

Introduction

One big issue of Jan-Feb (*Resolved: It is just for the United States to use military force to prevent the acquisition of nuclear weapons by nations that pose a military threat*) is our general lack of accepted authority, or accepted philosophical ideas, on the geopolitical level, as compared to our abundance of rather accessible orthodoxy on the political level. That is, I start out the Plebes with Locke, and maybe a side order of Rousseau, and see no reason why they can't go quickly from there to the readable parts of Rawls. Voila, an instant introduction to social theory via the social contract, the general will and fairness spread across an entire society. Throw in a little JSM "On Liberty," and you've got one hell of a philosopher in the 9th grade. (There are those who sneer at such orthodoxy, but one learns to play scales before one plays Liszt's Sonata in B minor). These standard texts in fact inform most thinking on the nature of government and society, even when the thinking is in opposition. (That is, you can't have Marx without Locke, or at least not Marx as he is. You can't make claims that the individual is not the core unit of society if that has been the presumption so far, without knowing that you're undermining that presumption.)

As far as I know, and I admit I'm no expert, there is no similar canon for an underlying philosophy of geopolitics. I'm sure there are standard texts, and probably even a canon as such for the subject area, but not with this level of accessibility and acceptability. All the Founders of the US were familiar with—and in agreement with—Locke, in other words, but I wonder what all the members of the UN General Assembly are familiar with. Because of this lack of standard thinking, of a normative, if you will, we're pretty much on our own when a resolution is of a geopolitical nature. We cannot draw on shared knowledge, and shared expectations, to the degree that we can with issues concerning one single national polity. This is reflective, no doubt, of the reality of the planet on which we live. We have established various rules and practices for managing our societies on a local level, and we mostly do that pretty well, but we have yet to establish accepted rules for managing our societies on a global level. We do not all play well with

others, and our rather meager attempts to define transnational rules and boundaries don't stand very well. It's not just some backwater nations thumbing their noses at what is considered international common law: The US, for instance, defies the Geneva Convention with Guantanamo. Some theorists, like Rawls if I'm not mistaken, have determined that for all practical purposes the various nations of the world are in a virtual state of nature with one another. Until we are willing to subsume national interests into overarching global interests (imagine there's no countries) the way we subsume individual interests into overarching societal interests on the local level, this is probably not going to change. As a result, topics that we argue that cross national, sovereign borders require addressing the reality of the world in which we live, both from the perspective of what we ought to do (and maybe we ought to be a global village instead of a globe of villages) and what we have to do (survival in the global state of nature).

Which brings us to the big question: What, exactly, comprises justice on a global scale if we have no generally accepted international standards of justice? Jan-Feb asks us to determine the justness of certain actions of a global nature, yet we have no normative scale for weighing those actions. What do we do?

Sovereignty, or, what are the units of geopolitics

The concept of sovereignty is very ephemeral. I think that an understanding of what comprises sovereignty is important for understanding the nature of geopolitics. The core unit of international justice is the nation. But what exactly *is* a nation?

Nations are, by definition, groups of people with something in common. And there are numerous schools of thought about why nations come to exist, and what it is that makes a group of people a nation rather than just an odd conglomerate of individuals accidentally in one place. Obviously, geography is certainly a prime determiner. Island nations are the easiest example of this. One of the easiest ways to get a nation going is to set an area off from other areas, and an island is the best way to do it. Other examples are mountains and rivers and deserts, but nothing seems as pure as an island. An island has a natural protection against invasion because of its surrounding water (more impor-

tant historically the further back you go), so the people on an island, if they come together as a cohesive group, immediately gain one of the first benefits of nationhood, which is defensive safety, not only in this case safety of numbers but safety of geography. Usually islanders are there in the first place as already connected tribes or families or political groups, maybe emigrating from some other nation originally, and one way or the other they are of a piece. Islands in other words present a uniformity of polity that, at least in theory, seems clean and refined. It's not necessarily true in reality, as some islands are split between two or more unique political entities, but you get the picture.

All you have to do is imagine an island, and maybe extrapolate the concept of island—unique geographic entity—to non-literal islands, and you begin to perceive a nation as a physical place. Some places actually feel a physical determination to be a nation, the will to sovereign power. An island feels like it should be a nation. A large area entirely surrounded by mountains feels like it should be a nation. An area set off by rivers should be a nation. Whatever natural boundaries exist add to the feeling of national determination. In the US, our national determination is given the name Manifest Destiny, meaning that we were “destined” to become a nation stretching from the Atlantic to the Pacific. National determination, therefore, may or may not be a reasonable longing.

Shared ethnicity is another aspect of national cohesion. It's hardly essential but historically it's been quite a biggie. Think of the concept of a homeland. Who is it that wants that homeland? The Jews want a homeland. The Palestinians want a homeland. The German Third Reich wanted an ethnically cleansed homeland. Every nation at the Olympics has an anthem proclaiming the existence of (and often the primacy of) homeland. The French are the French, the Italians are the Italians, the Brazilians are the Brazilians. Their ethnicities are a combination in various measures of race, religion, history, and any other generally shared beliefs or traits, which can include a shared belief in non-uniformity of all traits, i.e., freedom to be or believe anything, which is what the US is theoretically built on. (The proof of the viability of this American concept is the belief held in some nations that the US is evil, based on its lack of a pure religious underpinning, that we are godless entities with no belief except in the almighty dollar—all right,

the formerly almighty dollar nowadays—that we are anti-them at the core and therefore they must be anti-us at the core, for whatever reason.)

So you have place and you have culture, and to make a nation you need polity, political organization. You need these people to come together and claim their connectedness. Now here we have, in Western thought, some general consensus. Governments derive their just powers from consent of the governed, as Thomas Jefferson put it. For that matter, governments also derive their unjust powers, if any, from the consent of the governed. In other words, you can torture this concept quite a bit to explain that even dismal totalitarian governments with brutal dictators acting as overlords of a police state are deriving their powers from the consent of the governed, although in these cases that consent may be coerced. The point is that the power of a government is derived from the people governed, regardless of the form of the government. If you stick to the concept of just powers in the Jeffersonian (and of course Lockean) sense, or of just government, period, questions of legitimacy are removed, and we have a fairly acceptable proposition.

According to this logic, any group of people with an accepted leadership is some sort of government. True enough. Any sizeable group of people tends to have some sort of governing body: school districts have school boards, towns have town councils, corporations have boards of directors, clubs have presidents. Maintaining order within any group usually requires some sense of governance, of rules being made and enforced. Anarchy has never been proven to be an effective mode of production of much of anything: it is, in effect, a human version of Brownian motion, and it is hardly likely to make the trains run on time.

As you can see, the concept of “nation” is not inherent in the concept of governance. If all sorts of groups can have governing bodies, which are the groups, then, that we would consider nations? We say it’s the combination of geography, culture and organization. If, for instance, Australia had no government, and all the Aussies ran around in total anarchy doing whatever they pleased, you would be hard-pressed to consider them a nation, despite the fact that they inhabit a clearly delineated territory. We also

need culture, and all the things that comprise culture. A culture need not be homogeneous—certainly the USA is both a nation and culturally diverse—but there do have to be strong commonalities. A shared value set. Shared history. Probably shared language (Brussels may be a nation but it's language split makes it also a fairly anomalous headache).

So now we begin to see a well-rounded concept of nation, with territory, government, and a shared “psyche,” if you will, with variants from nation to nation of the literal elements of the psyche, just as there are variants in the size and shape of the territories and the nature of the governments. Holding it all together—and this is important—is the belief among the people in this territory, with this government and with this shared psyche, that they are, indeed, a nation. That is what sovereignty is all about, the *will* to be a nation, willing themselves into existence. They could think of themselves as something else, which need not concern us, but at the point at which they consider themselves a nation, they declare their sovereignty—that is, that they are a nation, that they have sole power over themselves—and that sovereignty is that nation's autonomy, and the connection of that autonomous nation with the other nations in the world.

For example, if the Colonies wish to declare their independence from Great Britain, they'd better be ready to conduct themselves as members of the global community, to exercise their sovereignty/autonomy. But additionally, the other members of the global community must be ready to accept the Colonies' nationhood, or any group's nationhood. That is, half of the deal of being a nation is claiming to be a nation. The other half is being *recognized* as a nation by the preexisting nations. Much of the history we study in schools is the conflict of sovereignties either within their borders or establishing their existence. Who's in charge here? And, why are you where I want to be?

Establishing a nation's sovereignty is tantamount to empowering it to exist. A nation's sovereignty *is* its inherent power. A nation's power is its sovereignty. Sovereignty for a nation is the same as autonomy for a nation, and is certainly analogous to autonomy for an individual. ‘We wish to have autonomy’ means that we wish to have sovereignty over ourselves. A nation's claim of sovereignty is a claim of its autonomy. Which leads

to the obvious conclusion that any abridgment of a nation's sovereignty is an attack on its autonomy—an attack which may or may not be justified, of course...

So, sovereignty is a polity declaring its autonomy as a nation. Its warrant for claiming that autonomy is a combination of its organization, its geography and its society. Its success at establishing that autonomy/sovereignty is measured by the power it has to prove to the world that its claim is warranted (and not from any particular inherent legitimacy) and the world's agreement that the claim is warranted. This gives us a group of nations, each with its own government/geography/culture. Any nation's justification for existence derives entirely from its claim of just existence, and the acceptance of that claim by other nations makes that claim true. In other words, nations exist because they say they do, and because other nations agree. It's a house of cards, but there you are. We suggested earlier that all these nations are in a virtual state of nature. Let's look at that in more detail.

What do nations want

The so-called geopolitical state of nature should not be seen as a state of constant warfare, in the Hobbesian sense. It is pretty obvious what war is like between nations, and war only occasionally describes the way things are. The geopolitical state of nature is probably better seen as an arena of power, in which each nation seeks a certain amount of that power for its own benefit. If the powers among or between states are in a mutually satisfactory equilibrium, this balance of power is construable as peace. If the powers are not in equilibrium, then we are either at war, or in danger of being at war. The question then is, what exactly comprises a mutually satisfactory equilibrium?

Let's start our look at goals with trade and economics. All countries do not share the same goals, and the goals of each are mostly rooted in its culture (even geographical goals, i.e., the destiny to control land that may or may not now be under control, has a cultural aspect). Although economics is often culturally linked, economics can be isolated from culture, and in any case, economics are inescapable. One would be hard-

pressed to claim that countries today can exist in isolation, or that they should exist in isolation. Our technological abilities allow us to share resources on a global level; oil is a perfect example of a commodity that is used globally but possessed unequally by its users. Some countries have oil, others don't. Some countries have great agricultural capabilities, others don't. Some countries have great technological capabilities, others don't. In some of these cases of possession of a natural resource, it is where it is and there isn't much you can do about it, while in cases of an artificial resource (e.g., brains, which are outsourced from India for US industry customer support) it is more situational. Labor works similarly. A poor heavily populated area can be seen as a resource for unskilled labor, an unpopulated area of any economic class would be seen as not much of a labor resource. And so on. While one could categorize nations at various levels of have and have not, it might make more sense to categorize them as having some stuff and not having some other stuff. What they have and don't have, combined with their culture, defines them as members of the community of nations, and marks what is different between India and France and Ecuador, et alia.

As I say, our technological abilities allow us to share resources on a global level, so it stands to reason that, if we are so inclined, we can provide the resources that are missing from a country to that country, and presumably that country can provide the resources it has a surplus of to yet some other country that needs that resource. In other words, one can envision a utopia where all countries trade what they've got for what they haven't got, and presumably everybody's got something, so it will all work out. But utopia is the operative word here. Some countries really don't have anything, and others really do have everything. The US, for instance, has just about everything except really cheap labor. We even have a lot of our own oil, although not enough for our actual usage (putting aside the necessity of that usage). Countries like Malawi or Somalia don't have much of anything, and don't really offer any particularly attractive resource for other nations on a reciprocal trade level. These countries would have to be transformed at their cores before they could become viable trade partners. So in reality, we have countries that don't need all that much, countries that can probably trade well and equally, and countries that don't have anything.

The countries in the middle, the ones that have something to trade, and do so, can be seen as sort of neutral on the geopolitical scene, if things are working out for them fairly well on other fronts, i.e., they're not fighting over some turf or religion or something. France has wine, Germany has beer, they trade, everyone's happy. This is not to say that life in these countries is ideal, but it's pretty good. Modern-day Europe is in fact a great example of this middle area, as the EU demonstrates. They've even developed a common currency, which has benefited some countries quite a bit, providing a backbone of economic security that transcends local fluctuations. The fringe European countries all want to be a part of the EU, for all the benefits it secures.

There are bigger issues at the top and the bottom of the scale. There is a question of whether the power (however you define it, but at the moment we're still talking economic) of the US bestows on it extra responsibilities, which most people answer in the affirmative. There is the problem of how to bring the bottom countries around, making them viable players. And here is where this economic analysis begins to fall apart. If it were only just a question of moving piles of money around, with guaranteed results from the movement of those piles of money, everything would be fine. But what happens if you provide aid to a country, and that country's oligarchy absconds with the loot? Or what if the political structure of the country is so unstable that even with the best of intentions the aid doesn't make it to the people who need it? And aid in times of need is one thing, but what's really needed is engines to permanently improve these nations, a combination of political and social determination hard to come by. And most of all, what about countries who are not looking at the world as mere finance, but have other goals, either territorial or cultural, regardless of their size or stability or economics?

That's when things start to get complicated.

There's more to it than money

(Keep in mind that our goal here is not to provide a particular explanation of certain geopolitical actions, but to provide a framework of understanding of geopolitics, and a

springboard to further analysis as makes sense with the particular subject you're pursuing. In Jan-Feb, that subject would be the possession of nuclear arms. We'll only be touching on nuclear issues in this essay, and not evaluating them in the preemptive strike context.)

As we said in the last section, the world does not neatly fall into a pattern of cooperative trading partners, nor for that matter does the world fall into neatly fitting economic pieces that only want for a master puzzle solver to put them together. But more importantly, there is more to international relationships than economics and trade (although there do seem to be some who believe that open trade is the panacea for all the world's problems).

So let's look at the items that we can mix and match in our understanding of geopolitics. There's the pure economic well-being of a nation, which we've talked about, then there's the physical location of the nation, the government (and type of government) of a nation, and there's the nature of the people of a nation. What do these items describe?

1. Every nation wants more pie than there is.

Poor nations want to be less poor. Rich nations want to stay rich. Everyone at any level either wants more or doesn't want less, which means something's got to give. Conflict! Rich nations can use poor nations to stay rich. Poor nations will view charity in a different light from investment. But who would invest in a poor nation, with virtually no likelihood of a decent return on investment? Resource-rich nations can use that richness as a bribe or a threat.

2. People are where they are physically sometimes for reasons those people do not approve of, or other people do not approve of.

Multiple entities claim a spot as their historical possession. Israel and Palestine. The Alsace-Lorraine. Native American land. Tibet, Taiwan, China. Northern Ireland.

3. We don't like you, and/or you don't like us.

Islamic vs Western nations. Endless Catholic/Protestant battles in Europe for hundreds of years. The French vs the English. All the historical European conflicts involving dy-

nasties you can barely remember (although these also usually included land grabs and even fiscal goals).

In the world as a perfect place, the nations would peaceably coexist despite these factors. But the world is not a perfect place, and so we have seemingly endless conflict from the dawn of recorded time. The fights are over resources, culture, land. Our globe today is definitely Islamic and non-Islamic nations at various levels of conflict, Africa a horrible mess that includes warlords ripping off the populations of their own nations (or the neighboring nation), China positioning itself for future superpowerhood, Russia re-inventing itself presumably with regained superpower status, the US held hostage in the hands of an unpopular regime until 1/20/09, independent non-national (or rogue nationalist or separatist or whatever) movements resorting to terrorist techniques to achieve their goals... What a mess! And what theories can apply to all or even most of them?

One clear thing from a geopolitical perspective is that few nations feel that everything with their position is fine. And even the happiest of nations would not be dumb enough to think that with all this confusion going on around them, they don't need to protect themselves just in case. Governments are created, in part, to perform synergistic actions beyond the scope of individuals, especially on a military level, either for defense or offense. So everybody has arms, buys arms or develops arms. Or, they obtain protection from a country that already has arms. Japan, for instance, is not particularly well-armed and if, let's say, they were attacked by North Korea (which would be likely if North Korea wished to attack "the West" since that's about as far as NK's missiles could reliably fly), it would be up to the US to respond as Japan's protector (cf. WWII); NK, Japan and the US all know this. Some countries feel a need to defend themselves against the US, which is why NK develops its arms in the first place. Countries that perceive of the US as an enemy act accordingly. Any country that sees any enemies anywhere acts accordingly. Everybody makes sure that they can defend themselves.

And some countries go even further, and attack somebody offensively. Some attack people within their own borders, i.e., ethnic cleansing. Some attack across borders, e.g.,

the US in Iraq or Al Qaeda on 9/11 (Al Qaeda being an ad hoc country, but we won't bother to analyze the extraterritorial nature of terrorist organizations, and we'll simply accept that terrorist organizations share most traits of nations short of national boundaries, which they are usually seeking to attain or regain).

All of this military action, defensive or offensive, is overlaid on the very complex issue of firepower. And that will be our next issue.

Firepower

The history of warfare, from the perspective of strategy and tactics, is to some extent the history of firepower. Our definition of firepower will be "offensive power applied from a distance." From the dawn of time, whoever can amass the better firepower tends to win the battles. While there are examples of great strategists who have managed to overcome better firepower with a clever plan, for the most part, if I've got better weaponry, and more of it, I'll probably come out on top.

The study of firepower is also the study of the advancement of weaponry. Let's look at our ancestors in the caves.

Step one: fists.

Step two: tool use and rock throwing.

It doesn't take a genius to see how throwing a rock has some advantages over throwing a fist. I don't have to get as close, so if I have rocks and all you have is fists, I win. Similarly, if my tool use skills bring me to a knife, and all you've got is a fist, I probably win then too. But the further away I can get from you while still launching an offensive attack, the better chance I have of harming you while not being harmed myself. A bow and arrow is better than throwing rocks, because I get better accuracy and better results. I can kill better with an arrow than with a rock. I can be further away from my enemy than with a rock (or, of course, than with a close-range weapon like a sword/knife/mace/battle-axe). A gun is an improvement over the bow and arrow (once guns get to the point of rifling, at least): better accuracy, more distance, more deadly. In

war, if one side has guns and the other side has swords, the guns will probably win because the gunners will never be in range of the swords, but not vice versa.

So, there's the history of world warfare in a nutshell. Add to this developments in artillery so that guns become cannons, and you've made it about as far as the American Civil War. But we miss something here, which is who, exactly, are the combatants. For most of Western history, the combatants were professional soldiers. One batch of professional soldiers fought another batch of professional soldiers, and there didn't tend to be too many of them, and they played by various accepted rules, and then the kings found out who won and that was that. Very civilized, in a manner of speaking. The American Civil War can be said to have introduced a new concept, the standard-issue non-professional soldier. Not that there weren't volunteers, but the Union had the resources of factories (for war materiel) and population (for soldiers) and drafted the latter to attend to the former. Small elegant battles went away during the Civil War, and bloodshed on a mass level was introduced. Assembly-line death. (It was perfected in the trenches of WWI.) But it was still soldiers fighting soldiers.

Artillery fire can do serious damage. I can shoot you from very far away, and make a very big bang. Start thinking battleships, where I can deliver the artillery from anywhere on the water. Start thinking airplanes, where I can start dropping bombs from the sky. Develop aircraft carriers, and you've got one of the greatest advances ever in the history of firepower.

Planes start to make wars very dicey, primarily beginning during WWII. Previously the world was a contest of our firepower vs your firepower, with whoever shoots the most from the furthest having the advantage, but at the point where we start dropping bombs from airplanes, beginning with military targets, it isn't long before we find ourselves firebombing Dresden. Strategic national targets.

And then we take the giant step, and we're bombing Hiroshima and Nagasaki to demonstrate the ferocious power of the atomic bomb.

At the point where we have nuclear weapons, we have taken a quantum leap in fire-power (no pun intended). Provided we have airplanes or long-range missile launching capabilities, we can launch our weapons virtually from the comfort of home. And we can kill everyone for miles around. We go beyond military targets almost by definition. Nuclear weapons take out cities, not military targets. War, as a result, is totally redefined. It is not just soldiers anymore. We can destroy civilizations.

The technology for creation of nuclear weaponry is complex and expensive. The US had the bomb in 1945; the Soviets were right behind us. Even before WWII ended, US Foreign Policy had determined that the USSR was the next enemy, and the USSR took a similar view of us. These two major powers were the only ones in a position in the wake of WWII to develop and afford these weapons, which is why they were the ones who had them. Before long, we had them pointing at each other. But we didn't use them. We came close once or twice, but we never pulled the trigger.

We now start to see why nuclear weapons are different from other weapons. With nukes, there's no longer even a pretense of attacking military targets. Pretty much any analysis you can find on the justness of war will tell you that attacking civilians should not be on the program. It's bad enough that many of our conflicts nowadays are urban, with that wonderful euphemism of collateral damage, i.e., we took out an orphanage when we took out the suspected insurgents headquarters next door. But nukes take it to the next level. Their destruction is beyond even the intended military. One of the special aspects of the US and USSR facing off with nukes was that they both had enough in their arsenals to destroy each other, so if either of them did start a nuclear conflict, it would assure the end of both of them. This became known as Mutually Assured Destruction, or MAD, to indicate to anyone what the problem was. A subset of the problem would probably be that if any nuclear power attacked another nuclear power with a differently sized arsenal—say, Israel attacked Russia—the bigger player would probably destroy the smaller player. In other words, Israel might take out Moscow, but Russia in return would take out Israel.

The destructive power of nukes is so great that their existence theoretically negates their use; Baudrillard talks about this. As soon as you've acquired these weapons, you've backed yourself into a corner of being unable to use them: Their power is so great that their use is inconceivable.

If only that were true.

Over time, a handful of national players have managed to acquire nukes. The thing is, possession of a weapon of such power is a magical thing. If the progress of warfare is the progress of firepower, than nukes are a giant step in that progression. And that leads to some issues to consider:

1. Countries that have nukes have a vast advantage over countries that don't have nukes.
2. Countries that don't have nukes whose enemies have nukes are at a vast disadvantage. If a conflict were arise, conventional warfare could lead to nukes, and a guaranteed outcome.
3. Countries that have nukes demonstrate that they are in a position of power on the world stage. For instance, even if, theoretically, the US never plans to use its nukes, it possesses them, and *could* use them. The enemy never knows. The same holds true regardless of who the possessor is.
4. The threat of nukes is an enormous bargaining chip. Even threatening to acquire nukes will cause international repercussions. North Korea gets US money. Iran almost gets attacked.

What gets thrown into this mix is the idea of nuclear non-proliferation, that is, the idea that no countries who don't have nukes should acquire them. The Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty says that because of their special nature, people who have them won't use them and people who don't have them won't get them, and that we will eventually all disarm. That is, the nations of the world have agreed that nuclear warfare is bad, period. It breaks the rules of warfare. It is the line drawn in the sand by civilized society.

Too bad all society isn't civilized. Thank goodness the technology is complicated and expensive, and the preexistence within a nation of conditions supportive of those complications and expenses logically connects with a responsible government and the Baudrillardian construct that you would have to be insane to use these weapons and their very possession is an indication of sanity and no one is that crazy. Maybe. But as technology advances, no doubt nuclear technology will also get cheaper, just like HDTVs. One year only the rich can afford them, a couple of years later every schmegeggie has one. And look at the incentives! If you have nukes, you get to be a player. Instead of being poor old backwater Boogaboogaland, you get to be a member of the nuclear fraternity, just like the US and France and the UK. American hegemony must end! Death to all yankee dogs!!!

And we begin to understand the nature of the geopolitical scene today. There are no easy solutions to the economic problems that exist. Poor countries with nothing to offer don't want charity, they want to be viable economic entities with a solid balance of trade with other nations. Achieving this usually means alliances that are occasionally disturbing (which is something we didn't go into, but is certainly the case today as China and non-Communist Russia invest in developing nations for their own benefit, especially in Africa, without necessarily paying any attention to human rights issues, but then again, count up how many dictators has the US supported in strategic situations, including Saddam Hussein). Countries with chips on their shoulders over the disposition of land in the past or for any other reason historical or social, want to get even or change the status quo. At the point where these issues are dealt with conventionally, they are probably within the realm of acceptability, if not necessarily desirability. Stuff will happen that we may not like, but there's a limit to how bad it can be. But when you insert a nuclear option into the equation, you go beyond the realm of acceptability. At the point in the future where someone uses nuclear weapons, we will be living the nightmare we are only now beginning to drift into.

And that's the way it is in the world today. Firepower changes everything.

Welcome to the Bahamas!

Geopolitical Justice: some proposals

We began by saying we would address the issue of justice on an international scale. We said we understood (sorta) justice on a national, social contract level, but didn't have the resources for making normative statements on the global level. Well, we still don't have the resources for making those normative statements, but at least now we know what the issues are.

Justice is defending citizens on a military level: Individuals in a nation cannot defend themselves from attack by outside agencies. This is the job of the government. It would be just for a nation to build a strong defensive military, or seek support from strong military partners. It could also be just for a nation to build, and use, a strong offensive force. The US certainly does, despite any protestations to the contrary: make a list of the countries we've invaded since WWII, even if those invasions were "defensive."

Justice is protecting national sovereignty on a non-military level: That is, one can make an argument that a polity needs to protect itself, and that part of the contract of individuals with their government is the guarantee by the government of this protection. The government is obliged to provide this protection. And this goes beyond, or transcends, the military level. A polity needs to protect its culture. If a nation is, say, very conservative, it would be a government responsibility to prevent other countries from coming in with offensive materials. A government is just in protecting the important interests of its citizens, and if those important interests are social, than protecting those social important interests is a just act on a contractual obligation level.

Justice is maximizing individual welfare: That is, one can make an argument that a government's obligation to its citizens includes guaranteeing, as best it can, a decent quality of life. A government is obligated to relieve poverty, develop infrastructure, bring in investors who will help develop the country. The government of a developing nation that uses all the money it can get its hands on to build palaces for the rulers is not living up to this obligation. The government of a developing nation that seeks in-

ternational economic partners, encourages sustainable development without harming the environment, etc., is living up to this obligation.

Justice is a government working to maintain its nation's dignity on the international level: Since only a government can act on the international level, all the actions a government takes on that level can one way or another be tested for justness. If a government works to make its nation a recognized participant in world events, this would probably be just action, whereas if a government works to isolate its nation, this would probably not be living up to its obligation. It is easy to make an argument that in today's technological, multinational corporate world, a nation must be part of the community of nations to participate in the benefits that derive therefrom.

Justice is protecting the citizens of your nation above the citizens of other nations: Since we have a social contract within our borders, and no social contract outside our borders, our governments only have contractual obligations to their own citizens. On the other hand, we could make claim that our governments have moral obligations to other citizens that also must be taken into consideration. That is, we don't give up our ideas of right and wrong the minute we cross the border.

Justice is the application of a social contract on an international level: Since geography is accidental, national sovereignty, while valid as a political concept, is not the ultimate determinant of the worth of citizens. Individuals exist as human beings before they exist as citizens of a particular nation, and their human worth transcends their nationality. Creating an international social contract, i.e., a "federal" state of all nations comprising the individual nations, with transcendent laws at this federal/international level overriding local laws, allowing for a framework of individual rights protection within the context of differing societies, is a just action. In other words, a UN that worked, with actual power, is a reasonable goal of just action on the international level. Seeking this goal, even if ultimately unachievable, leads to the betterment of all, therefore the mere seeking is just.

From these blocks, I could put together an argument that Iran is justified in putting itself forward as the leader of the Moslem world, requiring the international respect that

comes with leadership, that this requires a nuclear capability, and that this is beneficial to its people on a social, economic and military level. From these blocks, I could also put together an argument that the US is justified in preemptively preventing its enemies from acquiring nuclear arms, because the protection of citizens within a nation is just. From these blocks, I could do all sorts of things.

But *I* don't have to. *You* do.

Have fun.