

A CHALLENGE TO THEOLOGY: AMERICAN WEALTH AND POWER IN THE GLOBAL COMMUNITY

Both the scope of my assigned topic and the significance of this Society leave me apprehensive about approaching this task. Accordingly, I have tried to set specific limits and objectives for this presentation. My purpose is both to indicate the shape of American power (and wealth) in the existing international system and to illustrate the kinds of problems this poses, not for all of theology but for one area: social ethics. Power is a relational term in international politics; American power exists and takes shape within the context of the international system, so my discussion of American power will be cast primarily in terms of analyzing the international system and locating the U. S. position in it. In discussing the ethical issues, a clear principle of selectivity is at work: my intent is to illustrate the types of questions put to the theological community, not to supply a detailed agenda. Within the confines of these limits, I will now address the topic in two steps: first, a discussion of American power within the changing shape of the international system; second, an analysis of three ethical issues arising from the changing system.

I. INTERDEPENDENCE: FATE AND FUTURE OF WORLD POLITICS

The concept of American power and dominance in the globe is tied to the post-war picture of the world. The United States emerged from World War II as the only major participant whose homeland had escaped physical destruction. It also emerged in the post-war period as the primary architect of those political, economic and military structures which we identify with the international system since 1945. Today, that system in many of its dimensions is either in the midst of significant and substantial change or is collapsing under the strain of change. To assess the degree and dimensions of U. S. power and wealth in the world requires a prior understanding of the dynamics of change taking place in the international system today.¹

¹Much of the material to be analyzed in this section of the paper reflects points made by a series of scholars recently: cf. S. Hoffmann, *Gulliver's Troubles*:

The case I will argue here is that we can distinguish analytically three stages of development in the international system since 1945. The third or present stage presents us with a world in which the dominant motif is the challenge of interdependence understood as both the context of world politics and the content of foreign policy. The emerging interdependent system, however, is a product of the first two stages of post-war international politics. Hence it is necessary to sketch the process of development and the U. S. role in it through the three stages.

A. *The Bipolar World*

The post-war international system took shape in the mid-1940's and remained intact for two decades. In the immediate post-war period, power in international politics meant military power, eventually coming to mean principally nuclear power. The structure of power in the post-war world was bipolar, with the two poles being the United States and the Soviet Union. The substance of world politics was dominated by political and strategic issues, with the primary question for each nation being military security. The nature of superpower relations was conceived as a zero-sum game in which a loss for one (territorially, psychologically, militarily) was perceived as a gain for the other; little if any area of mutual interest was perceived by either partner.

In the face of this intensely competitive, nuclear dominated relationship other states were faced with what appeared to be a choice between patrons. Gradually the configuration of the globe became that of each superpower surrounded by a tightly knit alliance in the form of NATO and the Warsaw Pact with the remaining areas of the globe appearing as a field for competition between the East and West. In this nuclear dominated world the range of choice open to allies or other nations in the recently decolonized world was very narrow. Western Europe and Japan were rebuilding their political systems and economic structures with U. S. help in a remarkable manner, but both were totally dependent upon the U. S. security shield and not prone to take any independent action. The new states faced several problems of political organization and socio-economic development. In the fifties and early sixties their posture in world politics was less that of subjects than of objects in the superpower competition.

Or the Setting of American Foreign Policy (1968); S. Brown, *New Forces in World Politics* (Brookings, 1974); Z. Brzezinski, "U. S. Foreign Policy: The Search for Focus," *Foreign Affairs* (July, 1973), pp. 708-27.

The bipolar international system endured several shifts in the balance of nuclear power and some changes in the fortune and fate of each superpower, yet it continued as the basic pattern of global politics for almost twenty years. Beneath the surface of daily diplomacy, however, a process of change was occurring which gradually became visible throughout the sixties. Three dimensions of this process can be identified. The first factor was "the paralysis of power"; the phrase highlights the paradoxical impact which nuclear weapons have had on foreign policy. In the pre-nuclear age it was assumed that every increment of military power a nation possessed could be translated into political influence. The paradox of nuclear weapons is that their employment is so costly to both agent and opponent that they are unusable in any rational political calculation. Hence nuclear possession by the United States and the Soviet Union bestowed primacy in the international system, but also imposed the constraint of extreme caution lest possession be pushed to use.

Complementing the paralysis of power or imposed constraint on the superpowers was the second factor of change: the legitimation of the sovereignty of small states. This legitimation protected the small states from gross or open intrusions by the superpowers, even if it could not insulate them from economic penetration or from being used as pawns in the superpower competition. The third factor of change was the gradual recognition by the United States and the Soviet Union of a zone of mutual interest in their competitive relationship, a series of issues in which both had more to gain by cooperation than by conflict. This perception was catalyzed by the perilous experience of the Cuban Missile Crisis in which the real danger of a nuclear mistake was vividly brought home to both parties.

B. The Pentagonal World

The cumulative product of these factors of change began to reshape the structure of power in the world by the mid-sixties. In the face of the paralysis of power, middle power allies began to take some independent actions: the symbolic cases were de Gaulle's France in the West, and Mao's China in the East. The conceptual picture of the globe moved slightly away from a bipolar image in the direction of a five-power world which sought to recognize the potential and place of China, Western Europe and Japan in the world. The idea of a five-power

world has never captured the allegiance of all analysts or diplomats,² but it has sufficient validity, I believe, to view it as the second stage of development in the post-war system.

The difference between a bipolar view of the world and a five-power world goes beyond the number of significant states acknowledged as actors. In a pentagonal world, power is an analogous term meaning not only military power but also economic and other forms of power. The nature of relationships among the five powers is diffuse and varied. Indeed to understand the pentagonal world which became visible in the late sixties and maintains some validity today, it is necessary to diagram the relationship of the actors in terms of three triangles:³ the strategic, the economic and the moral.

In the strategic triangle, power means military capability, more specifically, nuclear potential. The actors in the strategic triangle are the Soviet Union, the United States and the People's Republic of China. The issues which dominate the strategic triangle are the prevention of nuclear war, arms control, the Middle East and alliance questions (either NATO or the Warsaw Pact). The pattern of relations in the strategic triangle involves a mix of deterrence and detente: deterrence refers to the basis of superpower relations, the mutual capacity for destruction possessed by the Soviet Union and the United States; detente is the political process which probes for relationships of mutual interest among the three great powers, thereby reducing the chance of a strategic mistake. The Cold War relationship of the actors in the strategic triangle approximated total opposition; the deterrence/detente relationship resembles an adversary posture, a mix of cooperation and competition.

²An example of a dissenting voice from the five-power perception of the globe would be that of George Ball, "The Super-powers in Asia," *Adelphi Papers*, No. 91: "East Asia and the World System, Part I," p. 1: "The quality that distinguishes a super-power is not the possession of a particular type of weaponry or a population exceeding a minimum figure but the fact that its leaders think in world terms, exert influence—and deploy formidable power—on all the continents. By this definition—in spite of all the recent chatter about multipolarity of polycentricity—there are still only two super-powers, the United States and the Soviet Union. In political and military terms all other nations must be regarded as essentially regional in their interests and effectiveness."

³Cf. S. Hoffmann, "Choices," *Foreign Policy* 12 (1973), 6ff.; 12ff.

In the economic triangle, power means economic capacity expressed in terms of GNP, position in the monetary system and balance of trade. The actors in the economic triangle are the United States, Western Europe and Japan. The issues which dominate this arena involve trade, monetary and investment questions, along with multinational corporate practices in the industrialized nations. The dynamic of the relationship has produced a shift from an alliance posture in which Japan and Europe were almost completely dependent upon the United States for military security to that of a limited adversary relationship in the economic order in which Europe and Japan are prime competitors of the United States.

The striking difference between a totally bipolar world and a view involving five powers can be seen by comparing the strategic and economic triangles. In any international system the hierarchy of power in the world is one of its defining characteristics. When power comes to be seen analogously, then multiple hierarchies can coexist in the world. By the early seventies China's strategic potential pointed toward the need to include her in any military conception of the globe, but in economic terms she was far from posing any significant challenge to the members of the economic triangle. Conversely, Japan in the economic order approximated super-power status, but did not seek to translate this into political or strategic currency.

One similarity between the strategic and economic triangles is that they both involve power relationships—each actor possesses power. The third triangle as it emerged in the late sixties and early seventies involved relationships of a different order: the dominant character of the relationship was the disparity of power between the loosely described First, Second and Third Worlds. The issues in the relationship involved the general question of how the Third World moved from being an object in the political process to the role of subject through meaningful participation in international decision-making; the specific issues embodied in this general question involved trade relations, commodity prices, the role of the multinational corporations and the impact of the monetary system on developing countries. The pattern of relationships at the end of the sixties continued to manifest a process in which plans and programs for development were failing to narrow the gap between the material prosperity of the Third World in contrast to the First and Second.

Two comments about the five-power world are needed for perspective in this analysis. First, since our concern is U. S. power in the globe, it is interesting to note that even when the exclusively bipolar pattern was expanded to include others, only the United States functioned in all the triangles of power. The pervasiveness of U. S. power in the globe continued in the late sixties in spite of Vietnam, balance of payment problems and a strained domestic economy seeking to provide both guns and butter. Second, although the five-power model of the world is conceptually helpful in understanding how the international system evolved in the late sixties, the model never received sufficient attention because it was overtaken by events. Just as analysts and diplomats were debating whether there were five real powers in the world and what the implications of this pattern might be, the global characteristics of interdependence moved in on the foreign policy process of all five powers, expanding their tasks and complicating their relationships in a new way.

C. *The Interdependent World*

The challenge of interdependence is the third stage of development in the international system since the war. The elements of interdependence did not appear on the scene in one stroke, but have emerged as a series of related trends in the configuration of the post-war world. The reason for the dramatic entrance of the term "interdependence" into the vocabulary of analysts and statesmen recently is that the meaning of interdependence has been crystallized in a startling way by a series of events over the past two years.

What then are the elements of interdependence: what processes provoked it and which events exemplify it? The first trend which contributes to the context of interdependence is what Stanley Hoffmann has called "the displacement of the security dilemma,"⁴ meaning the gradual receding of military security from the center of all foreign policy concerns. This displacement is a consequence of the paralysis of power, of the politics of detente and of the emergence of other factors aggressively competing for the attention of states. Most visible among these new contenders for the status of "high politics" is the economic factor; the increasing interdependence among states in the economic order has made it obsolete to think of economic relations as a sphere outside the foreign policy process. The emergence of the economic

⁴*Ibid.*, p. 5.

agenda, indeed what some authors today call "the primacy of economics" in foreign policy, is the second trend which is both a consequence of and a contributory factor toward the interdependence of the global system.

The third element in the fabric of interdependence is the growing significance of transnational problems on one hand and transnational actors on the other. These highlight the features of interdependence in a forceful way. Transnational problems are those which touch all nations, are beyond the control of any one nation, and require the cooperation of several nations for their resolution. They are exemplified in the subject matter of a series of recent U. N. conferences: food, population, environment, trade, and the law of the sea. It cannot be said that any of these questions are totally new; what is distinctive about them today is the awareness they generate of the need for common action.

Complementing transnational problems on the foreign policy agenda is the rise of significant transnational actors on the global stage. These organizations range in scope and shape from multinational corporations through religious bodies to regional and international agencies. In a recent article Professor Samuel Huntington specified three characteristics which these increasingly important transnational actors share: "First, each is a relatively large, hierarchically organized, centrally directed bureaucracy. Second, each performs a set of relatively limited, specialized, and, in some sense technical functions. . . . Third, each organization performs its functions across one or more international boundaries and, insofar as is possible, in relative disregard of these boundaries."⁵ Such actors contribute to factual interdependence because their centrally directed policies affect several states; they also complicate interdependence because they operate in a manner which many states can neither contain nor control.

The basic roots of interdependence lay in these fundamental patterns of change which have been occurring in the international system for several years. The implications of interdependence took shape with particular urgency after the Middle East War of 1973. In terms of its impact on the international system, the war itself had less significance

⁵S. Huntington, "Transnational Organizations in World Politics," *World Politics* 25 (1973), 333.

than the role of oil in the war and since that time. The use of the oil weapon had the following demonstrative effects: (1) the emergence of OPEC as a cartel with substantial bargaining power and tremendous revenues fractured the neat triangle of First, Second, Third World and also impacted the economic triangle: OPEC is now an economic power and no longer a Third World party; (2) the OPEC model has had political, psychological and economic significance for the Third World. Politically, the oil weapon, originally used in a Mid-East context, has now been incorporated as part of the larger power struggle in the international political economy; psychologically, the self-image among raw material producers has shifted from that of poor neighbors to that of potential powers; economically, other groups seek to emulate the oil cartel with as yet untested results.⁶

The passage from foreign policy as political and strategic issues to include economics, the impact of transnational factors in state politics and the case of oil frame the context of interdependence. Within this context, the structure of the international system and the substance of foreign policy are being transformed in significant ways.

The *structure* of power is redrawn and much more complex than the pattern which dominated the scene for two decades after the war. Strategically, the two super-powers still are qualitatively distinct, but the remaining nuclear states now include India and the future of nuclear proliferation is in doubt.⁷ Economically, the three actors in the economic triangle have been joined and challenged by OPEC. The Third World is now divided into a Third and Fourth World, the latter being forty-two countries of a billion people marked not only by extensive poverty but by extreme vulnerability to other changes in the international system.⁸ In the interdependent system all are dependent but not equally dependent.

⁶For differing analyses of whether the OPEC model can be reproduced cf. F. Bergsten, "The Threat is Real," *Foreign Policy* 14 (Spring, 1974), 84-90; S. Kresner, "Oil is the Exception," *Foreign Policy* 14 (Spring, 1974), 68-83.

⁷For an assessment of the status of the Non-Proliferation Treaty cf. *NPT: Paradoxes and Problems* (Washington, D.C.: Arms Control Association, Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, 1975); also G. Quester, *The Politics of Nuclear Proliferation* (Baltimore and London: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1973).

⁸"The U. S. and World Development," in J. Howe, *The U. S. and World Development: Agenda for Action, 1975* (Praeger Publishers, The Overseas Development Council, 1975), p. 14.

The nature of relationships in the new pattern of power is less stark and clear than the Cold War bipolar posture of two giants in total competition across the globe, with other rivalries subsumed into the competition or subdued by it. The pattern today is that of a series of "limited adversary relationships" involving degrees of both competition and cooperation, but the emerging possibility of more open confrontation must be taken seriously.

In this new structure of power the mix of conflict and cooperation cuts across political, economic and strategic issues. Interdependence means interrelated issues, and one characteristic of foreign policy in the present system is how states can maximize the form of power they do possess to achieve objectives in areas where they do not possess significant means of influence.⁹ Economic power can be used to achieve political goals: the most visible case is the Arab oil embargo during the 1973 War, but the Arabs could have learned the tactic from Western allies—de Gaulle attacked the dollar for political reasons in 1971. Conversely political or strategic capacity can be used to achieve economic objectives: this is part of the U. S. objective in the Middle East—to keep the access open to oil supplies. Finally, political bargaining can be used to achieve strategic goals: China flouts its political rapprochement with the United States to keep the Soviets strategically off-guard.

All of these examples serve to demonstrate Stanley Hoffmann's comment that in the present international system "manipulation of interdependence has become the core of interstate politics."¹⁰ With this baseline as a description of the meaning of foreign policy today, it is possible to assess the significance of U. S. power and wealth in two steps. First, in an interdependent world with multiple kinds of power, the measurement of U. S. power is a more sophisticated task than simply joining our GNP to the numbers of strategic missiles we possess.

The continuing *latitude* of U. S. power is still very significant as demonstrated by the visible presence we have in the strategic and economic triangles. The new *limits* on U. S. power, however, are also significant; in the manipulation of interdependence all the cards are not in

⁹R. Keohane, Jr. and J. Nye, "Power and Interdependence," *Survival* (July/August, 1973), pp. 158-65.

¹⁰S. Hoffmann, "The International System and U. S. Policy Toward Latin America in a Changing World," *Quadrangle* (1975), pp. 83-4.

the U. S. hand. The limits on power are rooted in the conditions of interdependence in the sense that traditional uses of power which used to hurt others now have a feedback mechanism—some uses of power impact the agent as well as the opponent. In strategic terms, deterrence demonstrates the limits of power: no nation can use nuclear weapons without exposing itself to massive destruction. In economic terms, the United States cannot use economic coercion with its industrial allies (as we did with Japan in 1971) without endangering the whole fabric of the monetary and trade systems upon which all depend. Finally, under conditions of interdependence many of the formerly powerless Third World nations are becoming subjects of power; while the margin of direct coercion is narrow for them, they can negotiate from strength in some areas and they seek to expand this capacity.

Secondly, at some point between a conception of the *latitude* of U. S. power and the *limits* of U. S. power in an interdependent world the significant ethical questions arise. The fundamental problem is the ambiguity of interdependence. From one perspective it is a call for cooperation, even community, in the international system; in an interdependent world we need others and they need us. This factual basis of need creates a potential base for significant policy moves in the direction of greater peace and more justice in the international system. From another perspective, however, the conditions of interdependence contain potential for conflict, even chaos, in the international system. Our mutual need means mutual vulnerability; the manipulation of interdependence can mean seeking to maximize the dependence of others on us; interrelated issues can be used as weapons rather than as bonds of cooperation. In brief, the move from material interdependence to moral interdependence is neither a short nor simple step. The step requires both normative wisdom and political dexterity. I seek to examine now, in the context of the interdependent system I have tried to outline, three of the ethical questions which the conditions of interdependence pose for Catholic social ethics.

II. INTERDEPENDENCE: SHAPING THE ETHICAL ISSUES

My purpose here is to highlight the ethical complexity and challenges of interdependence by proposing three prismatic issues for analysis: the notion of sovereignty in an interdependent international sys-

tem; the use of force under conditions of interdependence; the tension between justice and peace in an interdependent world.

A. *Sovereignty: The Status of the Nation-State*

At the heart of interdependence lies a significant challenge to the conception of state sovereignty which has been an assumption of international politics since the Treaty of Westphalia (1648). The notion of the independent sovereign state as the basic unit of global politics has been the foundation not only of the practice of diplomacy but also of the normative doctrine of international law. The prevailing conditions of interdependence call for a more nuanced view empirically and normatively.

In the empirical order significant evidence exists pointing toward the erosion of the sovereign state. In strategic terms the concept of the sovereign state as one which can insulate its citizenry from attack by defensive measures does not function today at the most crucial level of strategy: super-power nuclear policy. The super-powers *deter* each other by a promise of mutual assured destruction; neither can *defend* itself against nuclear attack in any significant way. In economic terms, both the transnational impact of economic policy (e.g., monetary relations) and the scope of transnational economic actors, impinge forcefully upon the ability of any state, however powerful or wealthy, to control its economic destiny. The degree of erosion is not as starkly clear as the strategic example but it is no less real.¹¹ Finally, to exemplify a transnational issue, environmental policy goes beyond the scope of any single nation: no nation can guarantee clean air or water for its citizenry through a self-determined policy pursued in isolation. The purpose of all three examples is to illustrate in the purely empirical order the need to move from a conception of international politics as a series of autonomous states interacting with each other to one of an

¹¹A prominent economist puts the case this way: the model regime which we implicitly use at present—autonomous and purposeful nation-states in harmonious and unrestricted economic intercourse, through the competitive marketplace . . . governed by occasional treaties and conventions to assure good conduct and to iron out modest problems of overlapping jurisdiction, leaving virtually all economic decisions to national governments—is simply not viable in the long run. R. Cooper, "Economic Interdependence and Foreign Policy in the Seventies," quoted in Brown, *New Forces in World Politics*, p. 201.

interrelated system in which an unprecedented degree of collaboration and cooperation is the price of effective policy.

Yet, the erosion of the nation-state does not mean its evisceration; still less does it mean that any supranational structure exists to function in behalf of states. The *erosion* of the state is one theme of interdependence; the other theme is the *endurance* of the state. In spite of the new limits imposed upon it, the state continues to be the basic unit of decision and action in international affairs. The gap between what it is expected to do politically, strategically and economically and what it actually can do under conditions of interdependence is the fundamental problem of foreign policy today. We are in a world of transnational problems, but little if any evidence points toward a qualitative leap toward transnational institutions of action which could supplant the state. Finding ways to live with this structural gap in the international system (how to act effectively with inadequate means of action) may be the crucial problem of international relations in the last quarter of this century.

My purpose today is to stress that the problem is not purely technical or even political: it is also a normative problem, and one which should have a particular appeal for Catholic theologians. The question of the legitimacy and the limits of sovereignty has been a theme of Catholic moral thought since the dissolution of the *Respublica Christiana*.¹² The realist strain in Catholic social thought has accorded the nation-state a substantial but relative value; it has acknowledged that the state fulfills indispensable functions but it has never in theory acknowledged it as an ultimate source of value. This position of legitimizing the nation-state but seeking to link its responsibilities and policies to the larger human community is best reflected in Pope John's *Pacem in terris*. In a sense John's text sets the contemporary *problematique* of the sovereignty question for Catholic thought. This is clear from the fact that he described in normative terms the structural gap between the potential of the nation-state and the scope of transnational

¹²For a sampling of the discussion on the topic of sovereignty cf. O. Gierke, *Political Theories of the Middle Ages*, trans. by F. W. Maitland (Cambridge, 1900); M. Wicks, *The Problem of Sovereignty in the Late Middle Ages* (Cambridge University Press, 1963); J. T. Delos, "The Sociology of Modern War and the Theory of the Just War," *Crosscurrents* (1958), pp. 248-66; John XXIII, *Pacem in terris* (1963).

issues almost a decade before political analysts began highlighting the same gap from an empirical standpoint.

John's statement of the problem, however, was skeletal; the need is to carry forward his basic insight in terms of the specific issues which constitute the fabric of global interdependence today. The normative dimensions of the task can only be sketched here. Fundamentally the normative challenge involved is the task of thinking through the very conception we have of the international system. Hans Küng, Avery Dulles and Richard McBrien, among others, have highlighted the significance of conceptual models in our understanding of the Church. In an analogous manner the task of redefining the notion of sovereignty to fit the needs of interdependence demands a clarification of the conceptual model we use to define the globe and our place in it. It is impossible to go very far in articulating the role and responsibilities of the United States in the globe in light of its power and wealth unless we first have analyzed how we conceive of the basic community in which the United States exists.

Is the international system a series of autonomous units, self-contained and self-sustaining, in search of some areas of interdependent relationships or is the system in fact an interdependent whole which must find a way to coordinate the independent decisions of its units? The conceptual model at work in the thinking of analysts, statesmen and plain people will have significant bearing when they come to evaluate a proposal like the following made by Richard Gardner: "What the world requires now is not more self-serving talk about 'sovereignty' but a mutual survival pact between developed and developing countries in which mutually agreed limitations on the sovereignty of each are undertaken to protect the sovereignty of all."¹³

Anyone who believes that the premises needed to support a proposal like this are readily accepted in the public mind need only look to the recent debate in England about accepting the limits on sovereignty implied by staying in the European Community or look closer to home at the official reactions of our government to developing country initiatives to redesign the operating rules of international economic relations.

¹³R. Gardner, "Report of the Seminar, in the World Food and Energy Crisis: The Role of Institutional Organizations," quoted in R. Hansen, *The Emerging Challenge: Global Distribution of Income and Economic Opportunity*; Howe, *The U. S. and World Development*, p. 161.

The fundamental significance of recasting the notion of sovereignty in light of the larger global community is specified by Seyom Brown in the following way:

The widening gap between the expanding material basis of community and the political structure of world society cannot, however, be bridged by legislative fiat—a kind of world constitutional convention to devise institutions congruent with the patterns of physical interdependence. The resulting structures would be flimsy legal artifices unless substantial groundwork were laid to expand community identity, especially among people who, except for familial attachments, still identify most strongly with a given nation-state. The problem is thus *institutional* in the broadest sense of the term and connotes the structuring of reliable patterns of responsibility and accountability among those whose actions affect one another.¹⁴

Part of the significance of the conceptual model we have of sovereignty is that it determines the categories we use in articulating standards for personal choices and public actions. Our conception of political community (i.e., how far it extends and what bonds of responsibility it implies) determines the structure of our ethical discourse. The debate on U. S. food policy in the face of the world food crisis, for example, has been marked by contending conceptions of what is the nature of the moral problem confronting us. One approach is to cast the food crisis in terms of a relief effort, thereby confining the moral problem to the realm of charity and limiting the scope of inquiry to how generous we choose to be. Another approach casts the same question in terms of social justice, thereby opening up a range of structural questions for analysis, and describing the moral choice in terms of basic obligations to be fulfilled, not supererogatory works to be chosen. The same dichotomy will arise this Fall when discussion of the New International Economic Order takes place at the United Nations. One objective the developing nations have in this debate is to move the whole issue of First, Second, Third World off the terrain of humanitarian charity and concessional aid and recast the issues in structural terms, using social and distributive justice as the categories of analysis. In a sense what is being sought is a redefinition of the rules of discourse and standards of evaluation before specific issues of trade, monetary relations, commodity

¹⁴Brown, *New Forces in World Politics*, p. 143, (emphasis his).

prices and practices of the multinationals are considered. The empirical shift from focusing on aid to discussions of the trading and monetary systems, the structure of political power within which economic relations occur and the rules of practice by which specific cases are decided has a normative analogue in shifting the discussion of moral responsibility in an interdependent world from relief and charity to social and distributive justice.

The strength of recent Catholic social teaching has been its focus on these structural issues (of the political-strategic order in *Pacem in terris*; of the political-economic order in *Justice in the World, Progress of Peoples* and *The Eightieth Year*). The structural discussion in the magisterial social teaching, however, has of necessity been confined to the systemic level. What is needed now is to specify the implications of this structural analysis through the prism of national actors in the system.

The twofold task implied here is first, clarifying the categories of public discussion on these issues (what kind of moral choices are we talking about) and second, engaging in specific case analysis in light of these ethical categories (what is a just trade or commodity policy for the United States toward the developing world).

Fundamental to this task, however, is the need to generate a sense of community, of perceived solidarity and responsibility beyond the confines of the nation-state. This is a multidimensional endeavor encompassing political concepts, psychological images and moral rules. The resources for the task are not lacking in Catholic tradition, but the mining of these resources involves a substantial work of *ressourcement* and reconstruction of some basic notions in light of the factual conditions of interdependence. Pervading Catholic social thought from the medieval period through modern papal teaching is a conception of international community which in its structural elements, shorn of specific historical constructions, is closer to the dynamics of an interdependent world than the inherited seventeenth-century model of self-contained states interacting like atoms in a defined diplomatic field of play. This comparison is not meant to point toward a "Catholic answer" to the complexity of interdependence, only to indicate the possibility of a Catholic contribution to finding an adequate model of sovereignty and community in a world which will contain the former and will require the latter in the foreseeable future.

B. Force: The Old and New Politics of War

Since one of the characteristics of interdependence is the emergence of the economic and transnational questions alongside the more traditional political and strategic issues of foreign policy, a key normative issue is how we relate the political-strategic agenda to the realm of economic relationships. At the heart of this linkage problem is the issue of the legitimacy of using force.

To exemplify the kind of questions emerging from conditions of interdependence, I will examine briefly a proposal made by Professor Robert Tucker of Johns Hopkins University which has generated substantial debate in the past year. In two tightly reasoned and provocative articles Tucker set forth his case for considering a military solution to the oil crisis in the following way:¹⁵ (1) the OPEC measures on oil affect the vital political and economic interests of the United States and its closest allies; (2) in any similar situation in the past the use of force would normally have been one of the options considered to resolve the conflict; (3) the absence of the discussion of force and the assumption that it is an irrelevant policy instrument in this case "implies a revolutionary change in the very nature of international society"; (4) military intervention in the oil producing region is feasible, may be politically necessary, and therefore should be explicitly considered by the U. S. government.

In a more detailed amplification of his position Tucker made three points which are central to the deliberation of this paper: (1) he wants the issue of intervention discussed at the level of normative principle—he does not want to neglect the moral issue; (2) he finds the conditions of increasing interdependence not at all comforting because they are corrosive of the political order needed for international society; (3) it is imperative for the United States, whose interests are threatened by the present character of interdependence, to restore the credibility of the use of force as a means of providing political order for economic relations.

In a penetrating response to the Tucker proposal Professor Stanley Hoffmann of Harvard University, while questioning the whole set of

¹⁵R. Tucker, "Oil: The Issue of American Intervention," *Commentary* (January, 1975), pp. 21ff.; "Further Reflections on Oil and Force," *Commentary* (March, 1975), pp. 45ff.; cf. also R. Tucker, "A New International Order?" *Commentary* (February, 1975), pp. 36ff.

assumptions of the Tucker article, specified two points which are of significance for this normative analysis. Using Tucker's own concern for a conception of world order as a starting-point, Hoffmann challenges Tucker in the following way:

That war may remain necessary as a last resort we all know, even as some would deny even this in the nuclear age. But persons concerned with world order have a duty to indicate with some rigor the circumstances in which the last resort might be envisaged.¹⁶

To complement this proposition Hoffmann goes on to indicate his perception of the emerging order and finds it particularly appropriate for a super-power like the United States not only to refrain from military solutions to economic questions, but to "maximize interdependence, entangle the 'newly rich' countries in the economics of the old ones, give the former an incentive to avoid . . . damaging the latter, and commit the old *and* new rich to improving the fate of the poorest nations."¹⁷

In the contrasting perceptions of these two analyses the ambiguity of interdependence emerges again. For Tucker interdependence is a threat, for Hoffmann if not a promise, at least a beneficial trend in the international system. For Tucker the very mutuality fostered by interdependence requires that the credibility of using force be reasserted and reestablished; for Hoffmann the conditions of interdependence point in the direction of a "renunciation of the use of force to redress non-military measures of coercion" and an increased reliance on "the admittedly slow processes of international institutions."¹⁸

These contending prescriptions frame the larger issue of which reasons (if any) legitimate the use of force under conditions of interdependence. Tucker puts this question to the moralist by seeking to extend the traditional logic of the political-strategic agenda into the realm of economic issues fostered by conditions of interdependence. In classical language, do the emerging conflicts in transnational and inter-

¹⁶S. Hoffmann, "An Exchange on Oil and Force: Robert W. Tucker and Critics," *Commentary* (April, 1975), p. 6.

¹⁷*Ibid.*, p. 6.

¹⁸*Ibid.*, p. 6.

dependence areas constitute a just cause for resort to force? A detailed response to this question is beyond the scope of this paper and beyond the capabilities of one author. The question is one of the challenges which interdependence poses for theological ethics.

In a preliminary response to the challenge I can make only two points. First, I believe there is not only political wisdom but ethical insight in Hoffmann's proposal that we renounce the use of force to redress non-military measures of coercion. The thrust of this proposal is to insulate the new transnational issues from the traditional logic of war and politics. In normative terms Hoffmann's insight means restricting the categories of just cause so that the new agenda of issues is not left open (normatively, at least) to adjudication by force.

It is true that in traditional just war teaching legitimating causes for war extended beyond purely political or military reasons. It is also true, however, that in the nuclear age contemporary Catholic teaching, reflected in Pius XII, Paul VI and *Gaudium et spes*, has severely narrowed the range of legitimating causes of war because of the new conditions of warfare and the possibilities for using other means of redress.

In similar fashion the conditions of interdependence pose new challenges and new possibilities for rethinking the justifying causes for resort to force in human affairs. I think that in terms of calculating the consequences of opening the new issues to the logic of war and in terms of the nature of the new issues themselves, a case can be made to establish a firebreak between the old politics of war (still with us on several issues) and the new politics of interdependence (which, if not conflict-free, is still not identical with past issues). Making such a case would involve establishing a presumption against the use of force, articulating a series of restraints to enforce the presumption and also testing limit cases where the specific situations involved might override the presumption. All of these tasks, of course, go beyond the scope of this paper.

In articulating such a position, one of the specific issues which would have to be joined with Tucker is his conception of political order in the international community. In reading his proposal one gets a sense that he believes the prevailing political and economic order is not only efficient but basically just; hence, when the order is challenged and U.S. interests are affected by the challenge, there is a *prima facie* legitimation for us of the industrialized world to resort to force to defend the existing order.

Without entering the specifics of the debate, I think it is fair to say that the challenges to the existing order grow in part from a substantial conviction among large numbers of the world's population that the justice of the order Mr. Tucker would use force to defend is itself the basic moral question. If one questions the validity of the existing politico-economic structures (as much of Catholic social teaching does), then the Tucker proposal is called into question not only by the principle of proportionality but also in terms of the legitimacy of the cause for which force is being employed.

The normative challenge of establishing constraints upon the use of force and of recasting our conception of sovereignty are similar tasks in the sense that both deal with articulating the constitutive rules by which the reality of interdependence is to be ordered. The basic rules of political order and strategic control are exposed for examination and redefinition only during periods of fundamental change in the international system. In more conventional periods of diplomacy the task involves adapting the rules or applying them; in our day the challenge for ethics, politics and law is to redesign the rules by which the international system functions.

C. Tension of Justice and Peace

As political analysts, ethicists and statesmen seek to construct an adequate framework for realizing the benefits of interdependence and limiting its costs upon each part of the system, a central problem which must be faced is the reconciliation of the need for peace with the demand for justice. This familiar paradigm of political ethics takes on new complexity of scope and substance in the conditions of interdependent international systems. Different dimensions of the problem are highlighted in two cases: the Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) and the Middle East.

In discussing the control of force, I have just argued the value of keeping the political-strategic agenda distinct from the arena of economic relations. The explosive potential of the NPT is that by nature it joins these two dimensions of world politics. The purpose of the treaty is to prevent the spread of nuclear weapons beyond those already possessing them. It is not difficult to recognize that failure to halt the spread of nuclear weapons will seriously endanger global peace, not because the new possessors would be inherently less responsible than

the present nuclear powers, but simply because the chance for miscalculation or miscalculation¹⁹ will be numerically compounded.

The way in which the NPT joins the strategic and economic issues is that many of the non-nuclear states are also developing nations with very strong justice claims in the international economic arena. Among the thirty-seven states which have neither signed nor ratified the treaty there are ten Fourth World states and fourteen Third World countries. If these states cannot find redress through the bargaining process in the economic arena (e.g., through the process symbolized in the debate on the New International Economic Order), there will be a constant temptation for some to seek to increase their bargaining position by threatening "to go nuclear." The Indian decision to explode a nuclear device undoubtedly had several motivating causes; but in a world where nuclear possession sets a state apart as a member of a select group, the attraction of this option for a dispossessed and often ignored state cannot be overlooked.

This perception on the part of a single non-nuclear state is reinforced by the collective perception of the group that the enthusiastic support given the NPT by both super-powers is in fact a shared plan to consecrate their present dominance in an international system which Third and Fourth World states believe functions to their economic and social detriment.

In a sense the normative dilemma of NPT is the converse of the Tucker proposal. Tucker argued for the legitimacy of the capitalist, industrialized states to extend the logic of military power into the economic arena to preserve the existing international order. The non-signatory Third and Fourth World states may be tempted to use their NPT bargaining leverage to restructure the existing order. In a nuclear world neither group would gain from endangering the peace; it is not clear, however, that either group is willing to maintain the peace if the price is what *they perceive* as systematic injustice. The purpose of this analysis is not to argue that both groups have equally valid or equally pressing justice claims. It is rather to say that a central challenge and dilemma of interdependence is the adjudication of justice claims in a world where both the powerful and the dispossessed can threaten the peace in the name of justice.

¹⁹S. Hoffmann, "Nuclear Proliferation and World Politics," in A. Buchan, *A World of Nuclear Powers?* (Englewood Cliffs: Prentice-Hall, 1966), pp. 101-2.

From a different perspective the clash of justice and peace is inherent in the Middle East conflict. On the regional level, the essence of the problem involves a set of conflicting justice claims concerning sovereignty, security and territory. Each party believes it has objective justice on its side; hence the margin for compromise is narrow. No lasting solution is possible unless each party's minimal justice claims are satisfied. Four times in twenty-five years the regional peace has been sacrificed to conflicting claims of justice and rights.

Yet, the clash of justice and peace in the Middle East is no longer simply regional. Each outbreak of fighting now includes the risk of super-power escalation. Hence, the systemic or global interest in peace is balanced against the regional need for justice. While the intensity and stakes of this systemic and regional conflict are unique in the Middle East, the conditions of an interdependent world contain the potential to reenact such a conflict over resources, food, population and distribution of wealth. Learning how to balance regional needs and systemic needs is part of the challenge of interdependence.

CONCLUSION

The role of theology in responding to the challenge of interdependence is broader in scope and more complex in substance than I have been able to articulate in this paper. Describing the full dimensions of the challenge is an assignment for a task force, not for a single speaker. Even within the area I chose for analysis, I have not sought to be comprehensive empirically or ethically. My intention has been to sketch the structure of power as I see it, and to draw forth from that structure some central questions with significant ethical implications for the way in which we understand and deal with interdependence.

Without seeking to propose how other dimensions of the theological task should be structured in light of the conditions of interdependence and the content of American power, I would point instead to the significance of who we are as we pursue this task. In a world of transnational actors and problems, the Church is probably the oldest transnational institution in existence. Each local church as a part of the whole has a distinct task put to it by an interdependent world. The potential for American power to shape interdependence either toward community or chaos is too obvious to stress. What must be stressed is the

importance of the theological-ethical task in determining how interdependence is shaped. The way in which the shaping occurs will greatly determine the chances both for peace on earth and for the development of peoples.

J. BRYAN HEHIR

*United States Catholic Conference
Washington, D.C.*