of the overall system. For example, in a forest each tree, bush, or blade of grass has its own unique spot and competition takes place among its own kind rather than with others. This principle also applies in the international arena where differences among countries may not sharpen competition. Instead it may enhance possibilities for cooperation. Take, for example, the present state of economic cooperation between the East and the West. Its development has enormous possibilities. For the most part this is due to structural differences in the systems and related growth potential between socialism and capitalism. As a result, economies of East and West do not actually contradict one another, but rather mutually supplement each other; for example, present progress in space sciences. The USSR has placed emphasis on the development of a space station, while the US has emphasized development of the space shuttle.

*Over the Years International Relations Are Becoming More Complex.* Reduction of world politics to “bipolar” or “multipolar” concepts is not only an oversimplification, it is a delusion. Contrary to the recent past where at most a dozen states dealt with the rest of the world in a classic balance of power posture, there are now two hundred that can and do act in this manner. Thus balance of power in the modern world must be based on a newer and more useful long-term model. World politics under these conditions must be an open rather than the closed system of the past. Not only must nation-states be included in this process, but international organizations, transnational business groups, means for international dialogue, political and public movements, as well. The former hierarchy of foreign-policy priorities is also losing its clear lines of distinction. New problems are appearing on the world community’s agenda. To analyze the events and trends of today through the prism of old-style “political realism” is like trying to pour water from a pail into a bottle with a narrow neck. Of course some water will get into the bottle, but the loss will be tremendous.

*Growing Interdependence of Nations.* The chain of interdependence does not consist of just one or two links: Therefore, economic decisions taken in one part of the world can have significant unforeseen consequences at other sites, near or remote. In the past when interactions were chiefly political and military, a high degree of economic independence was present. Foreign trade was totally dependent on politics and was only a minor aspect of any country’s overall economic structure. Today the reverse is true. The internationalization of world economic ties has reached such a high degree of interdependence that any steps to undermine trade brings enormous hardships to all participants, even those not directly associated with the changes. This is particularly the case for most middle- and small-sized nations who regularly have over half of their gross national product tied to exporting goods. The notion of national “power” takes on new meaning under these conditions and is relative to a great number of variables, including the extent of foreign-policy agreements, the amount of capital invested outside the country, and the amount of business conducted with or in a specific country. In some cases these may be assets for foreign policy, in others they may become a source of significant vulnerability. For example, while a creditor can exert tremendous pressure on a debtor, it can also become a hostage of the debtor country.

*Differences between Foreign and Domestic Policies Are Fading.* Although foreign policy was always meant to be an expression of domestic policy, previously there were often significant differences. Since international problems did not seem to touch the personal lives of a country’s peoples (except during war), those in power were able to exercise considerably more freed-

om in foreign-policy decisions than in any other sphere of activity. Over the centuries, this allowed state figures and diplomats to plot their designs for foreign relations on a private chessboard, playing the game by unwritten rules of their own design, motivated solely by their own national self-interests.

Today, diplomats and generals no longer have a monopoly on determining foreign policy. Businessmen, bankers, scientists, and figures from the arts are all participating in this process. Today the mix of a state's foreign and domestic policies represent a complex interaction of internal and external factors played out on the world scene, heavily affected by bureaucratic influences from government, private enterprise, and public organizations. The concept of "national interests" in these circumstances becomes moot since the interests of the parties participating have become so contradictory. There is no single "national interest."

*War Is Not Working as an Effective Means for Conducting Foreign Policy.* During the past period of "balance of power," war played an important role. It determined equivalence for those with similar military forces and legally determined the international, economic, and political hierarchy as well. War then was acceptable – legally, economically, and morally. It was romanticized, with the soldier presented as a brave handsome figure as in the Renaissance paintings of Velasquez. Today war is seen differently. As imaged by Salvador Dali, it has become a monstrously absurd "Autumnal Cannibalism." In the nuclear age, it is a dead-end passage with no safe path of return for either the aggressor or the victim. If used, nuclear weapons will destroy all humanity and perhaps all life on the planet.

As a consequence, there is no longer any rationale for participation in even small conventional wars. Each one is capable of escalating into a full-blown nuclear exchange. In the past, national security was gauged by establishing a better border and creating buffer states to protect one from an aggressor. In the nuclear age such geographic factors have no meaning. Geography provides no protection against intercontinental ballistic missiles. Besides, each regional conflict now bears with it the seed of a nuclear catastrophe.

These are the realities of our times whether we like them or not. One can be deeply attached to the historical past, with its sacred alliance and "balance of forces," but the world has changed. This has happened irrespective of our individual wishes or desires. Now we must move to respond positively and creatively to these forces. We have no other choice. To resist by closing one's eyes and withdrawing into the past can serve no purpose but guarantee doom. Science has amply shown that man can conquer his environment when he obeys, rather than flaunts, the rules of nature. The man who tries to fly by jumping off a cliff will like all others fall to the earth and pay with his life.

*Force of Law or Law of Force?*

When you read the works of historians or students of politics, or listen to the speeches of political figures, you get the impression that basic problems of international relations stem directly from developments in international law. This law appears to them as the only reliable regulator of world politics, and for a movement in the direction of order in the world. On this basis it seems natural to consider establishing new legal norms for regulating modern-day spheres of interactions between nation-states. It is felt that eventually a place must be reached where each state clearly knows what is good and what is bad, what is favorable and what is unfavorable, devoid of ambiguities and uncertainties. Under these conditions everything becomes simple and easy to understand, like a multiplication table, because everybody knows that it is useless to argue with the absolute facts given in a multiplication table.

Is such a perspective realistic? I don't think so. At any rate, present international practices do not favor it.

First, it's not so very easy to reach legal agreement regarding some of the most important international problems. A sadly recurrent theme can be seen to occur: The more important the problem is, the more difficult it is to find an acceptable legal solution. For example, the Soviet-American SALT II Treaty was under consideration for seven years, yet, it was never ratified by the US Senate. Dialogue concerning the international law of the sea went on for many years, but the final convention, agreed upon after all the years of effort, is still not signed by a number of leading countries of the world.

Second, international legal norms do not have a single interpretation as with a multiplication table.

Sometimes they are prone to quite opposite interpretations, as has been the case with the basic provisions of the charter of the United Nations, which is interpreted so differently in the East compared to the West.

It is doubtful whether it will ever be possible to draw up a specific treaty which excludes all opportunities for starting rumors, arbitrary interpretations, and juggling. And, of course, any country can find lawyers and experts who, by intricate manipulations of words, can readily give all the responsibility of breaking a treaty to the other side.

Third, conduct of international relations is so complex in today's world that it is simply impossible to work out simple rules and procedures, and agree upon legal norms under all conditions. Attempts to constrict the richness of international dealings into conformity with the prescribed codes, treaties, and rules of international organizations – is the same process as attempting to turn a live cell into a dead crystal. If prescribed law is not responsive to the markedly dynamic situations present in today's world, it would be quite naive to think that it will be responsive to the politics of

tomorrow.

Is international law worth striving for? Do we want relations in our family, with our friends and acquaintances, colleagues, and people in general regulated only by courts and bulky volumes of civil and criminal laws? Do we want our every step to be checked with corresponding instructions, directives, and approved rules? One has to agree that there is a tacit and humiliating assumption in such a perspective, that people are inherently evil and unable and unwilling to get along with one another.

Historical experience confirms a humorous remark of Voltaire's that multiplicity of laws in a state is the same as having a large number of doctors treating a person – they are a sign of declining health. Very often the force of codified law has been substituted in directives for the force of moral law. Societal development has been tied to the judicial system and written history to criminal codes.

Very often international rules of conduct have been futile attempts to stop the process of international system disintegration, creating an illusion of reliability and stability where they had never existed. Hegel used the analogy of the Minerva owl which flies in the twilight. In other words, wisdom comes late. The international legal system, created in the Roman empire, reached its peak at the time of Justinian when "Pax Romana" was in evident decline. The international legal system in feudal Europe took shape only after the Peace of Westphalia (1648), long after feudalism's golden age. The Versailles–Washington structure after World War I, modeled after the most recent legal information, with all necessary treaties, protocols, and procedures turned out to be a total failure and lasted less than two decades.

The large amount of legal activity during the period between World War I and World War II allows one to draw the conclusion that many countries felt very uncertain about the future and instinctively moved to preserve the existing order in the international arena. At the time of crisis and catastrophe, state leaders regarded the paragraphs of treaties and items of agreements as a private repository for gradual accumulation of today's hopes and conquests and which could be safely counted on for their nation's security. The 1930s was a period when so many international conferences were conducted, and with so many pacts, treaties, agreements, and conventions – bilateral and many-sided, open, and secret. And the result? A universal disease of "pactomania" which did not prevent a world war and became only a belated symptom of the growing military threat.

Over the centuries the force of law has always been supplemented by the law of force. In fact, rules of international conduct were most often determined by the state of military affairs existing at the moment.

Today, the law of force is rapidly losing its dominant role. The invention

of nuclear weapons has turned a worldwide war into collective suicide. International interdependence and globalization of social change have turned notions of “local conflict” and “regional war” into sheer nonsense, and with it a still greater devaluation of the meaning of military force in foreign policy. The same may be said of any process for exerting economic pressure under conditions where production is under international control. In a word, it is not possible for the law of force to assume the role of universal law in international politics.

On one hand, international relations cannot remain as a jungle of “power struggles” by states, nor on the other can states develop under a totalitarian yoke of all sorts of codes, rules, directives, and systems of regulations. Therefore, today the problem of developing a moral-ethical structure for relations between states is of more vital importance than ever before.

*Law and Morality: General and Special*

Obviously we cannot believe that moral-ethical considerations have never played a role in international life. On the contrary, such notions as “moral duty,” “justice,” and “national honesty” have always exerted a certain influence on states’ politics. Nevertheless, these moral slogans were often a form of cover-up for political aspirations rather than a source of inspiration. Such things occurred so frequently that morality became a weapon and a force for the weak, while moral revenge was sometimes the only answer to political defeat.

Easy manipulation of foreign policy by moral-ethical categories is clearly shown by the following two circumstances. First, maintenance of a low educational and cultural level in a given population makes it possible to impose any kind of mind-set on them. Second, moral isolation of peoples provided their rulers with a certain monopoly for moral education of their subjects. For example, the decree of the Peace of Augsburg (1555) stated that the religion of the ruler determined the religion of his subjects.

Today, we have in principle a new situation. Mankind’s cultural development has led the individual to an ever increasing moral independence. Culture is not only knowledge but also a consolidation of contributions by all of its human members. A tragedy by Sophocles and a theory by Einstein, a novel by Dostoyevsky and a computer program – all of them equally liberate our thoughts and strengthen us spiritually, and facilitate our moral development as individuals.

On the other hand, development of the mass media and the widening person-to-person contacts between countries is gradually eradicating spiritual isolation between peoples. Barriers give way as we begin to understand the common character of our aspirations, our common ideals, and our values. It is difficult to overestimate the importance of this point. We see

the mind-set of “ours-not ours” being transformed into old and useless concepts. And realize how this concept of “opposites” in its different forms (“Greeks-barbarians,” “Christians-pagans,” “civilized nations-savages”) has had a decisive influence on forming the patterns for political and moral interaction of individual societies over our entire past history. National borders were viewed as fortress walls behind which could be found either an enemy’s values or absence of values. Today the enemy may exist in one’s own midst and anywhere else in the world, with those holding fast to old stereotypes and the use of force to resolve conflict.

As knowledge has grown and the individual has been freed to become more independent, it has become more difficult to manipulate moral values and they are changing gradually to become an independent factor influencing the development of world politics. Politics cannot evade moral judgment while morals, in their turn, cannot remain apolitical. Morality as a form of social consciousness and social relations has much in common with law. Both morality and law form an international point of view representing a combination of relatively stable rules and directives. Legal structures have come to reflect levels of general progress in international relations, as well as human civilization; morality as evidence of an individual’s idea about what is absolutely required and just in dealing with other human beings.

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At the same time, there are serious differences between morality and law. Law, first of all, is the written rule of conduct fixed in corresponding treaties, agreements, and regulations of international organizations. Morality is an unwritten code existing in the form of world public opinion. If necessary, rules of international law are executed by enforced measures (economic and political sanctions, use of UN Armed Forces, etc.); but moral requirements are supported by the power of common customs, public opinion, or personal conviction of the people. Thus, moral sanctions are executed by a measure of spiritual influence, which becomes supported by others around the world, not by special legislative edict of individual states but by the whole of mankind.

In many aspects, international relations are regulated both by the rules of law and moral codes. For example, military aggression is the breach of a universally recognized legal code, as well as a moral crime. However, moral restraints are more comprehensive and applicable than legal restraints.

All of us, undoubtedly, have met people who do not violate laws, who

honor the criminal code and fulfill all resolutions, decrees, and instructions but at the same time they provoke unpleasant feelings – even disgust. An execution of legal norms can surprisingly be associated with egoism, inattention to concern or care for others, or use of people for personal gain. These individuals cannot be arrested or tried in civil proceedings, and moral censure is the only means of influencing them.

Similar situations very often appear in the international arena. Since international legal standards are unable to regulate all aspects of relations between countries, there are many ways of getting around laws. There are no laws (and probably it will be impossible to ever invent them) which prohibit an artificial increase of a nation's currency rates with the aim of bankrupting financial operations of competitors. There are no laws to prevent a "brain drain" from developing countries to developed ones. It would be very difficult, even if possible, to work out a system of legal standards which would clearly define the concept of "subversive," destabilizing propaganda. The significance of such "nonlegal" spheres in international relations will inevitably grow as the scientific and technological revolutions continue to develop, leading to ever-widening contacts at all levels between states. Moral-ethical considerations may become their primary regulators. Moral condemnation of a "national self-interest" policy may turn out to be more effective means of regulation than attempts to prove its illegality.

Morality has another important difference from law. A treaty can be signed under pressure. Formal equality in the agreement can conceal a factual dependence of one state on the other; yet morality, in principle, is impossible without the independence of states. The choice of freedom is impossible without independence and there is no ethics without freedom of choice. But morality also limits the independence of actions of states in the international arena because it presupposes that all states act responsibly and do so willingly.

And there is yet a final consideration which is important. Morality, unlike law, is always the result of individual action. Moral behavior by a state is based on the conduct of its citizens, not on the declarations of its leaders. This includes the sum total of collective as well as individual actions taken separately. And if the overwhelming majority of us consider ourselves as amateurs in international law, in the sphere of morality all of us are pros. This is a fact and there is no irony in this. When an international treaty is concluded, one can talk about his incompetence, lack of knowledge in the details of legal law, and absence of information. One can digress from the theme, wait in the next room, loaf in the corridors, smile at foolish things. In a word, entrust our leaders to speak on our behalf and make decisions for us. But when we move to estimate the moral consequences of an event in

world politics, no one has the right to abrogate his responsibility. No one, be he or she a scientist, engineer, soldier, economist, peasant, or housewife, can be satisfied if he or she sloughs off the required decision-making process to a political entity. Everyone is responsible for everything.

*Inevitability of a Moral Conflict*

Dostoyevsky was asked: Is it enough to define morality as simply following one's own convictions? "No," he answered, "this is only honesty. We must also constantly ask ourselves: Are my convictions true?"

This differentiation between morality and honesty is, unfortunately, very often lost. They have significant differences in principle. We can, for example, assume with a great degree of certainty that there are many political leaders in the Republic of South Africa who actually think that black people are an inferior race, that blacks must be restrained, and that the policy of apartheid is the only possible course to secure domestic stability in their nation. And these people follow their convictions quite honestly. It's very hard to reproach them with dishonesty: They honestly speak about their views and honestly try to implement them in life. But firm adherence to their convictions does not make them moral. Supporters of racism, like supporters of nuclear war, deserve moral condemnation by all the world's inhabitants.

Traditional morality teaches that it is impossible to be a patriot and, at the same time, sharply criticize one's country's policy. Nuclear-age morality teaches that a patriot must critically assess the policy of his state . . ."

A unique feature of establishing standards for moral conduct is the fact that they become such only when they pass through the conscience of each and every person. As a rule, this process does not proceed smoothly, but rather with inner resistance manifest in a form of moral conflict, splitting of conscience, and an understanding of the necessity of healing this split which requires the making of a firm decision.

There are, at least, three types of moral conflicts. First, moral requirements can come into conflict with legal standards. We can find at times that an international treaty or agreement seems amoral to us and one-sided, despite the fact that it was concluded in full conformity with all international legal formalities. This is certainly the case in developing countries. Do they have a moral, as well as legal, obligation to pay back formal loans that were made to them in good faith?

Second, moral requirements can clash with immediate needs and benefits. Can the world's great powers morally justify continuing the supply of arms to any country on the planet, knowing the full implications of military conflict in the present nuclear age?

Finally, a conflict is possible between different systems of moral values.

This conflict is, perhaps, the most difficult and painful kind because it can be solved only by the individual himself. On the world scene, this conflict presently takes its form from the collision course occurring between “traditional” morality and nuclear-age morality. Traditional morality primarily demands support for the security of one’s own country, and only subsequently for solving other international problems; while nuclear-age morality is building towards universal security which can be the sole guarantor of national security. Traditional morality teaches that diversity among nations and conflicts that may arise from such differences can and must be used for the benefit of the motherland, thus weakening them; nuclear-age morality teaches that partiality towards one’s own state can and must be sacrificed for humanity’s interests. Traditional morality teaches that it is impossible to be a patriot and, at the same time, sharply criticize one’s country’s policy. Nuclear-age morality teaches that a patriot must critically assess the policy of his state and that acknowledgement of mistakes and learning from them are most favorable actions for himself and for all others, and the only way to prevent their continued recurrence in the future.

The resolution of a moral conflict does not resemble the solution of a chess problem or a legal case. People feel a moral conflict keenly and quite deeply. We very often prolong our sufferings by putting off the necessity of taking the needed moral step and making the needed decision. We remain passive, hoping that the conflict will pass with time, or that someone (government, experts in international affairs, lawyers, history, or God) will solve all our problems for us.

Perhaps all of us have experienced such a state of being and indecision. It is very tempting to project an annoying inner conflict into our outer world, making it an outer conflict, thus preserving our inner state of harmony and calm. Unfortunately, or maybe fortunately, such attempts usually end in failure. Sooner or later we have to make a choice, and sooner or later we are forced to face the need for personal responsibility.

Naturally enough, moral conflicts have more than just a personal character. Very often, moral conflicts occur between large groups of people, political parties, classes of individuals, and even states. In these cases people have an easier choice: They can simply join one or another side. However, such choice also requires great personal courage and results in an inner moral conflict.

Up to now we have addressed answers to old questions. Realizing that the nuclear age has placed us in a totally new situation, with totally new questions we have never faced before, we must even change the manner of posing our questions. We must ask these questions realistically and without holding out false hopes.

*Competition or Confrontation?* Being realists, we must recognize that contradictions and differences between countries do and will continue to exist. Moreover, the development of international cooperation can increase contradictions and expose areas where cooperation was more supposed than real. There are no two states in the world whose interests are, or ever will be, absolutely identical and who have “full unity of opinions” on all problems. This latter cliché is nothing more than a substitute for continuing business in the previously old intolerable manner of relations.

But if states are doomed to rivalry, this doesn't mean that they cannot choose the forms for such rivalry. This means that the inevitable conflict can be expressed as competition, rather than confrontation. The principle differences in these approaches deal with attitude. Confrontation presupposes each side wants to conduct their interactions according to the laws of a “zero-sum game” (one wins, while the other automatically loses); while competition can be accomplished over the course of parallel, independent actions, even involving a third party, without need for direct or even hostile interaction, and according to the rules of a “positive-sum game” (all sides win).

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As a rule, subjective, principally political factors play a determining role in confrontation, whereas objective, mainly socioeconomic factors constitute the basis for competition. Confrontation excludes any possibility of cooperation, except in the narrow sense when efforts are directed to handle the confrontation itself or prevent its occurrence. Competition, on the other hand, requires full cooperation of both sides at all levels of mutually agreed upon tasks and strives to find ways of maximally utilizing the experience and capabilities of the other side.

*Estimation of Capabilities or Estimation of Intentions?* Traditionally, political figures have based their course of action on a “worst case” scenario, considering this approach to be the most probable situation that could occur. But is this really the way life is? If our relations with other people are to be based solely on assessing the magnitude of harm they “in principle” can inflict upon us, then life becomes totally unbearable. Every passerby then becomes a potential robber, rapist, or murderer. The strategy of “deterrence,” which is presently so heavily favored by “political realists,” becomes absurd when we try to apply it to everyday life. But why is this faulty logic still applied to the relations between the West and the

East? Maybe it's high time to switch from relying on worst case scenarios and hypothetical estimates of "the potential enemy" to the most probable case and to uncovering the real intentions for each side.

*Primary Aims or Primary Means?* When firm agreements are not present, perspective is lost. Actions become more reflexive in character. Without a clear definition of a national interest, power politics quickly moves in to fill the vacuum. Left in the hands of the political realists, national interest quickly becomes redefined to mean "national power" and the maximization of that power. Foreign-policy goals become limitless and can be contained only by resistance from other states. If it is possible to design some kind of armament system, it must be designed, and corresponding doctrinal substantiations will be tended to later. If it is possible to intrude into some area of the world, it must be done, and later invent arguments to prove that it is a "zone of vital interests," "strategic bridgehead." It's high time for all state figures to clearly define their countries' real interests, and only then begin to reach out in search of their achievement.

*Dialogue of Governments or Dialogue of Civilizations?* There is a traditional point of view that governments can reach an agreement easier than between peoples. It is also felt that state figures are better informed, less emotional, and more realistic, therefore it is they who must lead the people to dialogue. There is some correctness in this, but to paraphrase Clemenceau – "international relations are too serious a matter to leave them solely to politicians." State figures may be driven by self-interests which differ markedly from the peoples they represent.

Therefore, the most productive dialogue is that between peoples or civilizations, though it is more difficult than the dialogue of governments. Only then can the "image of the enemy" and its dehumanization be overcome. Only through dialogue can an atmosphere of cooperation be created that can withstand all the fluctuations of day-to-day political life. Only through this process will the hold of present-day logic be broken, which makes us powerless and isolates us from one another.

One need not be an expert to adopt an ideology which stresses our common goals and desires, rather than one which pits us against each other.

We all want our life to have meaning, and history a purpose.

We all want to participate in the discovery and realization of this meaning.

We all desire that all peoples share in the shaping of our future human destiny and it not be determined by a handful of leaders.

At present, we fully realize that mankind has not yet restructured its

system of international relations to function on a just and democratic basis. We have not yet achieved universal disarmament, we have not provided adequate help to economically backward countries, nor have we arrived at common solutions to many global problems. These await us in the future. But, as Goethe said: “What we desire today already includes the possibilities of our ability to accomplish them tomorrow.”

Further, one must refrain from visualizing the modern world as being in a simplified black-and-white state, where all moral virtues are collected at one pole, while all moral vices at the other.

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*“ . . . there are no experts or specialists who can . . . free us from the responsibility of deciding the future of our countries and of all humankind.”*

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A morality of survival is nothing but a moral necessity stemming from the task of preventing the destruction of our civilization. It is another matter entirely when moral standards are being followed, not due to outside pressure, but by inner agreements set by society itself and its members. In this case, international moral standards are transformed into national conviction. Application of this type of morality to international relations would result in a qualitatively different world order based on a good-neighbor policy and mutual assistance by all peoples of the world.

It is necessary to clearly understand that neither science, law, military strategy, economics, nor sociology can substitute for moral standards of political conduct by a state. Therefore, there are no experts or specialists who can relieve any one of us from the required moral choices we each face, or free us from the responsibility of deciding the future of our countries and of all humankind.