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DIRECTOR OF CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE

*Air Force*

May 10 '76

*Dear George -*

*Thanks for  
the May 4<sup>th</sup>  
letter and the  
article -*

*I read, with  
interest, the episode  
in your letter about  
Sec. Dulles.*

*Hastily - Sincerely,*

[Redacted Signature]

*John Edgar Hoover  
Air Force*

DEPARTMENT OF THE AIR FORCE  
HEADQUARTERS UNITED STATES AIR FORCE  
WASHINGTON, D.C.



4 May 1976

Mr. George Bush  
Director, Central Intelligence Agency  
Washington DC 20505

Dear Mr. Bush

Enclosed is a short piece on "Intelligence, Morality and Foreign Policy" by Sidney Hook which appeared in the 1 May New York Times - in case you missed same. For the New York Times, it is a rare, wise and philosophically sound piece of work which I am certain will appeal to you.

I don't think Dr. Hook has done too much violence to the Acheson-Kennan pieces on morality and foreign policy. Frankly, I think Hook strikes a keen balance.

It reminds me of an episode I witnessed in The White House years ago. The scene was a National Security Council meeting on the Suez Crisis of 1957 - which was about to explode. Through some superb work by our attaches, the President had been forewarned of the combined English-French-Israeli intentions. Mr. Eisenhower, as I am certain you will recall, had used his advance warning to counsel restraint upon Mr. Eden. The Joint Chiefs of Staff - in three separate reviews - had unanimously come down in support of any aggression which would eliminate the cancer of Nasser in the Middle East. At a crucial moment in the debate over which position the United States should take in the United Nations - John Foster Dulles - arms waving - rushed into the room brandishing a small sheaf of papers and literally shouted at the President: "You cannot permit this to happen. The United States cannot and must not sanction naked aggression - however useful its purpose. For us to stand by idly, without condemning this aggression would be to betray every moral value that the United States has long since represented throughout the world - and especially within the Arab World." Foster Dulles won the day, with the President acknowledging: "You are absolutely right."

Warmest regards

*George J. Keegan, Jr.*  
GEORGE J. KEEGAN, JR.  
Major General, USAF  
ACS/Intelligence

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NYT Article, 1 May 76



NEW YORK TIMES - 1 MAY 1976 Pg. 23

# Intelligence, Morality and Foreign Policy

By Sidney Hook

STANFORD, Calif.—From de Toqueville to Walter Lippmann, democracies have been faulted for their inability to conduct timely and intelligent foreign policies. Nonetheless, it is apparent that in the long run no foreign policy in a democracy can be successful unless it has popular support.

A more serious criticism contends that the likelihood of a successful democratic foreign policy is hindered by its tendency to be naively moralistic. It assumes that what is right or wrong, honorable or dishonorable, in ordinary private life is no less so in the life of nations at peace or war.

Many experts in foreign policy assure us that standards of morality in private and public life are profoundly different. The Italian statesman Cavour, not the worst of the great unifiers, uttered a sentiment most would have approved: "If we did for ourselves what we did for our country what scoundrels we would be."

Our own onetime Secretary of State, Dean Acheson, in an address to those contemplating a career in foreign service, observed: "Generally speaking, morality often imposes upon those who exercise the powers of government standards of conduct quite different from what might seem right to them as private citizens."

Although this is a plausible and widely held view, it seems to me mistaken. It rests on a confusion between moral standards or basic moral values that, if valid, are invariant for all situations in which human beings must act, and the decisions that must be made in specific situations, whether personal or public.

No one moral standard or value by itself determines what action should be taken because when we are in an agony of doubt about what we should do, more than one moral principle or value always applies. Otherwise, we would have no genuine problem or doubt.

This holds in the area of personal relations as in public policy. Because we should tell the truth it does not follow that we should tell the truth to someone intent upon robbing or maiming innocent victims, if not telling the truth will tend to prevent such action.

There are always other values involved. Even in less extreme situations, we may rightly prefer to be kind rather than needlessly truthful if speaking the truth — say, about his stupidity or her ugliness—will result in great cruelty and no benefit to anyone else. It is wrong to steal, but we cannot morally condemn a man who steals to provide for his hungry family if no other means exist to alleviate their plight.

It should be clear that every troubled situation of moral choice is one in which the choice is not between good or bad, right or wrong, but between good and good, right and right, the good and the right. One good may be overridden by a greater good; one obligation by a more pressing one.

Ordinary human life would be impossible if we did not recognize and act on these considerations. Sometimes it involves a choice of evils. It is wrong to kill a human being, but if the only way to prevent him from blowing up a plane or city was by killing him, it would be right to do so.

To be sure, the weight of experience is behind the moral injunctions and ideals expressed in the testaments and commandments of the great religious and ethical systems of the past. But they cannot all be categorical in all situations because they obviously conflict.

Sometimes we cannot be just without being cruel. Reflection is required to determine which is to be subordinate to which. The only absolute is, in John Erskine's phrase, echoing a thought of John Dewey, "the moral obligation to be intelligent" in the choice of that course of conduct among possible alternatives whose consequences will strengthen the structure of the reflective values that define our philosophy of life.

The situation is quite familiar in the area of civil and political rights. The right to know may conflict with the right to privacy, freedom to publish with the right to a fair trial, freedom to speak (inciting a lynch mob) with the right to life. Even the right to worship God according to one's conscience may be abridged if it involves human sacrifice or polygamy. The conflict of freedoms should be resolved by the action whose consequences are more likely than those of any other to further the total struc-

ture of freedoms in the democratic community.

It is when we approach foreign policy that we find great impatience with considerations about moral principles. Palmerston's pronouncement is often cited: "We have no eternal allies or enemies. Our interests are eternal and perpetual, and those interests it is our duty to follow." Agreed. But why should the national interest exclude moral ideals?

Whatever its complexities, it presupposes at the very least national survival. Even on the plane of personal morality, survival, except under extreme conditions, is integral to the good life. In order to be blessed, says Spinoza, one must at least be.

We are not talking about national survival under any circumstances but of our survival as a free and open society, imperfect as it is. If its existence is desirable, to what measures are we committed in its defense in an age where nuclear Pearl Harbors make the sudden death of cultures possible? Certainly not to just any measures regardless of their consequences on basic security and to the character of the society we seek to defend. And just as certainly to an intelligent "intelligence system" that will penetrate the designs of the declared enemies of our society, especially violations of arms agreements. Secrecy on these and related measures is a matter of political morality.

There is no substitute in our time for an intelligence service ultimately responsible to the authorized representatives, political or judicial, of the democratic community.

Firefighters tell us it is sometimes necessary to burn a house, or permit it to burn, to save a village. This does not bestow a license for arson on fools or fanatics. We must recognize the evil we do even if it is the lesser evil. But if it is truly the lesser evil, then those who condemn it, or who would have us do nothing at all, are morally responsible for the greater evil.

*Sidney Hook, emeritus professor of philosophy at New York University, is senior research fellow at the Hoover Institution on War, Revolution and Peace, Stanford. This is adapted from an article in the bimonthly "Freedom at Issue," published by Freedom House, in New York City.*

AF/IN (Maj Gen Keegan)

CIA (Mr. Bush)

DIRECTOR OF CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE

Dave -

Better send  
the attached  
note - as is!

GPB

ILLEGIB

