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The Logic of Peace

Jonathan Schell

Jonathan Schell's The Unconquerable World points the way out of the devastation of the twentieth century toward another, more peaceful path. And his investigations into the great nonviolent events of modern times — from Gandhi's independence movement in India to the explosion of civic activity that brought about the surprising collapse of the Soviet Union — suggest foundations of an entirely new kind on which to construct an enduring peace. As Schell makes clear, all-out war, with its risk of human extinction, must cease to play the role of final arbiter. "The Logic of Peace," printed here, is the final chapter of Schell's book.

The escalation of violence around the world has been so rapid since September 11, 2001, that this day may appear already to have been the August 1914 of the twenty-first century. The parallels are striking. In 2001 as in 1914 a period of political liberalization, economic globalization, and peace (at least in the privileged zones of the planet) was summarily ended by a violent explosion. The fundamental decision now, as it was then, is between force and peaceful means as the path to safety, and the world has seemed to make a decision for force. Again, observers have been compelled, as Henry James was in 1914, to recognize that the immediate past has been a time of illusion — a time when the world was heading toward a precipice but did not know it, or did not care to know it. Again, an unpredictable chain of violent events has been set in motion — some today have even said that a “third world war” is upon us.

And yet, since history does not repeat itself, the analogy between 1914 and 2001, like all measurements of the present with yardsticks from the past, is useful only for querying events, not for predicting them. There are equally important differences between the two moments, some of them obvious, others less so. In 1914, the great powers' preparations for war were complete. The arms were piled high, the troops massed, the war plans mapped out in detail, the mobilization schedules fixed, the treaties of alliance signed and sealed. Even before the first shot was fired, the whole of the long war to come lay waiting in the file cabinets of the chanceries of Europe, needing only the right incident to spring to life. And when that incident came and the armies were hurled across the borders, no power on earth, including the governments involved, could call them back until the war had run its full bloody course. Our moment, by contrast, is one of exceptional unpredictability and fluidity. No inexorable timetables or web of alliances among great powers threaten to drag

Jonathan Schell is a regular contributor to Harper's, Foreign Affairs, and The Nation. This article is taken from his book The Unconquerable World: Power, Nonviolence and the Will of the People and is reprinted by arrangement with Metropolitan Books, an imprint of Henry Holt and Company, LLC. Copyright (c) 2003 by Jonathan Schell. All rights reserved.

everyone together into a new abyss. The unexpected — new crises, abrupt developments, sudden opportunities — is the order of the day. The strength of the forces that attacked on September 11 is unclear, and appears likely to wax or wane in response to events. The Bush administration has announced a series of wars that it may decide to fight, but there will be points of decision at every step along the way. Developments in the field can quickly alter political opinion at home. The proliferation of weapons of mass destruction can inhibit as well as provoke war. Elections can bring new people to power. Other countries are watching and waiting, uncertain where and how to bring the weight of their influence to bear. The effect of a series of wars, if such occur, on global economic integration is unknown, and huge uncertainties shadow the economic scene.

As shocking as September 11 was, it was not a decisive catastrophe, but rather a warning. No irrevocable decision has in fact been made. The scope for choice remains unusually large, and the new cycle of violence can still be broken or reversed, and new policies adopted. Seen narrowly, September 11 posed the specific question of how the United States and the civilized world should deal with a global terrorist network ready to commit any crime within its power. That question requires all the urgent attention and action that it is receiving. At the same time, I submit, we should be asking what the larger and more fundamental decisions for policy may be. If we take this broader approach, the profound changes that have occurred in the character of violence, politics, and power over the last century will command our attention. In 1918 and 1945, a decision in favor of coercive power clearly meant in practice choosing the old war system, and a decision in favor of cooperative power meant choosing to create *ex nihilo* a Wilsonian system of global collective security based on international law. Today, neither of these alternatives is open to us. Others are on the table. Let us consider each of the two paths, beginning with the choice of coercive power, then turning to the choice of cooperative power.

Violence as the Solution to Violence: The End of Balance

Now as in 1918 and 1945, organized violence plays a double role in the decision, for violence is both the problem to be solved and one of the solutions on offer — a solution to itself. This remedy is of course as old as history. When Clemenceau rejected Wilson's vision in favor of an old system in which he still had "faith," he was referring to definite plans for defending his country within the framework of the global war system. And when the diplomat Harold Nicolson began to lose confidence in Wilsonism and repaired to that old system because the value of "armaments, strategic frontiers, alliances" was already proven, he was reverting to the same faith. Both held to the idea, codified in the realist school of political thought, of creating a balance of power, which had always been the main hope for peace of those who planned to deploy the instruments of violence to prevent violence. When nuclear weapons were invented, war among the great powers became unworkable, yet the idea of balance survived, in the new form of the balance of terror. Some have continued to call the balance of terror a balance of power, but a better term might be a balance of powerlessness, inasmuch as its stability rests on the willingness of the parties to enlist in a community of total jeopardy.

The balance of powerlessness may have been more effective than the balance of power exactly because the penalty for failure, nuclear annihilation, was so much greater. It cannot, of course, be demonstrated conclusively that nuclear terror pre-

vented a third world war. Too many ifs of history are involved to make a firm judgment. (Since we cannot in the present predict what history will do, what makes us think that we can say what history would have done if such and such an imaginary event had occurred?) For example, we would have to determine that a third world war had been straining to occur — only to be checked by fear of the bomb. We would also have to show that the presence of nuclear weapons did more to prevent world war than to cause it. After all, the most acute crisis of the Cold War, the Cuban missile crisis, was brought about by the deployment of nuclear weapons. If nuclear strategic thinking had anything to do with resolving that crisis (something that is in itself difficult to demonstrate), it was only after causing the crisis in the first place.

Nevertheless, it is as possible as it is necessary, even without resolving these unanswerable questions, to acknowledge that the presence of the bomb weighed heavily in the calculations of the statesmen of the Cold War, inclining them against major war each time a crisis occurred. Their increasing recognition that, as President Ronald Reagan put it, “nuclear war cannot be won and must never be fought” was a central fact, in theory and in practice, of the Cold War.

With these developments, nuclear strategy acquired a Wilsonian dimension. It had evolved into a war stopper. The importance of the role of the balance of terror as a peacekeeper becomes clearer if we consider the varying fates of the century’s two major organizations for peacekeeping, the League of Nations and the United Nations. The League was discredited by a series of aggressions and conflicts it was unable to prevent or halt, then swept aside by the Second World War. The Cold War played a similar role in sidelining the United Nations.

President Franklin Roosevelt and Winston Churchill, who first called for such an organization in the Atlantic Charter in 1941, had sought to draw lessons from the fate of the League. Instead of assigning the peacekeeping function to a large council, as the League did, they vested it in an alliance of the prospective victors of the Second World War — the United States, the Soviet Union, China, England, and France — each of whom was given a permanent seat on the Security Council and a veto over its decisions. The hope was that this small, tight-knit group of great powers could guarantee the peace more effectively than the multitude of nations charged with that responsibility under the provisions of the League. But almost immediately after the organization’s foundation in 1946, this arrangement was for all intents and purposes nullified by the advent of the Cold War. In 1950, the Korean War, sanctioned by the Security Council after the Soviet Union walked out of its proceedings, confirmed that the breakdown in relations between the United States and the Soviet Union was irreparable.

If this geopolitical split had been the only reason for the UN’s failure to perform its central role, the story would be a familiar one, well-known to analysts of the League’s collapse: collective security fails to get off the ground because the powers that are supposed to enforce it fall out with one another. The designated peacemakers become the peace-breakers, and no one else is strong enough to bring them into line. In fact, however, the UN’s marginalization occurred for another reason as well — the onset of the nuclear age. By an accident of historical timing, the bomb was first tested and dropped in the hiatus between the designing of the United Nations and its founding.

In April of 1945, in San Francisco, the Conference on International Organization formally agreed on the outlines of the UN Charter. On October 24, the UN came into existence. On August 6, however, the destruction of Hiroshima radically trans-

formed the nature of the main problem, great-power war, that the new organization had been fashioned to solve. Conceived in one age, the UN was born in another. Having been designed to cope with a world dominated by the global war system, it came into existence after that system's death knell had been sounded. The central purpose of the UN was to prevent a third world war — to, in the words of the Preamble to its Charter, “save succeeding generations from the scourge of war, which twice in our lifetime has brought untold sorrow to mankind.” But as the years passed it was not to the UN, disabled by the Cold War, that the great powers turned to save them from a third world war but to nuclear arsenals. Even as the Cold War was wrecking the UN as an instrument for keeping the peace, nuclear deterrence was coopting it. Thus the UN was not swept away, as the League had been by approaching world war; it was permitted to live on to perform important, if secondary services — supplying humanitarian relief in disasters of every description, sending peacekeeping forces to calm local conflicts, providing a forum for the expression of international opinion.

With the end of the bipolar Cold War order, and the acceleration of nuclear proliferation, however, the new, nuclearized form the balance is crumbling. For reasons both political and technical, nuclear terror is rapidly shedding its “Wilsonian” role as a preserver of stability and peace.

Some, it is true, have argued to the contrary that the balance of nuclear terror can actually be extended and strengthened by proliferation. Just as nuclear weapons stopped the two superpowers of the Cold War from fighting a hot war, so, it is suggested, they can immobilize ten or twenty or thirty nuclear powers, in a grand peace based on universal terror. The political scientist Kenneth Waltz, for example, has suggested that “the gradual spread of nuclear weapons is more to be welcomed than feared.”¹ He hopes that the Soviet-American stalemate enforced by deterrence during the Cold War might be enlarged to include many more nations. What has not been explained, however, is how a steadily growing number of nuclear powers, each capable of annihilating some or all of the others, can balance their forces in a way that would leave any of them feeling safe. Mutual assured destruction is a policy whose logic fits a bipolar relationship. It defies adjustment to a multi-nuclear-power world.

Proliferation, indeed, undermines stability in every sense of that word. In the first place, it destroys strategic stability. Strategic balance during the Cold War was supposed to depend on the attempt to maintain a rough equality between the forces of the two sides; but in a world of many nuclear powers this goal would be unreach-able. If Country A and Country B were to painstakingly craft a stable nuclear balance (something, incidentally, that the Soviet Union and the United States failed to do for as long as the Cold War continued), it could be overthrown instantly by any nuclear-armed Country C that suddenly allied itself with one or the other. The necessary changes in targeting could be accomplished in just a few hours or days. Even in today's world of eight nuclear powers (or perhaps nine, if North Korea's claim to possess nuclear weapons is true), some of the imbalances inherent in nuclear multi-polarity are evident. There is little hope of balance, for example, in the quadrilateral relationship of the United States, China, India, and Pakistan. India has stated that it became a nuclear power to balance nuclear-armed China, by whom it was defeated in a conventional border war in 1962. Pakistan became a nuclear power to balance India. If India seeks again to balance China, however, will Pakistan seek to keep up? China, moreover, has supplied nuclear technology to Pakistan. And Pakistan has supplied some to North Korea, receiving missile technology in return. Will India therefore feel compelled to build a nuclear arsenal that equals both China's and

Pakistan's? The United States meanwhile has decided to build national missile defenses, which, if they turn out to work, will erode or nullify China's capacity to strike the United States. China has already said that it will respond by building up its still modest nuclear forces. That will put additional pressure on India. Nor can we forget that Russia may, at any point, step into the picture with its still-huge arsenal. The spread of ballistic- and cruise-missile technology, whose proliferation is as predictable as that of nuclear technology, compounds the problem geometrically.

In the second place, proliferation is bound to undermine the foundations of technical stability. During the Cold War, the United States and the Soviet Union sought a kind of safety in the policy of mutual assured destruction. In practice, however, they found that their nuclear command-and-control systems were so vulnerable to a first strike that the retaliation required by the doctrine could not in fact be assured. To cure the problem, the two governments resorted to policies of "launch on warning" — that is, each planned to launch its retaliatory strike after receiving a warning that the other side had launched its first strike but before the missiles had arrived. This system placed severe time pressure on any decision to launch in retaliation, increasing the risks of accidental war. The presidents of the two nations were — and still are — required to make these decisions within five minutes of receiving warning of an incoming strike. The pressures on Russia, which now faces a technically superior American force, have grown especially severe.

If the United States and Russia, with all their resources and an ocean between them, cannot guarantee the survival of their command-and-control systems, is it reasonable to expect that smaller, poorer nations, facing many potential adversaries, with little or no warning time, will accomplish this? The warning time between India and Pakistan, for instance, is effectively zero. For them, not even launch on warning is possible. The requirements for nuclear stability under the doctrine of deterrence are thus altogether lacking.

In the third place, what the experts call arms-control stability — meaning conditions favorable to negotiated limits on or reductions of nuclear arsenals — would be destroyed. During the Cold War, the United States and the Soviet Union, unable to agree on numerical offensive limits, built up their collective arsenals to the preposterous collective level of some seventy-five thousand nuclear warheads. In a multipolar nuclear world, arms-control agreements would become exponentially harder to achieve. How could twenty or thirty nations, few of whom trusted the others or were sure what they were doing, be able to adjust the scores of nuclear balances among them? Containing proliferation (if someone should wish to return to that policy somewhere down the road) would be a pipe dream. How would, say, the twentieth nuclear power persuade the twenty-first that building nuclear weapons is a bad idea?

In the fourth place, multiplying nuclear arsenals would increase the danger of nuclear terrorism. A world of proliferation would be a world awash in nuclear materials. Terrorists who acquired them would be indifferent to nuclear threats from others. The balance of terror depends on fear of retaliatory annihilation, but many terrorists have no country of whose annihilation they are afraid. They are unafraid to lose even their own lives, and blow themselves up with the bombs they aim at others. The terrorist bent on self-immolation with a weapon of mass destruction is the nemesis of balance. Deterrence has no purchase on the dead.

Violence as the Solution to Violence: Empire

If the balance of power and the balance of terror are no longer available, does the storehouse of systems of coercive power still offer any resource for keeping peace in the world? One option remains to be considered: universal empire, substantially achieved only once in the history of the Western world, by the Romans. (Even they were unable to conquer certain outlying territories.) The nation now aspiring to a global imperial role is, of course, the United States. Its military dominance is one more reason that a balance of power has become impracticable. Obviously, there can be no balance when one power is mightier than all the others put together. Not a balance of power but a monopoly of power — or, at any rate, of force — is the present American ambition. The new state of affairs is sometimes referred to as “unipolarity,” but the term is an oxymoron within a single word, for by definition “polarity” requires two poles. (The Bush administration’s official statement of its global policy, the “National Security Strategy,” falls into a similar confusion when it speaks of a “balance of power in favor of freedom.” A balance that is “in favor of” one side is again by definition not a balance.)

Although both the balance-of-power system and the balance of terror were primarily based on coercion, both contained significant admixtures of cooperation. Both depended on a sort of brute equity among two or more powers. If the balance was to be maintained, neither could claim a right to attack the other: they must coexist. Under the balance of terror, the element of cooperation was even stronger. The two sides were bonded in the common project of avoiding the war that would annihilate both. They were paradoxical partners in survival. A global hegemonic peace, on the other hand, would mark the triumph of coercion. Its foundation would be not equality of any kind but the absolute and unchallengeable superiority of one power and the vassalage of others — not mutual nonaggression but preemption, not coexistence but the right of one, and only one, to execute “regime change.”

The idea of American global hegemony thus carries the rule of force to an extreme. And yet, fantastic and unreal as the ambition may be, there is a logic underlying it. Means, this logic runs, must be adequate to ends. Since proliferation is in its nature global so must American domination. The United States will employ its overwhelming military superiority to stop proliferation all around the world. It applies to the world the reasoning that Bodin applied to the state four hundred years ago: the world is now a community; a community needs order; to provide order there must be a sovereign; the sovereign can be none other than the master of the sword; the United States alone can lay a claim to mastering the sword; therefore the United States must be the global sovereign. And so on behalf of its own and the world’s safety, the United States will fight a series of what can be called disarmament wars. Under this plan the United States would, indeed, become a “disarmament empire,” dedicated to preserving the world from nuclear destruction. (Of course, all empires are in a sense disarmament empires: they rule by defeating — by destroying or disarming — every foe and rival.) It is not going too far to say that if the solutions to the danger of nuclear proliferation were restricted to coercive systems, then some form of imperial domination would be the form it would have to take.

To acknowledge the existence of this logic, which lends the American bid for hegemony whatever legitimacy it has, is not to overlook the more mundane and sordid aspects of American imperial ambition. Every empire in history has con-

cealed coarse self-interest behind a veil of noble ideals, and there is no reason to believe that American imperialism would be an exception. The most obvious and the rawest of these motivations is the wish to take control of the oil reserves of Central Asia, the Middle East, and elsewhere. Far more sweeping is the assertion in the “National Security Strategy” that in all the world there is now “a single sustainable model for national success”: the American one of “freedom, democracy, and free enterprise.” It is a formulation that, when wedded to the assertion of unchallengeable American military superiority and the right to intervene militarily anywhere on earth, plainly sets the stage for attempts to impose America’s will on nations in almost any area of their collective existence.

A plan for global hegemony, however, has not suddenly become feasible simply because the balance of power and the balance of terror no longer work. Even if we supposed that the United States were to complete the transition from republic to empire, there are powerful reasons to believe that it would fail to realize its global ambitions, whether idealistic or self-interested. Any imperial plan in the twenty-first century tilts against what have so far proved to be the two most powerful forces of the modern age: the spread of scientific knowledge and the resolve of peoples to reject foreign rule and take charge of their own destinies. If the history of the past two centuries is a guide, neither can be bombed out of existence.

The most persuasive rationale for empire is its promise of deliverance from the threat of weapons of mass destruction. The views of most countries on this subject, however, are far different from those of the United States. The Bush administration looks out upon the world and sees “evildoers” trying to procure terrible weapons; the world looks back and sees a hypocritical power seeking to deny to others what it possesses in abundance and even plans to use preemptively. Most countries fear those who already have nuclear weapons at least as much as they fear those who are merely trying to get them. In their view, stopping proliferation deals at best with a secondary aspect of the nuclear problem. They still see what has perhaps become invisible to American eyes — that the United States and Russia have thousands of nuclear weapons pointed at one another and at others and have refused to surrender these arsenals. They also see that the club of possessors has grown to include South Asia, where the danger of nuclear war has become acute, and they note that no plan is on the drawing board to denuclearize these powers, either. On the contrary, nuclearization has been a ticket into the good graces of the United States for both countries. Finally, they observe that the Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty, under which a hundred and eighty-two countries have agreed to forgo nuclear arms, is in jeopardy of breaking down because the five nations that possess nuclear arsenals under the terms of the treaty show no sign of fulfilling their pledge under its Article 6 to eliminate them. (Three other nuclear powers — India, Pakistan, and Israel — are nonmembers of the treaty, and the fourth, North Korea, has announced its intention of withdrawing.) It was in defiance of this nuclear double standard that India set off its nuclear tests in 1998, prompting Pakistan’s responding tests. Was “regime change” an option in these cases? Is it in North Korea? Will it be if Iran, Egypt, Syria, or, for that matter, Japan or Germany builds a nuclear arsenal? Does the United States propose to overthrow the government of every country that, rebelling against the attempt to institutionalize the double standard, seeks to acquire weapons of mass destruction? The attempt indeed appears more likely to provoke than prevent proliferation, as has already happened in North Korea. Nations threatened with that nightmare of the ages, a great power seeking global domination, will go to desperate lengths to redress the balance. Weapons of mass destruction are an obvious

means.

What is true for proliferation of nuclear weapons is also likely to be true for their use. Force, history teaches, summons counterforce. What goes around comes around. The United States is the only nation on earth that has used these weapons of mass destruction. An American attempt to dominate world affairs is a recipe for provoking their use again, very possibly on American soil.

It's unlikely that the passion for self-determination will be any easier to suppress than the spread of destructive technology. Empire, the supreme embodiment of force, is the antithesis of self-determination. It violates equity on a global scale. No lover of freedom can give it support. It is especially contrary to the founding principles of the United States, whose domestic institutions are incompatible with the maintenance of empire. Historically, imperial rule has rested on three kinds of supremacy — military, economic, and political. The United States enjoys unequivocal superiority in only one of these domains — the military, and here only in the conventional sphere. (Any attempt at regime change in a country equipped with even a modest deliverable nuclear arsenal is out of the question even for the United States.) American economic power is impressive, yet in this domain it has several equals or near equals, including the European Union and Japan, who are not likely to bend easily to American will. In the political arena the United States is weak. "Covenants, without the sword, are but words," Hobbes said in the late seventeenth century. Since then, the world has learned that swords without covenants are but empty bloodshed. In the political arena, the lesson of the world revolt — that winning military victories may sometimes be easy but building political institutions in foreign lands is hard, often impossible — still obtains. The nation so keenly interested in regime change has small interest in nation-building and less capacity to carry it out. The United States, indeed, is especially mistrusted, often hated, around the world. If it embarks on a plan of imperial supremacy, it will be hated still more. Can cruise missiles build nations? Does power still flow from the barrel of a gun — or from a Predator Drone? Can the world in the twenty-first century really be ruled from thirty-five thousand feet? Modern peoples have the will to resist and the means to do so. Imperialism without politics is a naive imperialism. In our time, force can win a battle or two, but politics is destiny.

Can a nation that began its life in rebellion against the most powerful empire of its time end by trying to become a still more powerful empire? It perhaps can, but not if it wishes to remain a republic. Secretary of State John Quincy Adams defined the choice with precision in 1821. After giving his country the wellknown advice that the United States should not go abroad "in search of monsters to destroy" but be "the well-wisher to the freedom and independence of all ... the champion and vindicator only of her own," he added that if the United States embarked on the path of dominating others, the "fundamental maxims of her policy would insensibly change from liberty to force She might become the dictatress of the world. She would no longer be the ruler of her own spirit."²

A country's violence, Hannah Arendt said, can destroy its power. The United States is moving quickly down this path. Do American leaders imagine that the people of the world, having overthrown the territorial empires of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, are ready to bend the knee to an American overlord in the twenty-first? Do they imagine that allies are willing to become subordinates? Have they forgotten that people hate to be dominated by force? History is packed with surprises. The leaders of the totalitarian Soviet empire miraculously had the good sense to yield up their power without unleashing the tremendous violence that was at

their fingertips. Could it be the destiny of the American republic, unable to resist the allure of an imperial delusion, to flare out in a blaze of pointless mass destruction

The Cooperative Path

In sum, the days when humanity can hope to save itself from force with force are over. None of the structures of violence — not the balance of power, not the balance of terror, not empire — can any longer rescue the world from the use of violence, now grown apocalyptic. Force can lead only to more force, not to peace. Only a turn to structures of cooperative power can offer hope. To choose that path, the United States would, as a first order of business, have to choose the American republic over the American empire, and then, on the basis of the principles that underlie the republic, join with other nations to build cooperative structures as a basis for peace.

For Americans, the choice is at once between two Americas, and between two futures for the international order. In an imperial America, power would be concentrated in the hands of the president, and checks and balances would be at an end; civil liberties would be weakened or lost; military spending would crowd out social spending; the gap between rich and poor would be likely to increase; electoral politics, to the extent that they still mattered, would be increasingly dominated by money, above all corporate money, whose influence would trump the people's interests; the social, economic, and ecological agenda of the country and the world would be increasingly neglected. On the other hand, in a republican America dedicated to the creation of a cooperative world, the immense concentration of power in the executive would be broken up; power would be divided again among the three branches, which would resume their responsibility of checking and balancing one another as the Constitution provides; civil liberties would remain intact or be strengthened; money would be driven out of politics, and the will of the people would be heard again; politics, and with it the power of the people, would revive; the social, economic, and ecological agendas of the country and the world would become the chief concern of the government.

Which path the United States will choose is likely to be decided in a protracted, arduous political struggle in the years ahead. Its outcome cannot be predicted. For the time being, the United States has chosen the coercive, imperial path, but that decision can be reversed. Of course, no American decision alone can secure peace in the world. It is the essence of the task that many nations must cooperate in it. If they do, however, they will find that twentieth-century history has presented them, together with all its violence, an abundance of materials to work with. There are grounds for optimism in the restricted but real sense that if the will to turn away from force and toward cooperation were to develop, history has provided more extensive and solid foundations for accomplishment than have ever existed before. For the anatomy of cooperative power has been transformed by the events of the past century as fully as that of coercive power.

Much that Woodrow Wilson hoped for has in fact come to pass. He wanted a world of popular self-determination. His vision is our reality (to a fault, as the tangled wars of self-determination of recent years demonstrate). He dreamed that the world would be made safe for democracy. We can begin to imagine, in the wake of the liberal democratic revival and the Western liberal settlement, that spreading democracy will help to make the world safe. He hated the territorial empires of his time. Today, they are on history's scrap heap.

Hopeful developments that Wilson could not have foreseen have also occurred.

The Wilsonian peace was destroyed in good measure by the rise of totalitarianism. Now totalitarianism, too, lies in the dust. In Wilson's day, revolution was widely thought to be in its nature violent. We have witnessed the power of nonviolent revolution, which was responsible for the downfall of the greatest empires of the previous two centuries, the British and the Soviet. In his day, the global adapt-or-die war system was at the apex of its power. In ours, it is disabled. Each of the aforementioned developments indeed curtailed that system in a different way. The military power deployed at the top of the system ran into the buzz saw of even greater power based on popular will at the bottom. As in Alice in Wonderland's croquet game, in which the mallets were flamingos and the balls were hedgehogs, the pawns in the imperial game, mistaken for inanimate objects by the imperialists, came alive in their hands and began, universally and unstopably, to pursue their own plans and ambitions. In this new dispensation, which can guarantee against global domination far more reliably than the balance of power ever could, the wills of innumerable local peoples play the role previously played by the resolve of major powers to go to war to stop a global conqueror.

While the self-determination movement was encasing the giant's feet in cement, nuclear weapons were immobilizing his head and limbs. What need was there to obey the dictates of the war system's global logic of force when at the end of every military path was neither victory nor defeat but a common annihilation? Coexistence had always been a wise policy; now it became a necessity. It remains so — American conventional military superiority notwithstanding — for all nuclear-capable powers. Even tiny, impoverished North Korea can deter the United States and all its might if it possesses half a dozen nuclear weapons and the means to deliver them. Of course, it is still quite possible to stumble across the dread threshold, committing genocide and suicide in a single act, but the option is hardly tempting.

Even as self-determination movements and nuclear arsenals were, in their different ways, paralyzing force as the final arbiter in global affairs, nonviolent revolution in the Soviet bloc and elsewhere was proving the existence of a force that now could arbitrate. Gyorgy Konrad was right, far-fetched as it may have seemed at the time, to suggest that his "antipolitics" pointed a way out of the Cold War and the nuclear stalemate, and so was Adam Michnik when he said that he and his colleagues had discovered a political equivalent of the atomic bomb. Has the effectiveness of what William James called the moral equivalent of war ever been more effectually demonstrated?

At the same time, the revival of liberal democracy was creating a growing, informal bloc of nations whose members enjoyed peaceful relations not because they bristled with arms or had established a cumbersome structure of collective security but merely because they lacked any reason or inclination for war and possessed cooperative means for resolving such disagreements as did arise.

The success of the self-determination movement, the rise of nuclear capacity, the success of nonviolent revolutions, and the liberal democratic revival are deep-rooted historical realities. Even as (with the exception of nonviolent revolution) they have created new dangers, they have laid down new foundations for a world that can move away from violence as the principle arbiter of its political affairs.

Shall we, then, return to the fray with a third round of Wilsonism? Shall we attempt once more to write a constitution for the whole world? We must answer in the negative. It would not make sense to apply twice-failed solution to problems that no longer exist. The entrenched war system defeated Wilson, and it is perhaps the most important of our inestimable advantages that we do not face this monster. Its fall has

opened up new avenues for action. No longer is it necessary, as it was in his time, to put in place a global system of law as a precondition for dismantling the structures of force. The two tasks can proceed along separate tracks, each at its own pace. No longer do we face the impossible task of uprooting the war system in its entirety or leaving it in place. The all-or-nothing dilemma has dissolved. Seeing, just as Wilson did, that by continuing to rely on systems of violence we condemn ourselves to catastrophe and horror, we can adopt his radical goal of creating a peaceful world while remaining at liberty to carry it out step by step. We can borrow a leaf from the Eastern Europeans. Rejecting a choice between accommodation and violent, all-or-nothing revolution, they decided upon the incremental pursuit of revolutionary ends by peaceful, reformist means. Acting on the basis of common principles yet without any blueprint — “in cooperation without unification,” in the phrase of the French sociologist Pierre Bourdieu — they pooled the variegated forces of society to achieve a radical renewal of their lives that in the end accomplished everything that was necessary. A revolution against violence in the world at large today would, in imitation of this process, not be the realization of any single plan drawn up by any one person or council but would develop, like open software, as the common creation of any and all comers, acting at every political level, within as well as outside government, on the basis of common principles.

One day, humankind may organize itself into a true body politic. Perhaps this will be some remote variation on the United Nations, whose hand now lies so lightly on the world; perhaps it will be some new organizational form. That day had not come in Wilson’s time. It has not come in ours. Even as an ideal, the structure of a global body politic remains uninvented. Such a novel object is unlikely to take a familiar form. The need for global political structures to deal with the globalized economy and the swiftly deteriorating global environment is manifest. Yet it would be premature, for instance, to suppose that they should constitute a “world government” or a “world state.” The words “state” and “government” carry too much unwanted baggage from the past. Why should an organization whose purpose and surrounding context would be so different from those of national governments repeat their structures? (The federal tradition is the most promising one perhaps, but no existing federation provides a model.) Nation-states, for example, have been in a condition of unceasing rivalry and conflict with one another and this condition has shaped basic elements of their anatomies. A global body politic, by contrast, would exist alone on earth — a circumstance that must have the profoundest consequences for its character, if only because of the blood-chilling possibility that, if it were endowed with anything like the powers to which existing states are accustomed, it might become repressive, leaving no corner of the earth free. There is a raw freedom in the plurality of states that the world should not surrender easily, or without the firmest confidence that a more civilized freedom can be defended and maintained.

In our new circumstances, the starting point of a world politics based in cooperative power would be not a blueprint for an ideal system of law but the reality that has already emerged on the ground. It is a reality for which there is as yet no adequate name. The word, when it appears, will refer to the power of action without violence, whether in revolution, the civil state, or the international order. I have followed convention in referring to this thing as nonviolence, but the word is highly imperfect for its purpose. “Nonviolence” is a word of negative construction, as if the most important thing that could be said about nonviolent action was that it was not something else. Yet that which it negates — violence — is already negative, a

subtractor from life. A double negative, in mathematics, gives a positive result. And in fact the thing itself, nonviolence, is entirely positive, as Gandhi said. Yet in English there is no positive word for it. It's as if we were obliged to refer to action as "non-inaction," to hope as "non-hopelessness," or to faith as "non-unbelief." It was in search of a solution to this problem that Gandhi coined his untranslatable "satyagraha." Havel spoke, only somewhat less mysteriously, of "living in truth." Arendt sought to wrest the word "power" from its normal usage and turn it to this end. John Adams and Thomas Jefferson who differed about many things — spoke of the power of citizens that flowed from the disposition of their hearts and minds, and recognized that such action was the foundation of all systems of political freedom. I have resorted in these pages to the plain phrase "cooperative power," as distinct from "coercive power."

The agenda of a program to build a cooperative world would be to choose and foster cooperative means at every level of political life. At the street level, this would mean choosing satyagraha over violent insurrection — the sit-down or general strike or "social work" over the suicide bombing or the attack on the local broadcasting station. At the level of the state it would mean choosing democracy over authoritarianism or totalitarianism (although some, such as Jefferson, Arendt, and Gandhi, have hoped for the invention of a political system that would provide more participation for citizens than representative democracy does); at the level of international affairs, it would mean choosing negotiation, treaties, and other agreements and institutions over war and, in general, choosing a cooperative, multilateral international system over an imperial one; at the level of biological survival, it would mean choosing nuclear disarmament over the balance of nuclear terror and proliferation. There is no reason to restrict the idea of cooperative power to individuals acting together. We can, to paraphrase Burke, just as well say, "freedom, when nations act in concert, is power." The choice at each level is never merely the rejection of violence; it is always at the same time the embrace of its cooperative equivalent.

Such a program of action, though lacking the explicit, technical coherence of a blueprint, would possess the inherent moral and practical coherence of any set of actions taken on the basis of common principles. History shows that violence incites more violence, without respect for national borders or the boundaries that supposedly divide foreign from domestic affairs. All forms of terror, from the suicide bombing in the pizza parlor to the torture in the basement to the globe-spanning balance of terror, foster one another. Nonviolence is likewise synergistic and contagious. For just as there is a logic of force, there is a logic of peace — a "cycle of nonviolence." Just as violent revolution creates the conditions for dictatorship, non-violent revolution paves the way for democracy. Just as dictatorships incline toward war, democracies, if they can resist imperial temptations, incline toward peace with one another. Just as war is the natural environment for repression and dominance by the privileged few, peace is the natural environment for human rights and justice for the poor. Consider, for example, the ramifications of the peaceful rebellion against Soviet rule. It was met, as a violent revolution surely would not have been, with Gorbachev's nonviolent, reformist response, which led, however unintentionally, to the end of the Soviet regime, which in turn created the conditions for peace between the Cold War powers. And recall, by contrast, the outbreak of the First World War. It led to the rise of totalitarianism, which led to the Second World War, which led in turn to the advent of the Cold War and the species-threatening nuclear balance of terror. No one planned or could have foreseen these chains of consequences but they

were as sure and real as anything anyone did plan.

A revolution against violence — loosely coordinated, multiform, flexible, based on common principles and a common goal rather than on a common blueprint — would encompass a multitude of specific plans, including ones for disarmament, conventional as well as nuclear; democratization and human rights; advancement of international law; reform of the United Nations; local and regional peacekeeping and peacemaking; and social and ecological programs that form the indispensable content of a program of nonviolent change. To neglect the last of these would be to neglect the lesson that campaigns of noncooperation are empty without constructive programs. Justice for the poor (victims of “structural violence”) and rescue of the abused environment of the earth (victim of human violence done to other living creatures) are indispensable goals. They are already served by a rich new array of nongovernmental organizations and movements, constituting the beginnings of an international civil society. They range from local protest and rebellion by the poor against their exploitation, through movements of protest in rich countries against undemocratic and anti-environmental trade agreements, through nongovernmental organizations, and philanthropic organizations, both secular and religious, dedicated to human rights, the alleviation of poverty, and other causes, to former statesmen still eager to be of public service in the cause of peace (the former Soviet president Mikhail Gorbachev, the former American president Jimmy Carter, and the former president of Costa Rica, Oscar Arias, are notable examples).

Of equal or greater importance is the feminist revolution, itself a part of the much broader democratic revolution of modern times. The public world has hitherto been run by males, and it is clear that, whatever their virtues and vices, their way of doing things has reached an impasse. Experts can dispute whether the unmistakable male proclivity for war is innate or learned, the product of nature or nurture, but one thing we cannot doubt is that historically organized violence has been bound up with the male way of being human — with men’s needs, men’s desires, and men’s interests. It is no less clear that historically the pursuits of women have been more peaceful. Could it be that nature in her wisdom created two genders in order to have a “second sex” in reserve, so to speak, for just such an emergency as the one we now face? There may be a less violent way of doing things that is rooted in female tradition and now will move to the fore, together with the gender that created it.

Peace begins, someone has said, when the hungry are fed. It is equally true that feeding the hungry begins when peace comes. Global warming cannot be stopped by B-52s any more than nuclear proliferation can; only cooperation in the form of binding treaties can accomplish either task. Peace, social justice, and defense of the environment are a cooperative triad to pit against the coercive, imperial triad of war, economic exploitation, and environmental degradation. Lovers of freedom, lovers of social justice, disarmers, peacekeepers, civil disobeyers, democrats, civil-rights activists, and defenders of the environment are legions in a single multiform cause, and they will gain strength by knowing it, taking encouragement from it, and, when appropriate and opportune, pooling their efforts.

Among the innumerable possible specific plans that such a program could entail, I have picked four to discuss here — not because they are in any way comprehensive, or even, in every case, necessarily the most important ones that can be imagined, but because they all bear directly on the choice between cooperation and coercion, and seem to me to be timely, realistic, and illustrative of the unity in diversity that a broad choice in favor of cooperation would manifest. They are a worldwide treaty to abolish nuclear arms and other weapons of mass destruction; a program of

international intervention to ameliorate, contain, or end wars of self-determination on the basis of a reformed conception of national sovereignty; enforcement of a prohibition against crimes against humanity; and the foundation of a democratic league to lend support to democracy worldwide as an underpinning of peace and to restrain existing democracies from betraying their principles in their foreign policies.

A Decision to Exist

In Wilson's day, rejecting violence meant rejecting war — above all, world war. In our time, we must secure not only peace but survival. The menace of annihilation — of cities, of nations, of the species — arguably suppressed the menace of world war, and now we must suppress the menace of annihilation. A decision for nonviolence, in our time, is a decision to exist.

An agreement to abolish nuclear arms and all other weapons of mass destruction is the *sine qua non* of any sane or workable international system in the twenty-first century. Any other attempted settlement of the issue of weapons of mass destruction will clash with other efforts to bring peace, with common sense, and with elementary decency. No tolerable policy can be founded upon the permanent institutionalization of a capacity and intention to kill millions of innocent people. No humane international order can depend upon a threat to extinguish humanity. Abolition alone provides a sound basis for the continued deepening and spread of liberal democracy, whose founding principles are violated and affronted by the maintenance of nuclear terror: "a democracy based on terror" is, in the long run, a contradiction in terms. And abolition alone can, by ending the nuclear double standard, stop proliferation and make effective the existing bans on other weapons of mass destruction. The logic of abolition is the real alternative to the logic of empire.

In practice, abolition means that the eight or nine nations that now possess nuclear weapons must join the hundred and eighty-two that have renounced them under the terms of the Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty. (The four nations — Israel, India, Pakistan, and Cuba — that have declined to join the treaty must do so.) The signatories may also wish to convert the treaty into a Nuclear Weapons Convention, which would take its place alongside the existing conventions banning biological weapons and chemical weapons. At that point, the signatories might wish to merge these three conventions into one, banning all weapons of mass destruction, including any that might be invented in the future. The step would be logical and practical, inasmuch as the means of inspection and enforcement would overlap considerably and would gain strength through coordination.

But won't the abolition of nuclear weapons undo one of the very building blocks of peace that I have named? If the ever-present danger of nuclear annihilation has paralyzed great-power war, won't great-power war spring to life once nuclear weapons are removed from the picture? The answer to the question lies at the root of the nuclear predicament. It is a profound misunderstanding of the nuclear age to suppose that its basic features emanate from nuclear hardware. They do not. They emanate, as we have seen, from the knowledge that underlies the hardware. The number of nuclear warheads in the world can fall and the number of fingers on the nuclear button can decrease, even to zero, without subtracting a single digit from the physical equations on which the bomb is based.

It is the spread of this knowledge throughout the world that guarantees that the war system can never operate on a global basis as it did before. The persistence of

the knowledge — the inherent capacity to rebuild nuclear arsenals, or to produce other weapons of mass destruction — will stand in the way. Let us imagine that nuclear weapons have been abolished by treaty, and that a nation then violates it by, secretly or openly, building a nuclear arsenal and threatening to use it to bully the world. As soon as the threat has been made, scores of other nations, all nuclear — capable, would be free to build and threaten to use their own nuclear arsenals in response, in effect deterring the violator. Not global hot war but a reflation of cold war would be the result. A crude system of mutual assured destruction would be reestablished, and wider war would be deterred, just as it is in our world of large nuclear arsenals. The important point, as always in matters of deterrence, is not that this would necessarily be done (although the scenario has a credibility that many existing ones lack) but that any government would know in advance that such a response was available, and would have every reason to desist from reckless schemes in the first place. The threat would not constitute nuclear deterrence in the classic sense of threatening instant nuclear retaliation; yet it would still be a kind of deterrence.

Abolition, when seen in this cold light, cannot mean a return to the pre-nuclear age, whether one might wish for such a development or not, nor can it rule out once and for all a resurgence of nuclear armaments in some future dark age, whose coming no one can preclude. It does, however, mean that a return to the global adapt-or-die war system is impossible. Abolition, in view of these circumstances, which as far as we know are unchangeable, would be nothing more-or less-than an indispensable though insufficient recognition by the human species of the terrible, mortal predicament it has got itself into, and a concrete expression of its resolve to find a solution. Abolition should not be undersold but it should not be oversold either.

There is thus more continuity between a policy of nuclear abolition and nuclear deterrence than at first meets the eye. It is as if we were saying, Let us take the deterrence theorists at their word that the goal of deterrence has been to prevent war. Unfortunately, we have to note an obvious fact: if you seek to avoid doing something by threatening to do that same thing, you have, at least to some extent, undermined your own purpose. So let us begin to move to a policy in which the “not using” — called by some “the tradition of nonuse” — gradually predominates, and the “threatening to use” fades away. Abolition then would fulfill the promise that deterrence now makes but cannot keep.

If this happened, the deterrence policy of the Cold War years might appear in history in a more favorable light than is now likely. It might then be seen as a system that in effect extracted the violence of the war system of the twentieth century, compacted it into a single world-destroying device, and shelved it — declaring to all: “If you want to use violence, then you must use all of it, so be wise and use none of it. And, just to make sure that you take us seriously, we are actually going to build and deploy tens of thousands

of thermonuclear warheads and place them on rockets on hairtrigger alert.” If followed by abolition, this act of extraction and consolidation would be revealed in retrospect as having been a halfway house to the full transformation of the war system into a peace system.

In this sequence, nuclear deterrence replaces the war system with a threat-of-annihilation system; abolition then replaces the threat-of-annihilation system with a peace system — or, at least, with the necessary foundation for a peace system. For abolition would not in itself constitute anything like a full peace system;³ it would only mark the world’s commitment to creating one. The alternative is that Cold War

deterrence will prove to have been the training ground for the full nuclearization of international affairs — that is, for nuclear anarchy.

Even after abolition, a critical decision remains to be made: whether or not to continue to rely as a matter of policy on nuclear rearmament in the event that the abolition treaty is violated. The nuts and bolts of any abolition agreement would be highly detailed arrangements for suppressing certain technologies — all, of course, inspected to the hilt. The agreement would specify exactly which nuclear-bomb materials are permitted, in what quantities, and where. There will assuredly be an enforcement provision in any such treaty, specifying what it is that the menaced nations of the world are entitled or obliged to do in the event of the treaty's violation. If nuclear rearmament is specified as a response, and technical arrangements suitable for it are provided, then, to an extent, the world would still be relying on nuclear terror to counter nuclear terror. Such provisions would embody what I have called "weaponless deterrence" and the scholar Michael Mazarr has called "virtual nuclear arsenals." If, on the other hand, the treaty bans nuclear arms absolutely, and forbids nuclear rearmament even in the face of its violation, whose remedy is to be sought by other means, then the world would formally and finally have renounced all dependence on nuclear terror for its safety.

The distinction between abolition, which is achievable, and a return to the pre-nuclear age, which is not, is necessary at the very least in order to understand and appreciate the radical difference between Wilsonism, which proposed to replace war with law, and abolition, which more modestly proposes merely to ratify the abolition of great-power war already imposed by the nuclear age, and to improve on this situation by retiring nuclear terror, which never can be utterly purged from human life, as deep into the background as is humanly possible. In practice, it may well be that if abolition of the hardware takes place, this will be such a momentous event morally, politically, and legally that, once some time has passed, and the world has gained confidence in its new arrangement, the deeper renunciation of nuclear terror will not be a difficult step. It would be deceptive, however, to suggest that a world without nuclear arms would be a world without danger, or even without nuclear danger. The risks, including the risk of nuclear rearmament, would be real. It is, rather, by comparison with the nuclear anarchy or the vain attempts at imperial domination that will otherwise probably be our future that the goal is attractive.

The dangers of abolition stem from potential violators of an abolition agreement.⁴ Two concerns have been uppermost — that the agreement could not be adequately inspected and that it could not be adequately enforced. I will confine myself here to a comment on each.

If historical experience is the test, possession of a nuclear monopoly (which a nation would have if it violated an abolition agreement) is much less valuable than nuclear theory predicts. At first glance, it appears that a country possessing a nuclear monopoly would possess an insuperable advantage over any adversary; nuclear-deterrence theory, which teaches that nuclear arsenals can be offset only by other nuclear arsenals, takes this for granted. The matter has already been put to the test several times in the history of the nuclear age, however, and in no case has possession of a nuclear monopoly translated into the foreseen military or political

Advantage — or, for that matter, into any detectable advantage at all. Nuclear powers have repeatedly fought, and even lost, conventional wars against small, non-nuclear forces, without being able to extract any benefit from their "ultimate" weapons. In the Suez crisis of 1956, nuclear-armed Britain, allied with France and Israel, failed to attain any of its aims against nonnuclear Egypt. France likewise found no

utility in its nuclear monopoly in its war against the independence movement in Algeria. Neither did the Americans in Vietnam, or the Soviet Union in its war in Afghanistan, or Israel in its wars in Lebanon and in the West Bank, or China in the border war it fought and lost with Vietnam in 1979. If the only examples were the English, French, American, and Israeli ones, we might wonder whether democracies are constrained from using nuclear bombs by scruples absent in totalitarian regimes. The presence of the Soviet Union and China on the list, however, suggests that other factors are at work. (It's also worth recalling in this connection that the only country ever to use nuclear weapons was a democracy, the United States.)

The question of just why none of these powers used nuclear weapons in these losing wars is not easy to answer. Nevertheless, I would like to suggest a possible reason. Isn't it conceivable that heads of state are reluctant to use nuclear weapons simply because they don't want to kill millions of innocent people in cold blood at a single stroke? This "self-deterrence" may be a more powerful force than theorists have allowed. The moments in which the use of nuclear arms has in fact been seriously threatened have mostly been times when, as in the Cuban missile crisis, two nuclear-armed adversaries were in collision. One-sided threats of use — after the actual use on Hiroshima and Nagasaki — are conspicuous by their rarity. If these reflections have any foundation, then theory has libeled history, and the one clean secret of the nuclear age may be a hidden minimal sanity or humanity in the heads of state who have presided over nuclear arsenals.

However that may be, the relevance to the abolition question of this history is that if six powers, both democratic and totalitarian, in possession of nuclear monopolies, lost six conventional or guerrilla wars against small forces without nuclear arms, then we can hardly suppose that the entire family of nations, having recently staked its security on a nuclear abolition treaty, would stand helpless before a single miscreant regime that, having manufactured a concealed arsenal, stepped forward to give orders to the world. Since a prospective cheater would know that other nations would be fully capable of nuclear rearmament, violation of an abolition agreement could never be a rational plan. Indeed, a policy of one nation bellowing nuclear destruction to the whole world would be plain insanity. To this we can add that if it were done anyway, the world would possess more than adequate means to respond. It is unimaginable that a cowering world would knuckle under to the demands of the cheater. Far more likely, it would react with determination to quell the threat or, at the least, quickly reestablish a balance of terror.

The effectiveness of enforcement is linked to the effectiveness of verification. Verification would include the right of preemptory, unannounced inspection of all suspect facilities. One widely accepted conclusion among experts is that although the discovery of secret facilities for the construction of new nuclear arsenals, which are necessarily extensive, would be comparatively easy under a maximal regime of inspection, the discovery of caches of weapons hidden away before the agreement came into effect — of "bombs in the basement" — would be difficult. Some experts have even suggested that this problem is the fatal flaw in any plan of nuclear abolition. A nontechnical consideration, however, offers reassurance. Any nuclear arsenal, even a hidden one, must not only be maintained and guarded by a large cadre but also supervised by a military and political chain of command leading from the lowest technician up to the head of state. The United States' expenditure of four and a half billion dollars a year on "stockpile stewardship" shows that maintenance of a nuclear arsenal is highly complicated, requiring many hands and minds. There must also be delivery vehicles, plans for mating the warheads to the delivery vehicles,

strategies, military and political, for using the weapons, and strategists to draw up the plans. Moreover, changes of regime, whether by violent or peaceful means, will multiply at a stroke the numbers of people privy to the secret. Many of those leaving office, often unwillingly, may be ill-disposed toward those replacing them and inclined to tell what they know; or else the newcomers may disagree with their predecessors' secret treaty violation and fear the wrath of the world. Few undertakings have ever been more secret than the Manhattan Project, yet some of its most highly classified information leaked in profusion to Stalin's spies.

In sum, it is in the nature of things that, over time, a growing body of people will share the secret of a hidden arsenal, and any one of them can reveal its existence to the world. With every year that passes, this body will grow. As in proliferation, the irresistible tendency of knowledge to spread shows itself — in this case to the advantage of disarmament. Time is the friend of inspection and thus of an abolition agreement. In the long run, the secret of a hidden arsenal would be as hard to keep as the secret of the bomb itself.

Like a nuclear monopoly, the bomb in the basement looks much more dangerous in theory than in the context of politics and history. In both circumstances, the natural repugnance that human beings have for nuclear weapons may have real-world consequences unforeseen in the denatured calculations of nuclear strategists — in the first case, inspiring among statesmen who wield monopolies an unexpected reluctance even to consider using their supposed advantage, in the second inspiring whistle-blowers to reveal activities that, under the terms of an abolition agreement, would be named and understood by all to be crimes against humanity.

All-or-Nothing Again?

Haven't I, though, simply reintroduced the fatal, all-or-nothing Wilsonian dilemma by insisting on the abolition of nuclear weapons rather than, say, their reduction to lower levels, or their reconfiguration in a more stable mode? Could it be that, by demanding abolition, we would be condemning ourselves to the same collapse of an overambitious plan that Wilson suffered? Admittedly, the proposal is ambitious. Yet nuclear abolitionism differs from Wilsonism in critical respects. The war system of Wilson's time was a workable and working machine, tightly integrated into the decision making of global politics, and so able to serve as the "pursuit of politics by other means." This cannot be said of the system of nuclear deterrence that supplanted it. After Nagasaki, no one has figured out how to gain political advantage from using, or even from possessing, nuclear weapons. The nuclear system is far more dangerous and far less useful than the war system was. As such, should be much easier to clear out of the way.

Another difference is that nuclear arsenals, unlike the old war system, can be eliminated step by step. The first steps have in fact already been taken through arms control agreements. It is the unequivocal commitment to the goal, accompanied by unmistakable steps to achieve it, and not the rapidity of its achievement that is most important. To be more precise, the period of implementation must be short enough to persuade potential nuclear proliferators that to build a new arsenal would be a worthless and dangerous expense, while being long enough to inspire confidence among the nuclear powers that inspection and enforcement are adequate.

Notwithstanding the absolutist ring of the word, abolition: not "all," even in the context of the nuclear predicament. Thanks to the indelible character of nuclear scientific know-how, the "all in this matter, however ardently we might desire it, has

been move beyond our reach forever. All we can do in the circumstance is set ourselves against the evil day with the full force of our concerted political will.

It's in the context of a cooperative approach to nuclear nonproliferation that the logic of a cooperative approach to terrorism, nuclear or otherwise, is best understood. Like war, terrorism must now be divided into two categories. Just as we distinguish between conventional war and unconventional war (meaning war with weapons of mass destruction), so we must distinguish between conventional terrorism, using ordinary explosives, and unconventional terrorism, using weapons of mass destruction. Unconventional terrorism — the problem of the small group that wields immense destructive power because it has got hold of one of these weapons — can be addressed only by gaining control over the technology involved. After all, not even the most successful war on terrorism imaginable can reduce the population of terrorists to zero. The rigorous global inspection system of an abolition agreement would be the ideal instrument to choke at its source the danger that terrorists will acquire weapons of mass destruction. Even if such a system were in place, it must be admitted, the problem would not be completely solved. It might still be possible for a group to clandestinely create the needed technology. But the problem might be 98 percent solved, which is perhaps the most that can be hoped for. At each step along the path, the danger of diversion or construction of weapons of mass destruction would decline.

The hope of combating stateless global terrorism of the kind represented by the Al Qaeda network (which must be distinguished from the innumerable local varieties of terrorism around the world) likewise appears destined for disappointment without the creation of cooperative international structures involving the great majority of nations. A global threat requires a global response, and a global response will be possible only if governments work together rather than against one another. Historically, the greatest successes in reducing terrorism have been accomplished by a combination of police action and political attention to underlying causes. There is no reason to suppose that a global version of the largely national efforts would be different.

It is difficult to imagine the United States, acting alone together with just a few nations, will be able to coerce or overthrow every regime that “supports” terrorism or, for that matter, defeat or destroy every proliferator of weapons of mass destruction. The cooperation of governments, not their antagonism, is an indispensable precondition for a successful policy of opposing a) reducing global terrorism of any kind. A cooperative policy alone likewise avoids the danger, posed by the imperial approach, that hostile action, in the Middle East or elsewhere, will widen the pool of recruits for terrorist groups. At the same time, it is the likeliest basis for the political efforts that, over the long run, are the only lasting solution to terrorist threats.

Delaminating Sovereignty

Sovereignty, the conceptual crystallization of the all-or-nothing trap, is, as its first intellectual exegete Jean Bodin knew so well, a bundle of powers forced together under the pressure of military necessity or ambition. That was why at the birth of the concept sovereignty its two inseparable defining principles were complete reliance upon the sword and indivisibility. That, too, was why, the later, popular incarnations of sovereignty, the people, their territory, and the land had to be congruent, excluding all overlaps mixed national populations, collective rights, or divided authorities. Yet long experience with popular government, in the United States and elsewhere, has

revealed that when power is cooperative, rather than coercive — based on action willingly concerted rather than compelled — then, in the domestic sphere, at least, it does not have to be indivisible. It can be federated; it can be divided among branches of government and localities; it can be delaminated.

It was not clear, on the other hand, whether such division could occur in the international sphere. Certainly, division was out of the question as long as the global adapt-or-die war machine subjected nations to its crushing pressure. However, now that that machine has been paralyzed and the pressure lifted, we can ask the question again. And in fact there are already signs of change. In regions in which coercive power, sovereign and indivisible, has yielded, structures of cooperative power, limited and divisible, have flourished. The most striking example is the European Union. Let us recall that sovereignty was first asserted in Europe by absolutist kings as a scythe to cut down the tangled thickets of medieval political institutions, with their dense, overlapping webs of ecclesiastical as well as secular rights, privileges, and duties. Although sovereignty is now defended as the guarantor of the plurality of states, originally it was diversity's enemy. It was the instrument of a radical simplification of politics, reducing the array of political actors to subjects on the one side and a sovereign on the other. The development of the European Union, however, shows that democratic states at peace with one another are now free to create a rich variety of hybrid arrangements, most of them unimaginable under the terms of the choice between a Wilsonian global constitution and the old war system. The E.U., as the former chancellor of Germany Helmut Schmidt has commented, "marks the first time in the history of mankind that nation-states that differ so much from each other nevertheless ... have voluntarily decided to throw in their lot together." The result has not been a simplification of politics. The union's economic and political institutions, which inch forward year by year, are already characterized by a complexity not far from the medieval. They defy analysis on the basis of such simple, clear principles of the recent past as sovereignty, whether of the people, the state, or anyone else.

Formulas for shared or limited sovereignty are also a necessary part of any solution to most wars of national self-determination, in so many of which the requirement of one state for one people on one territory has proved to be a recipe for nightmare. The most ingenious and promising solution is the on-and-off Good Friday accord of 1998, which may one day lead to a resolution of the conflict in Northern Ireland. In the European Union, the absence of conflict made structures of divided power possible; in Ireland, divided structures of power are being used to try to end a conflict — a more difficult challenge.

The Irish conflict, although possessing many singular local and historical features, nevertheless arose out of a dilemma of a kind shared by many other wars of national self-determination. Two neighboring peoples (in this case, the Irish and the English) have a long history of conflict (in this case going back at least four centuries). Between them is a disputed territory, on which their peoples are intermixed. (Northern Ireland, which remained under British rule after Irish independence in 1922, contains a narrow Protestant majority dedicated to preserving the union with Britain and a large Catholic minority of "nationalists" eager to join the Irish Free State.) Similar elements can be found in lands as diverse as Sri Lanka, Kashmir, Crete, Rwanda, several of the former Soviet republics, almost all the former Yugoslavian nations, and Palestine.

The two communities in Northern Ireland appeal to common principles — the right of self-determination and majority rule. The problem is that each has drawn

the boundaries of the “self” that is to be “determined” differently. The Protestant unionists draw a line that encompasses Great Britain, then crosses the Irish Sea and runs around the borders of Northern Ireland. Within that circle, which describes an existing institutional reality, the majority is British and Protestant. The Catholic nationalists wish to draw a line that simply circumscribes the Irish island (including, of course, Northern Ireland). Within that circle, representing the dream of a unified Ireland, the majority would be Irish and Catholic. The two circles overlap in Northern Ireland. If the first circle⁵ is accepted as “the nation,” then majority rule for now dictates that Northern

Ireland will remain part of Great Britain; if the second circle is accepted, then Northern Ireland would join Ireland. The problem is the one that lies at the heart of the separation question: Which groups have the right to form themselves into a body politic, in which a vote of the majority binds the minority? This is the question to which liberal democratic thought, from the time of the American Revolution down to our day, has been unable to offer any answer. Indeed, two of its elementary principles, self-determination and majority rule, seem to be part of the problem. An answer can be found only by dividing the supposedly indivisible — by disaggregating the powers fused in national sovereignty. That is what the Good Friday accord does.

The immediate problem was the savage internecine warfare that broke out between nationalist and unionist extremists in Northern Ireland. The path to a solution could not be found in Northern Ireland alone. It lay, as John Hume, the leader of the nationalist Social Democratic and Labour Party, came to understand, also in London, Dublin, Brussels (home of the European Parliament), and even in Washington, where President Bill Clinton played a mediating role. First, the two outside state parties, the United Kingdom and the Irish Republic, had to surrender any claim to a right of sovereignty over Northern Ireland. The Irish Republic did so by amending its constitution, which had claimed sovereignty over the whole island. Great Britain, to which Northern Ireland now belonged, renounced any “selfish, economic” interest in the territory. That is, if Northern Ireland itself wanted to leave the United Kingdom, Great Britain would let it.

The remaining question was how, if the two outside claimants were ready to surrender their claim, the future national status of Northern Ireland was to be determined. The accord’s answer was “the principle of consent”: the people of Northern Ireland would decide their own future by democratic procedures. In the language of the accord, “It is hereby declared that Northern Ireland in its

entirety remains part of the United Kingdom,” unless, “voting in a poll,” it decides to “form part of a united Ireland.”

These provisions ended the tug-of-war between the United Kingdom and the Republic of Ireland for control over Northern Ireland but left intact the tug-of-war — the sanguinary terrorist conflict — between extremists in the two local communities, each longing for union with a different country. The Protestants, still in the majority (though a dwindling one, as the Catholic population is growing faster than the Protestant), would opt for continued union with the United Kingdom, and also might continue to use their majority power to abuse and repress the Catholic minority. Inasmuch as such repression had been a primary cause of the conflict in the first place, it could hardly be taken lightly.

The accord addressed that problem with several further provisions, among them a plan to include a due proportion of nationalists in the Northern Ireland police force and a plan for political power sharing between the two communities. One important

feature of the latter was an agreement to apportion ministers of the government of Northern Ireland in accord with party strength in the assembly, rather than adopting a winner-take-all arrangement. This provision was a dramatic grant of exactly the sort of collective minority rights that classical liberal democratic theory was unable to approve. It ordained something that has always been a *bete noire* of classical liberalism — “concurrent majorities,” in which overlapping communities each vote separately for their representatives, who then must share power. In the first government under the accord, half of the ministries went to the minority nationalists.

Still another provision established a North/South Ministerial Council to make decisions on matters of mutual concern, such as agriculture, inland waterways, trade, and tourism. Created by legislation passed both in the British Parliament and in the Irish Republic’s Oireachtas, the council includes the Irish Taoiseach and First Minister of Northern Ireland as well as other ministers, and is to arrive at decisions “by agreement of the two sides.” A Council of the Isles was also created to deal with matters involving all of Ireland and Britain.

The parties to the Good Friday accord did not set out to dismantle sovereignty, yet that is what the accord does. We will look in vain in this agreement for power that can be called sovereign. The people of Northern Ireland remain citizens of the United Kingdom, yet they have been granted a constitutional right that the citizens of few, if any, other nation-states enjoy — the right to remove themselves and their land and goods to another country upon a majority vote. (It is a right that the Muslims of Kashmir, the Tamils of Sri Lanka, and the Tibetans in China, to give three of many possible examples, would love to acquire.) They have a clear right to remain British but no obligation to do so. Such a right is, indeed, perhaps the most elementary collective right a people can possess, the right of self-determination, which is the essence of national sovereignty. And yet in Northern Ireland this right, which is in truth a power, is obviously conditioned and limited. It was created by decisions in the United Kingdom, and can be suspended by the United Kingdom, which can restore direct rule over Northern Ireland, as it has done several times in the past three decades. (However, if the people of Northern Ireland once were to exercise their right to join the Irish Republic, England’s power to suspend the government would be at an end.) And although it permits the people of Ulster to define themselves politically by a vote, their options are limited. They are not permitted, for example, to establish themselves as an independent state.

As for the Irish Republic, it explicitly renounced its demand for sovereignty over Northern Ireland, yet thereby gained, through the Ministerial Council, more actual influence over the North than ever before. This arrangement has left traditional notions of sovereignty in the dust, clearing the path, as the peoples involved may decide, for all kinds of incremental, mixed institutions and arrangements for shared power that would be far richer and more nuanced than the bare choice between union with Great Britain and union with the Irish Republic. All the while, the Irish Republic can expect a day when Northern Ireland may of its own volition switch allegiance from the United Kingdom to Ireland by a mere majority vote.

At the same time that the United Kingdom was entering into this agreement, it was devolving new powers upon Scotland and Wales, in the most radical constitutional reforms in Britain of the twentieth century. When we consider that both innovations were occurring within the context of the steadily evolving constitutional arrangements of the European Union, we arrive at a picture of fundamental political transformation at every level of European politics, and grasp that national

sovereignty is now in the process of giving way to new forms in the very Europe in which the concept was born.

The influence of the Good Friday accord, if it succeeds, may extend far beyond Europe. It would be the first peaceful settlement since the end of the Cold War of a war of national self-determination — the first squaring of the circle. The Irish protagonists admittedly enjoy advantages that the parties in other wars of national self-determination lack. Probably the most important is that all the governments involved — the Irish Republic's, the British, and Northern Ireland's operate according to democratic principles. Alternatives to the gun — elections, parliamentary debates, free discussion — have always been available for use and have been used. For example, a gradual shift of the Irish Republican Army from violent struggle to electoral struggle has been one of the keys to progress brought by the agreement. In addition, the two governments in the dispute were willing to renounce their claims in favor of a decision by the people of the territory.

Such a combination of advantages is unavailable in almost any of the world's other many wars of national self-determination, in most of which either one or both of the warring parties is authoritarian or is unyielding in its territorial claim. (For example, India, though a democracy, has never been willing to let the people of Kashmir decide their future in a vote.) Nor would a success in Ireland have much value as a model in the lands of failed states, where the problems are more likely to be extreme poverty, lack of civil institutions, and underdevelopment than to be the excessive, murderous strength of political factions. There are parts of the world where neither violent nor nonviolent solutions offer ready answers, where patience is the better part of wisdom, and amelioration of the worst evils, such as famines, or merely heading off further catastrophic deterioration of a situation, may be the best that outside intervention can provide for the calculable future.

Nevertheless, the value of a successful Good Friday accord as a precedent for resolving wars of self-determination could be real, and the idea of delaminating sovereignty has already been proposed as a component of the settlement of other conflicts. In Sri Lanka, any solution to the conflict between the Tamil Tigers, who have been seeking an independent state in the north of the island, and the government that represents the Sinhalese majority will undoubtedly require some kind of power sharing. Some analysts have proposed that if the Israelis and the Palestinians ever return to a peace process, they may want to provide for dual sovereignty over the holy sites of Jerusalem, where not only national populations but religious buildings of high symbolic importance to several faiths are under contention. The Wailing Wall forms one side of a hill on which the Temple, the Jews' most holy site, once stood but on which the Al Aksa mosque, Islam's second-most holy site, now stands. One might suspect that a mischievous God, by permitting this interpenetration of holy objects, had decided to create, in the medium of architecture, a tangible symbol of the riddle of wars of national self-determination. The question He thus put before us was: How, when you cannot physically separate peoples (or their sacred buildings), can you organize the political world so that each people can be true to its deepest beliefs while living in peace with others? The tangible quandary of the holy sites poses an intangible riddle, which, in the words of the Israeli writer Avishai Margolit, is "How does one divide a symbol?" Precisely because a clash of faiths is involved in Jerusalem, which is a holy land for three religions, a settlement there one day would transcend the Good Friday accord in symbolic meaning.

Delaminating Self-Determination

The possibility of addressing wars of self-determination by delaminating sovereignty could open wider horizons of international reform. The scholar of international law Gidon Gottlieb, for example, has outlined a provocative legal program of surgery upon sovereignty. It would be foolish, he recognizes, to suppose that theoretical breakthroughs can solve real conflicts with long histories. “How ‘relevant’ are mere ideas and concepts,”⁶ Gottlieb asks, “when much blood has been shed and where enemies are locked in mortal combat? . . . The setting for peacemaking in ethnic wars is both grim and discouraging. Political efforts are invariably situated in the context of long and complex local histories of strife, of grievances, and of crimes well remembered. Layers upon layers of promises ignored, broken pledges, and treaties violated form the usual background to new promises, new pledges, and new treaties offered.”

Yet new ideas have a role to play when they are based on new realities in the situations in question. Gottlieb proposes that the two basic components of sovereignty, the nation and the state, might in some circumstances be separated. The problem of mixed populations, he has suggested, might be easier to solve if the international community created, alongside states but separate from them, a juridical status for nations. The individual person would then have available two internationally recognized statuses — one as a citizen of a state, the other as a member of a nation. In this “deconstruction” of sovereignty, the old unity of state, people, and territory would be dissolved. Each of the two statuses would confer rights and privileges but not the same ones. State rights, for instance, might include all the classical rights of individual liberty, while national rights might include such collective rights as the right to speak one’s own language, to control local schools, or to practice one’s faith. Special passports to travel between the states that are hosts to one nation might be granted. One nation then could overlap many states, and vice versa.

Among other examples, Gottlieb cites the dilemma of the Kurdish people, now living under the sovereignty of Turkey, Iraq, Iran, and Syria, in all of which they are more or less embattled. The classic solution to the dilemma, establishment of a sovereign Kurdish state according to the traditional rules of self-determination, would solve the problem for the Kurds but at the certain cost of bloody upheaval in four states and the possible creation of the reverse problem of repression of Turks, Iraqis, Iranians, and Syrians within newly drawn Kurdish borders. Instead of heading down this road, something that seems exceedingly unlikely to happen in any case, Gottlieb proposes conferring his formal national status upon the Kurds, guaranteeing them certain cultural and other rights and privileges within the framework of each of the four states. He proposes similar solutions for the struggles of national self-determination in Cyprus, in Canada (over the status of Quebec), and in Armenia and Azerbaijan (over the contested Nagorno-Karabak and Nakhichevan enclaves).

Delaminating sovereignty entails delaminating self-determination, at least as this has traditionally been conceived. Self-determination, one might say, must yield to self-determinations and selves — determination — that is, to permission for more than one nation to find expression within the border of a single state and to permission for individuals and groups to claim multiple identities — for example, Kurdish and Turkish. As the story of American independence demonstrates, the connection between the concepts of sovereignty and self-determination, otherwise called independence, has been close. Reasoning about the nature of sovereignty compelled the colonists to conclude that the choice they faced belonged in the all-or-nothing

category — either full independence or full subordination to Britain. It could not be otherwise in an age when sovereignty was regarded as the prime attribute of a body politic.

Yet even during the age of the colonial empires, some of the best minds cast side-long glances at middle courses between empire and independence. We have already mentioned the plan that called for replacement of the British Empire by “an association of states endowed with British liberties, and owing allegiance directly to the sovereign head.” Similar in character was the “Galloway plan,” for a “colonial union under British Authority which included a legislative council made up of representatives from the colonial assemblies and a president general to be appointed by the king.” For such plans to have succeeded, either the empire would have had to transform itself into a body based on consent, which is to say into a true federation, or the colony would have had to bow to force. Burke, one of the few Englishmen of his time ready to apply English principles of liberty and consent to the empire as a whole, was also one of the first to glimpse the full difficulty of the task, even in purely intellectual terms. “There is not a more difficult subject for the understanding of men,”⁷⁷ he commented in words that have held true down to this day, “than to govern a large Empire upon a plan of Freedom.”

The difficult subject would arise many more times in the history of modern empires. The French-Algerian crisis of the 1960s inspired the novelist and thinker Albert Camus to tackle another incarnation of it. France had settled a large colony of its citizens — the *pieds-noirs* in Algeria, whose native population began, in the 1950s, to agitate for independence. Camus, himself a *pied-noir*, devised a confederal plan, in which the fundamental character of the French state would change to incorporate Algeria. An Algerian regional assembly representing Algerian citizens and dealing with Algerian problems would be established under a unicameral federal Senate, which would preside over a Commonwealth consisting of France and Algeria, and elect a confederal government. It would mean, Camus explained, the end of the single nation-state born in 1789, and “the birth of a French federal structure” that would create a “true French Commonwealth.” Camus understood, as Burke did, what a profound reconception of the state, called *une et indivisible* in the French Declaration of the Rights of Man and the Citizen, would be entailed in such a plan for a multinational state. “Contrary above all to the deep-rooted prejudices of the French Revolution, we should thus have sanctioned within the Republic two equal but distinct categories of citizens,” Camus wrote. “From one point of view, this would mark a sort of revolution against the regime of centralization and abstract individualism resulting from 1789, which, in so many ways, now deserves to be called the *Ancien Regime*.” Of particular note in our context is Camus’s hope that the new structure might show the way for “the European institutions of the future.”

As Jeffrey C. Isaac, a scholar of Camus and of Hannah Arendt, has pointed out, Arendt had been prompted to think along similar lines in the late 1940s in regard to the establishment of Israel. The problem, once again, was two nations — Palestinian and Jewish — on one soil. She, too, believed that the only peaceful solution to dilemmas of this kind was a confederal one. The alternative was imposition of Israeli rule on Arabs and Arab territory by force. “The ‘victorious’ Jews,” she wrote, “would live surrounded by an entirely Arab population, secluded inside ever-threatened borders, absorbed with physical defense to a degree that would submerge all other interests and activities.”⁷⁸ The accuracy of this prediction does not mean that Arendt’s solutions were feasible. (The fact that one solution fails doesn’t mean the alternative would have worked.)

What is certain is that the hour of the consensual multinational state had no more come in the Middle East in the late 1940s than it had come in England in the 1770s or France in the 1960s. Indivisible national sovereignty remained the rule, and force remained its guiding principle. Not until our day has that hopeful hour perhaps arrived for one or two regions of the world.

Enforcement

In a program whose overall object is to wean politics from its reliance on force, the question of enforcement is obviously vexatious. It's clear, however, that if the international community should ever embark on such a program, enforcement will be a necessary element. The question is what its scope, provenance, and limitations should be. At one extreme is the American imperial plan, which is almost all enforcement — the unilateral right of a single power to attack and overthrow other governments at will. At the other extreme is no enforcement. Somewhere in between is a vision of an international community that fundamentally relies on consent and the cooperative power consent creates, but nevertheless reserves the right to resort to force in certain well-defined, limited circumstances. A nuclear-abolition agreement, for example, would require enforcement in the event of a violation, as would a coordinated international effort to combat global terrorism. Ideally, force would play the restricted policing role it does in a democratic state. I say "ideally," because if an international police force is to be legitimate there must exist an international order whose legitimacy is generally recognized, and this is just what is largely missing in the world today.

In these circumstances — which not even the implementation of every proposal in this book would fundamentally alter, since they do not envision a world state, legitimate or otherwise — there could hardly be a police force acting in the name of such a body to enforce its laws. Yet, as we tackle this question, the advantage of our circumstances over Wilson's are again evident. Because of the war system's demise, we are not in any way required to establish an overwhelming international military force that could impose its will on all miscreants. For excellent reasons, this idea no longer even crosses most people's minds; the only plan remotely like it is the current fantasy of hegemony that tempts American policy makers. And so we are free in the area of enforcement, too, to proceed incrementally. To whatever extent the international community decides to exist — and no further — it can seek to enforce a few selected internationally agreed — upon principles. Such an approach, it is true, would not end war at one stroke, as the League of Nations was supposed to do, but it would close the all-too-familiar demoralizing gap between grandiose rhetoric and trifling deeds — a perennial consequence of the bad faith of good intentions that was the curse of attempts at international peacemaking in the twentieth century.

The immediate need is for a principle defining a task that is achievable, or may soon be achievable, by the international community. One such principle has already been identified: the obligation to prevent and punish crimes against humanity. The concept of crimes against humanity first gained currency at the trials at Nuremberg in 1945, in which the victors of the Second World War held Nazi leaders accountable for the atrocities of their regime. Recently, it has been applied again in legal proceedings in special international tribunals against the former president of Yugoslavia Slobodan Milosevic and against the perpetrators of genocide against the Tutsis in Rwanda. The newly constituted International Criminal Court (I.C.C.), making use of the language of the Nuremberg Charter, has defined crimes against humanity as

acts, including murder, torture, rape, forced disappearance, and persecution, when committed “as part of a widespread or systematic attack directed against any civilian population . . .” The key distinction therefore is between abuses of individuals, which are not crimes against humanity per se, and abuses that occur as part of an assault against a defined group, whether ethnic, religious, racial, or national.

The most historically important of the crimes against humanity—specifically outlawed by the Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide, of 1948 — is genocide, which may be roughly defined as an assault upon the life of one of the earth’s peoples. There has been debate over whether the definition should include only ethnic, national, and racial groups or social classes and political groups, too. If the more expansive definition is accepted, then the definition of genocide will be hard to distinguish from the I.C.C.’s definition of crimes against humanity, and the two concepts would merge.

Why groups, however? Why should the international community concern itself especially with collectivities rather than individuals as such? An obvious pragmatic reason is that if the international community accepted responsibility for enforcing individual human rights, it would in effect have to constitute itself as a world state. The justifications for collective international intervention would be unlimited, since there is no country on earth in which some human-rights abuses do not occur. There is also a legal reason. All positive law is the law of a community. Whereas each national community is a community of individuals, the international community has, so far, been mainly a community of states, whose sovereignty has been guaranteed by international law (including the UN Charter). It therefore makes sense that international law would be especially concerned with states and peoples. When one person kills another, the order of the national community is violated. When a state kills a people, the order of the international community is violated.

Laws mandating international action to set aside sovereignty in the name of stopping crimes against humanity would revise this understanding without throwing it out. The state would still be recognized as the prime international actor, but it would no longer necessarily be recognized in every case as the nation’s legitimate representative. The international community (although not any single power) would assert a sharply limited and exceptional right to judge the fitness of a state to represent its people. Such a recognition would form a natural complement to the revisions of sovereignty needed to settle the wars of national self-determination. In most cases the claims of states, even of repressive states, to represent a nation would be recognized. But when a state perpetrated crimes against humanity upon its own population, it would forfeit its claim to represent them and open itself to international intervention. The right of states to rule in their own territories would cease to be absolute; rather, it would be like a license, valid in almost all circumstances but revocable in limited and extreme cases, to be defined by stringent and well-known principles.

In this shift, the rights of states would not be eliminated in favor of the rights of individuals, thereby opening the floodgates of unlimited intervention; rather, the rights of states would partially yield to the rights of nations — that is, of peoples — whose right of self-determination would remain untouched, and might at times be supported by intervention from without. When Slobodan Milosevic sought to forestall intervention against his genocidal campaign in Kosovo, he invoked sovereignty. In response, the international community could only argue circuitously that his crimes within his own borders were a “threat to peace.” A simpler and stronger answer would have been, “In what sense can you call yourself the sovereign represen-

tative of a people that you are seeking to destroy? Your genocide nullifies your sovereignty.”

Stopping crimes against humanity would be a new vocation for the international community, which has generally looked the other way when such crimes have occurred. Not until very recent times has the concept of collective rights made headway. An enforced prohibition of genocide, based on the conviction that the international community can no more tolerate the murder of one of its peoples than national communities can tolerate the murder of a person, would meet this welcome trend coming the other way. It would be a sheet anchor for the collective rights of peoples. (It is obvious, however, that enforcement even of this limited principle faces large obstacles. It is one thing, for example, to bring the former leader of a small, weak state, such as Serbia, to book for his crimes. It would be quite another to do the same to the leader of a large powerful state, such as Russia or the United States.)

Once established, collective rights might, over the long run, take their place as elements of a grand bargain, a new settlement of the rights, powers, and obligations of the individual, states, nations, and the international community. In such a settlement, the rights of peoples would be increasingly protected by a coherent body of law. Most important, peoples would possess the negative right not to be extinguished. They would possess in addition the positive right to self-determination. This right, while recognized in law, would be guaranteed chiefly by each people's own powers of resistance — powers whose effectiveness were put on such stunning display in the anti-imperial independence movements of the twentieth century — and only secondarily by limited collective assistance from the international community. The right would be understood as belonging, in the last analysis, to nations rather than to their governments. On the other hand, even when thus properly located, it would not be absolute — not be, that is, sovereign.

A commitment to stop crimes against humanity is a natural corollary to a program that demands nuclear abolition, fosters democracy, and delaminates sovereignty. The required shift in principle would look beyond states to peoples, in whom the roots of political legitimacy would be acknowledged. The principle would also apply to the nuclear threat, whereby not only every people but the human species as a whole has been placed at risk of extinction. The doctrine of deterrence, which “assures” the safety of one people from nuclear attack at the hands of another by menacing both with annihilation, is — described without hyperbole — a policy of retaliatory genocide. Adoption of this policy was the destination to which the great powers, once they had failed to agree on the abolition of nuclear weapons in 1946, were to a certain extent helplessly driven by the logic of the war system in which they were entangled. Nevertheless, it is inescapable that carrying out genocide in the event of nuclear attack is the heart of the policy. One of the deepest and most important consequences: of a prohibition of genocide would be a prohibition of the policy of nuclear deterrence.

A Democratic League

Even as the main structures of coercive power are gradually being retired from use, structures of cooperative power must gradually be built up. One of these would be the foundation of a democratic league, designed to foster and build upon the peaceful proclivities already found in the core of the democratic process. It is true that the power of democratic states to promote democracy outside their own borders is, by

the nature of democracy, limited, States cannot create democracies; only peoples can, through their actions and consent. (On the other hand, states are perfectly capable of creating dictatorships, which rule by force over unconsenting peoples.) Nevertheless, democratic states can give assistance to one another or to peoples already seeking to found or preserve democracy. Such assistance would be strengthened by the foundation of an alliance made up of the democratic countries of the world.

The idea first appears in history in the fourth century B.C., when the Athenian statesman Arata, facing a threat to Greece from Philip of Macedon, who was making common cause with autocratic Greek city-states, founded an alliance of the democratic city-states. Whereas Arata's ultimate objective was to win a war, the purpose today would be to preserve and strengthen democracy where it exists, to give it support where it is struggling to come into existence, and, most important, to jointly curb and correct the warlike and imperial tendencies that historically have accompanied the rise of this form of government and forestalled its potential contributions to peace. Such was precisely the purpose of Kant's proposal of a "peaceful union" of republics, which would "gradually spread further and further by a series of alliances."⁹

The main alliances in which the democracies now are involved present an anomalous picture. They are founded on every possible principle but democracy itself. The Clinton administration participated in the establishment of a Community of Democracies devoted to some of these purposes, but, though it now counts 110 nations among its members, it has yet to become a major forum for foreign policy decisions or international policy NATO is an alliance made up entirely of democracies, but its purpose is strictly military. The central obligation of the treaty — to come to the defense of any member who is attacked — depends in no way on the character of the regimes involved. In the absence of the Soviet Union, whose advance into the center of Europe at the end of the Second World War prompted the alliance's creation, the need even for this pledge of mutual assistance is unclear. The only war in NATO's history — the campaign to drive Serbian forces out of Kosovo — did not involve an attack on a member.

The European Union is another alliance made up of democracies. (It was not until 2001 that the Organization of American States adopted a "democratic charter.") Founded originally to foreclose a military danger — recurrence of war among the nations of Europe — it has evolved over the decades into an organization in which economic concerns predominate. Recently, the European nations have been asking themselves what political and military functions the union might also assume. Although the union has led to many remarkable and hopeful political innovations, including the European Parliament, the European Commission, and the European Court of Human Rights, its boldest initiatives, culminating in the launch of the euro, have so far been commercial. In consequence, when the time came for the West to embrace the newborn democracies in Eastern Europe in the wake of the Soviet collapse, the chief consideration was not the strength of their commitment to democracy but the weakness of their economies. Blocked by this economic hurdle from "joining Europe" — a phrase often used in the broad sense of joining the now-democratic system of the West through joining the E.U. — Poland, Hungary, and the Czech Republic took the easier step of joining NATO. Had a democratic league existed at the time, it would have provided all the Eastern European countries with a way to "join Europe" that was appropriate to the new situation (the end of Soviet rule and the foundation of democracy); that was possible (no economic hurdle

would have stood in the way); and that was inoffensive to Russia. Not until 2002 was the decision to invite these countries into the E.U. finally made. A democratic league would also serve to bind the Atlantic community by a tie that really should continue to bind it; namely, a commitment to freedom. The military glue that binds NATO is weakening in the absence of an enemy; and the economic glue of the E.U., although strong, tends in many areas to divide the Europeans from other democracies in the world. A democratic league, on the other hand, would possess a clear, positive, common purpose that NATO lacks — adherence, irrespective of wealth or geographic boundaries, to democracy.

The qualifications for joining the league would of course be observance of exacting standards of democratic governance and human rights. No state that failed to meet the standards could join; any state that departed from them would be subject to sanctions or expulsion. The league's requirements would give expression to the strong interest that every democratic country has in the preservation of democracy elsewhere in the world. The democratic character of all the states involved would also make supranational institutions among them far easier to establish than they are at the United Nations, where dictatorships have equal voice with democracies in votes on human rights. Juridical and legislative institutions of restricted scope could be added to executive ones. The European Convention on Human Rights, which established the European Court of Human Rights, and gives that court jurisdiction over human-rights violations within member states, could be a model — as could the European Parliament, whose members are directly elected, giving limited expression to an all — European public opinion.

The simplest and most obvious direct contribution that such a league could make to international peace would be to pledge to resolve disputes among its members without recourse to war, thus formalizing the historically demonstrated inclination of democracies to remain at peace among themselves. A vow by democratic Finland not to attack democratic India and vice versa would perhaps not be the end of history, yet the creation of a large body of nations in all parts of the earth that, both formally and actually, had renounced war in their mutual relations would provide a powerful example and, over time, perhaps a direction for the world as a whole.

Natural corollaries would be a commitment by the league to support the elimination of weapons of mass destruction, to steadily reduce the sale of conventional arms to other countries, and to devote its resources to restraining or ending wars of self-determination wherever it could.

Far more important and difficult would be a commitment to checking the aggressive tendencies that, in modern as in ancient times, have constituted the brutal, exploitive side of many democracies' relations with the rest of the world. The most serious and lasting contribution of a democratic league would be to choose democracy over imperialism once and for all. In order to be worthy of the name, a democratic league must be an anti-imperial league. Member nations would jointly resolve not to create or support repressive regimes, not to use armed force merely to advance commercial or other national interests, and in general to address international problems on a cooperative basis. A democratic league that sought to keep the peace among its own members even as it fostered aggressive ambitions in the world would destroy its own purpose.

Merely to state such goals, however, is once again to throw into distressing relief the policies of the one democracy in the world that today threatens to make the fearful transition from republic to empire, the United States. It is hard to know which is the greater tragedy — that, as the twenty-first century begins, the United States

approaches the world with a drawn imperial sword, or that it discredits and disables its rich and in many ways unique republican traditions, which, especially in their treatment of sovereignty, offer many useful starting points for the new forms of international cooperation, peacemaking, and peacekeeping that the world so badly needs.

The Unconquerable World

Fifty-eight years after Hiroshima, the world has to decide whether to continue on the path of cataclysmic violence charted in the twentieth century and now resumed in the twenty-first or whether to embark on a new, cooperative political path. It is a decision composed of innumerable smaller decisions guided by a common theme, which is weaning politics off violence. Some of the needful decisions are already clear; others will present themselves along the way. The steps just outlined are among the most obvious.

I have chosen them not merely because their enactment would be desirable. They represent an attempt to respond to the perils and dangers of this era as it really is, by building on foundations that already exist. For even as nuclear arms and the other weapons of mass destruction have already produced the bankruptcy of violence in its own house, political events both earthshaking and minute have revealed the existence of a force that can substitute for violence throughout the political realm. The cooperative power of now tightly woven, as I hope I have shown in these pages, into the life of the world. It has already altered basic realities that everyone must work with, including the nature of sovereignty, force, and political power. In the century ahead it can be our bulwark and shield against the still unmastered peril of total violence.

In our age of sustained democratic revolution, the power that governments inspire through fear remains under constant challenge by the power that flows from people's freedom to act in behalf of their interests and beliefs. Whether one calls this power cooperative power or something else, it has, with the steady widening and deepening of the democratic spirit, over and over bent great powers to its will. Its point of origin is the heart and mind of each ordinary person. It can flare up suddenly and mightily but gutter out with equal speed, unless it is channeled and controlled by acts of restraint. It is generated by social work as well as political activity. In the absence of popular participation, it simply disappears. Its chief instrument is direct action, both noncooperative and constructive, but it is also the wellspring of the people's will in democratic nations. It is not an all-purpose "means" with which any "end" can be pursued. It cannot be "projected," for its strength declines in proportion to its distance from its source; it is a local plant, rooted in home soil. It is therefore mighty on the defensive, feeble on the offensive, and toxic to territorial empires, all of which, in our time, have died. It stands in the way of any future imperial scheme, American or other. This power can be spiritual in inspiration but doesn't have to be. Its watchwords are love and freedom, yet it is not just an ideal but a real force in the world. In revolution it is decisive. Allied with violence, it may accomplish immense things but then overthrow itself; tempered by restraint it can burn indefinitely, like a lamp whose wick is trimmed, with a steady flame. Under the name of the will of the people it has dissolved the foundations first of monarchy and aristocracy and then of totalitarianism; as opinion, it has stood in judgment over democratically elected governments; as rebellious hearts and minds, it has broken the strength of powers engaged in a superannuated imperialism; as love of

country, it has fueled the universally successful movement for self-determination but, gone awry, has fueled ethnic and national war and totalitarian rule, which soon suffocate it, though only temporarily. It now must be brought to bear on the choice between survival and annihilation. It is powerful because it sets people in motion, and fixes before their eyes what they are ready to live and die for. It is dangerous for the same reason. Whether combined with violence, as in people's war, sustained by a constitution, as in democracy, or standing alone, as in satyagraha or living in truth, it is becoming the final arbiter of the public affairs of our time and the political bedrock of our unconquerable world. Z

Notes

1. Scott Sagan and Kenneth Waltz, *The Spread of Nuclear Weapons* (New York: W W Norton, 1997), 44. 344.
2. quoted in James Chace, "Imperial America," *World Policy Journal* (spring 2002).
3. This understanding of abolition as shifting the source of deterrence from hardware to software leaves open an important question. If deterrence survives beyond abolition, aren't we still snared in the riddles and corruption of threatening annihilation to avoid annihilation? Formally speaking, the objection is valid. Abolition so conceived does not purge the "sin" mentioned by Robert Oppenheimer, the scientific leader of the Manhattan Project, in his remark, "In some irredeemable way, the physicists have known sin." What it does do is to back the world across a critical symbolic threshold in the moral and psychological realm (psychology being the whole essence of deterrence in the first place).
4. For a fuller treatment of my views on these matters, see my books *The Abolition* (New York: Knopf, 1984) and *The Gift of Time* (New York: Metropolitan Books, 1998).
5. This state of affairs may be changing, for a surprising reason. To the great dismay of the Ulster Protestants, the people of Britain, according to recent polls, are not eager to hold on to the Ulster counties, and would not mind seeing them join the Irish Republic.
6. Gidon Gottlieb, *Nation Against State* (New York: Council on Foreign Relations, 1993), 50.
7. quoted in Conor Cruise O'Brien, *The Great Melody* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1992), 113.
8. quoted in Jeffrey C. Isaac, *Arendt, Camus, and Modern Rebellion* (New Haven, Conn.: Yale University Press, 1992), 214.
9. Immanuel Kant, "Perpetual Peace," in *Political Writings*, ed. Hans Reiss (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1970), 105.