

# National Peace Essay Contest 2004-2005



## Transitions to Democracy

### **Annual Competition for High School Students**

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*Kuwait and Kosovo: The Harm Principle and Humanitarian War*

## Introduction

The international system has witnessed dramatic changes in the recent past. Developments around the globe and at home challenge us to rethink the role of the United States in the international community. What is our nation's place in this increasingly complex global picture? How do we best promote respect for human rights and the growth of freedom and justice? What can we do to nurture and preserve international security and world peace?

The United States depends on knowledgeable and thoughtful students—the next generation of leaders—to build peace with freedom and justice among nations and peoples. In the belief that questions about peace, justice, freedom, and security are vital to civic education, the United States Institute of Peace established the National Peace Essay Contest to expand educational opportunities for young Americans. The National Peace Essay Contest is intended to:

- ◆ promote serious discussion among high school students, teachers, and national leaders about international peace and conflict resolution today and in the future;
- ◆ complement existing curricula and other scholastic activities;
- ◆ strengthen students' research, writing, and reasoning skills.

## Eligibility

Students are eligible to participate if they are in grades nine through twelve in any of the fifty states, the District of Columbia, the U.S. territories, or if they are U.S. citizens attending high school overseas. Students may be attending a public, private, or parochial school or participating in a high school correspondence program. Entries from home-schooled students are also accepted.

Previous first-place state winners and immediate relatives of directors or staff of the Institute are not eligible to participate. Previous honorable mentions are eligible to enter.

Students may take part in the contest with the sponsorship of any school, school club, youth group, community group, or religious organization. There must be a contest coordinator—someone in the school or community who can review essays and act as the key contact between participants and the Institute. If there is no designated coordinator at your school or organization, you may ask a teacher, youth group leader, club sponsor, parent, or other adult to be your coordinator. It is to your advantage to have someone review your essay before you submit it to make sure it is complete, has all the necessary forms, is free from typographical and grammatical errors, and addresses the topic. There is no formal process to become a coordinator. (See “Information for the Contest Coordinator” on page 7.)

### Coordinators

To obtain a teaching guide on this year's topic, email [essay\\_contest@usip.org](mailto:essay_contest@usip.org) or call (202) 429-3854. The guide will provide useful information on integrating the topic into the classroom curriculum.

## What Do Essay Contest Winners Receive?

Contest winners earn money for their college or university studies. For the 2004–2005 contest, first-place state winners will receive college scholarships of \$1,000. First-place state winners will also compete for national awards of \$10,000, \$5,000, and \$2,500 for first, second, and third place respectively (national awards include state award amounts). All first-place state winners are invited to attend an all-expense-paid awards program in Washington, D.C. in June 2005.



# 2004–2005 Essay Contest Topic

## Transitions to Democracy

Democracy embraces political conflict – the conflict of ideas, competition for power, the struggle for influence. Open, stable democracies like the United States are able to manage such conflict non-violently because of strong institutions, separation of powers, rule of law, civil society, a free press, accountability through regular elections, and multiple opportunities for citizen engagement with the government. For nations in transition to democracy from authoritarian systems or dictatorships, it is a daunting challenge to democratize peacefully. Institutionalizing democratic principles within societies lacking strong institutions can exacerbate conflict and political competition that can rip a country apart.

The process of democratization is particularly difficult when a country is emerging from a conflict. The transition to democracy, in combination with other factors, can often contribute to violent conflict, especially in societies that do not have the capacity to cope with conflict through non-violent means. In some cases, premature elections have promoted politicians who exclusively represent the narrow interests of their own ethnic group or class, thus exacerbating ethnic cleavages and economic polarization. In Bosnia, Rwanda, and Angola, for example, premature elections contributed to the collapse of a fragile peace and heightened internal divisions.

Inclusiveness, equality and reliance upon laws and institutions—rather than on individual leaders—are critical components of democratic societies. Creating the institutions and political culture that support democratic politics requires time and confidence in governing authorities. A slow transition that allows time for developing confidence in new institutions and policies is often necessary for stability. In South Africa and in some Latin American countries, a slow transition led eventually to a new constitution or to new power-sharing political arrangements among the different groups. The experience of some countries is that moving too fast toward democracy is a very destabilizing process. New governments often face expectations of quick results, immediate expansion of political participation, and instant prosperity. Responding to these expectations—or failing to respond to them—may destroy the weak consensus to stop fighting as groups fear they will be excluded from the post-war gains.

**In a 1500-word essay, select two countries—outside of the United States—that have sought a transition to democracy. In one of the cases, a democratic regime emerged; in the other no democratic regime was created. At least one of the cases should be post-Cold War.**

- ◆ For each case, describe the process of democratization. What factors led to democratization? How important were external elements or actors?
- ◆ In each case, analyze whether democratization contributed to a sustained peace or to conflict. What other factors, in concert with democratization, contributed to the resulting peace or conflict?
- ◆ Based on your analysis of the two cases, what advice do you have for the international community as to the proper sequence of actions that would provide for a smooth transition to democracy? What other elements should accompany democratization efforts to ensure a successful political transition that can sustain peace?





Winners of the 2002-2003 National Peace Essay Contest.

## What Do Students Do In Washington?

First-place state winners in the National Peace Essay Contest are invited to Washington for the awards program. This unique five-day program promotes an understanding of the nature and process of international peacemaking by focusing on a region and/or theme related to the current essay topic.

Over a period of three days, students take part in a simulation exercise in which they assume roles of national and international leaders, examine issues, address crises, and then formulate and propose solutions. In addition to such academically oriented events, program activities have included:

- ◆ meeting with such leaders as former vice president Al Gore; Senators Edward Kennedy (D-MA), Trent Lott (R-MS), Charles Hagel (R-NE), and Patrick Leahy (D-VT); Representatives Ralph Regula (R-OH) and Nita Lowey (D-NY); Ambassadors Var Huoth of Cambodia, Kun Woo Park of Korea, Jean Casimir of Haiti, and John Leigh of Sierra Leone; and Supreme Court Justice Byron White.
- ◆ participating in briefings by officials at the embassies of Ireland, Israel, Sri Lanka, Korea, the United Kingdom, Kenya, Cambodia, Ethiopia, Eritrea, Colombia, and Sierra Leone.
- ◆ visiting historical and cultural sites, including the Vietnam Veterans Memorial, Holocaust Museum, Korean War Memorial, FDR Memorial, Capitol, Supreme Court, and Smithsonian museums.
- ◆ attending musicals or plays and sampling international cuisines from some of Washington's most interesting ethnic restaurants.

## Essay Contest Guidelines

Your contest coordinator is responsible for reviewing your essay for grammatical and typographical errors. In addition, although the research and analysis must be your own work, your contest coordinator may review the essay to see that it reflects the essay description above. The text of the 2002–2003 winning essay is included in this booklet for your reference.

## What Are the Essay Requirements?

For the purposes of the National Peace Essay Contest, an essay is a three-part paper that lays out and develops a position in response to the essay contest question. Although researching the topic to find examples that support your points is crucial to writing your essay, it should be more than a research paper, a narrative description of an event, or a statement of opinion.

### Your essay should contain the following:

- ◆ An **introduction**, which introduces the subject and contains an explanation of your position. The objective is to demonstrate that you understand the essay contest question and have formed a response to it.
- ◆ A **body**, which develops your argument using research and analysis. The process of analysis may include comparing and contrasting, differentiating among several ideas or events, critiquing a variety of perspectives, interpreting results, or drawing inferences. In this section, you should analyze two case studies involving transitions to democracy. **Be sure to identify the sources of your information or ideas.**
- ◆ A **conclusion**, which summarizes the research and analysis presented in the essay and sets forth your conclusions. Drawing on ideas already presented, you should demonstrate that your conclusions support the

position you put forward in the opening paragraphs. Your aim is to convince the reader that your position is reasonable and valid.

### Your essay should also include notes and a bibliography:

- ◆ **Reference notes** (footnotes or endnotes) give the sources of your information or ideas. Footnotes are placed at the bottom of the page where the information appears. Alternatively, you may gather all the notes at the end of the text as endnotes.
- ◆ A **bibliography** is a list of the works that you have referred to in your essay or have consulted in order to write it.

Essays that use a variety of sources—academic journals, news magazines, newspapers, books, government documents, publications from research organizations—fare better in the contest.

Citations in the reference notes or bibliography should follow rules given in a handbook such as the *MLA Handbook for Writers of Research Papers* or the *Manual for Writers of Term Papers, Theses, and Dissertations*. Typically an entry will have *at least* the name of the author or editor, title of the work, and date and place of publication. The bibliography should be arranged alphabetically by the last names of the authors.

**Encyclopedias are not acceptable as sources.** Essays citing encyclopedias in notes or bibliography may be disqualified.

**The Internet or World Wide Web should not be the only source for your essay.** Be aware that you may encounter “republished” or “third generation” information on the Internet that is inaccurate or improperly attributed. When citing Internet sources, you must include the following information: author(s), title of work, Internet address, and date information was accessed. Detailed instructions can be obtained from the manuals listed above. For the purposes of this essay, Internet sources should be listed separately from non-electronic sources, such as books, magazines, and newspapers.

### You must:

- ◆ Type your essay, double-spaced, on one side of white 8 1/2 by 11 inch paper with left and right margins set at 1 1/4 inches each. **Your name and your school’s name must not appear anywhere on the essay.**
- ◆ Answer the essay contest question in a well-organized, well-reasoned essay of no more than 1,500 words. Points will be deducted from essays exceeding the 1,500-word limit. The word count includes articles (the, and, a) and quotations.
- ◆ Include standardized citations and a bibliography. (These are not included in the 1,500-word count.) Essays without these elements will be disqualified.
- ◆ Write the essay in English and address all parts of the 2004–2005 contest topic. Essays on other topics will be disqualified.
- ◆ Number the pages of your essay.
- ◆ Include your name, school, and address on the student registration form.
- ◆ Submit four stapled, legible, collated copies of your essay, along with the completed registration form, to your contest coordinator well in advance of the February 2, 2005 postmark deadline. Attach the registration form (one copy only) to the top of your essay copies. Your coordinator will submit the essays to the Institute.

### Your essay may be disqualified if:

- ◆ It is not on the topic.
- ◆ Registration forms are not complete.
- ◆ It does not have reference notes and a bibliography.
- ◆ It uses encyclopedia citations in the bibliography, or relies solely on Internet research.
- ◆ It is postmarked after the deadline of February 2, 2005.
- ◆ It plagiarizes—that is, uses someone else’s statements or ideas as your own.



## How Will Your Essay Be Judged?

Essays submitted to the National Peace Essay Contest in Washington, D.C., are sent to state-level judges—qualified experts selected by the Institute. Using the criteria described below, state judges select winning essays. National winners are selected from among the first-place state essays by the Institute’s board of directors. The decisions of the judges are final. The Institute reserves the right to present no awards at the state and national levels, or to reduce the number of awards if an insufficient number of deserving entries is received. Participants are notified in May of their essay’s status. Please do not call the Institute for information about the status of your essay.

Your entry will be judged by the criteria below.

### Quality of the research (1/3 total score)

Your knowledge and depth of understanding about the issues you are addressing will be demonstrated by the quality of your research. The following questions are provided to assist you in developing the research component of the essay.

- ◆ Have you adequately researched both facts and points of view regarding the topic?
- ◆ Have you examined two cases, at least one of which was post–Cold War?
- ◆ Does the essay analyze whether democratization contributed to peace or conflict and what other factors contributed to this condition?
- ◆ Does the essay suggest a sequence of actions that would provide a smooth transition to democracy?
- ◆ Have you supported your assertions with good examples?
- ◆ Does your essay show that you know the topic well enough to make informed judgments?
- ◆ Are the ideas and information obtained from other sources cited properly?

### Quality of the analysis (1/3 total score)

One goal of the contest is to encourage you to develop your own perspective on international issues. This perspective should be reflected in your analysis of a complex issue and presentation of clear, concise arguments to support your point of view.

- ◆ Have you carefully and thoughtfully analyzed the information presented?
- ◆ Have you examined issues from an original perspective?
- ◆ Have you used critical thinking skills to support your positions and conclusions?

### Style and mechanics (1/3 total score)

The National Peace Essay Contest is designed to promote good writing as well as serious thinking. The clarity of your presentation and quality of your writing will also figure in the score.

- ◆ Does the essay have a clear structure, including an introduction, body, conclusion, and bibliography?
- ◆ Is your essay free of errors in syntax, grammar, spelling, and punctuation?
- ◆ Are your ideas expressed coherently and effectively?

## Mail the Essays and Registration Forms to:

**United States Institute of Peace  
National Peace Essay Contest**  
1200 17th Street NW, Suite 200  
Washington, DC 20036-3011

*All essays must be postmarked no later than February 2, 2005.*

Four copies of each essay must be submitted with the registration form or the essay will not be forwarded for judging. Disqualified essays will not be returned for correction or forwarded to judges.



## **Information for the Contest Coordinator**

The contest coordinator is the key contact between students and the United States Institute of Peace. The coordinator may be selected by the student and can be a teacher, parent, youth leader, etc. Coordinators can obtain a teaching guide on this year's topic that will provide useful information on integrating the topic into the classroom curriculum. Coordinators do not need to contact the Institute prior to submitting essays.

### **The coordinator:**

- ◆ chooses how the contest will be conducted
- ◆ oversees the selection process for essays submitted to the contest
- ◆ ensures that essays are conceived and written by students and represent the students' own thoughts
- ◆ reviews the essays to ensure that they follow the guidelines on pages 4–5, and to check for grammatical and typographical errors
- ◆ signs each student registration form to certify compliance with the rules
- ◆ completes one copy of the coordinator participation form, and submits four collated copies of each student's essay and completed forms to the Institute (see address below)

If you would like more guidebooks or have questions regarding the contest, call the National Peace Essay Contest at (202) 429-3854, fax (202) 429-6063, or e-mail: [essay\\_contest@usip.org](mailto:essay_contest@usip.org).

## **Mailing the Submissions**

All essay packages must contain the registration forms and essays. In order to help us with the processing, please put one copy of the school or organization participation form on top, and place one copy of each student's signed registration form in front of the four copies of his or her essay.

### **Mail the essays and registration forms to:**

**United States Institute of Peace**  
**National Peace Essay Contest**  
1200 17th Street NW, Suite 200  
Washington, DC 20036-3011

All essays must be postmarked no later than February 2, 2005. Four stapled copies of each essay must be submitted with the registration form or the essay will not be forwarded for judging. Disqualified essays will not be returned for correction or forwarded to judges. Essays may be disqualified if they are not on the essay topic, are incomplete, do not have standardized citations and a bibliography, or use encyclopedias as sources in the bibliography.

## Essay Submission Checklist

- Have you made sure that your name, school, or city do not appear anywhere on the essay manuscript?**
- Is your essay no more than 1,500 words long?
- Have you filled in the word-count section on the application form?
- Is your essay written in English?
- Does your essay address all parts of the contest topic?
- Have you given your essay a title?
- Have you scrupulously followed accepted standards regarding attribution of quotations, arguments, and ideas of others?
- Does your essay have standardized citations and a bibliography?
- Are your Internet sources listed separately from your other sources?
- Is your essay typed, double-spaced, with left and right margins set at 1 1/4 inches, on one side of white 8 1/2 by 11 inch paper? (Please do not put essays in binders.)
- Have you numbered the pages of your essay?
- Have you completed the student registration form on page 10?  
(Read the pledge carefully. In signing it, you certify that the essay is your own work.)
- Has your contest coordinator signed your student registration form?
- Has your contest coordinator completed the coordinator participation form? (Coordinators, see page 12.)
- Have you made four legible, collated copies of your essay, including the bibliography?
- Have you stapled each copy of your essay?
- Have you attached your student registration form to the top copy of your four essays?
- Have you made a copy of your essay and the student registration form to keep for your own records?

When all of the above has been attended to, give your **completed student registration form and four stapled copies of your essay** to your contest coordinator in time for review at the school or organization level or for submission to the national competition.



# Registration Forms

## Instructions

The Essay Contest forms are available online in PDF format. You can download your own copy of the Guidebook which includes all necessary forms and instructions.

Once you have opened the Guidebook in Adobe Acrobat Reader you can choose to either:

1. Print the forms and then fill in the blanks either by writing clearly (in English) or using a typewriter.

OR

2. Save the blank Guidebook on your computer and fill out the fields by clicking above the lines which require your information. To advance to the next field while typing in the application just press the “tab” key. After you have filled in all fields, print, and sign the application

PLEASE NOTE: The Guidebook cannot be filled out partially and then saved with the free Acrobat Reader. You can still print the forms immediately after you have filled it in with the free Acrobat Reader. To save completed forms you will need a full version of Adobe Acrobat.





# 2004-2005 Student Registration Form

(Fill in electronically, or type/print in black ink.)

## Student Information

Essay Title \_\_\_\_\_

Ms.  Mr. \_\_\_\_\_

Home Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip Code \_\_\_\_\_ Country \_\_\_\_\_

Grade in School \_\_\_\_\_ Anticipated Graduation Date \_\_\_\_\_

Home Telephone Number \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail Address \_\_\_\_\_ Citizenship \_\_\_\_\_

(Students living outside the United States must be U.S. citizens to be eligible for the National Peace Essay Contest.)

How many words (counting articles and quotations) are in your essay? \_\_\_\_\_

Did you share your essay with others? \_\_\_\_\_ If so, how? \_\_\_\_\_

(Was it published in a school newspaper, posted on a bulletin board, discussed in your youth group?)

**Note:** Publication or sharing of essays is not required.

How did you hear about the contest? \_\_\_\_\_

## School or Sponsoring Organization Information

Name of School or Sponsoring Organization \_\_\_\_\_

Name of Contest Coordinator \_\_\_\_\_

Mailing Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip Code \_\_\_\_\_ Country \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone Number \_\_\_\_\_

## Certification Information

I pledge that this essay is my own work. I agree to abide by all guidelines and requirements of the National Peace Essay Contest. I understand that my essay will not be returned and will become the property of the United States Institute of Peace to use at its discretion.

Signature of Student \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

I have reviewed this essay and found that it meets the requirements of the National Peace Essay Contest. To the best of my knowledge, this essay is this student's own work.

Signature of Contest Coordinator \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

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# Coordinator Participation Form

(Fill in electronically, or type/print in black ink.)

Coordinator Name  Dr.  Ms.  Mr. \_\_\_\_\_

Position \_\_\_\_\_

Name of School or Sponsoring Organization \_\_\_\_\_

Mailing Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip Code \_\_\_\_\_ Country \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone \_\_\_\_\_ Best time of day to reach you \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail: \_\_\_\_\_

Subjects Taught: \_\_\_\_\_

Grade Levels Taught: \_\_\_\_\_

Is this your first time participating in the contest?  Yes  No

If yes, how did you learn about the National Peace Essay Contest or receive contest materials?

Brochure  Web  School  Other: \_\_\_\_\_

Did you use the NPEC Teaching Guide? Yes  No

Comments:

Would you like to receive materials for next year's contest? Yes  No

## Participation Information

Total number of your students participating in writing an essay this year \_\_\_\_\_

Total number of essays submitted this year \_\_\_\_\_

*If the essays were prepared for a class or extra-credit assignment, please provide the name of the class in which the assignment was given. If the essays were for a club activity, provide the name of the club and its purpose.*

General Class Assignment \_\_\_\_\_

Extra-Credit Assignment \_\_\_\_\_

Club Activity \_\_\_\_\_

Please use the space below to provide the Institute with any additional information about how you used the essay topic with your students, club, or group.

(FORMS MAY BE PHOTOCOPIED.)



## Sample Essay: 2002–2003 National Winner

### The Question

One of the age-old questions facing humankind is: when is war justified. Or, put another way, is there such a thing as a just war? Almost no leader will remain in power if he or she risks the lives of soldiers and civilians without assuring them that their mission is just and that of the enemy unjust. Some would argue, however, that many leaders use the language of just principles simply to justify wars they would fight in any case.

Many people believe in the concept of a just war, as defined by these fundamental principles:

- ◆ A just war must be a last resort; all peaceful options must be exhausted before the use of force can be justified;
- ◆ A war is just only if waged by a legitimate authority;
- ◆ A just war must be fought only as self-defense against armed attack or to redress a wrong;
- ◆ There must be a reasonable chance of success; deaths and injury that result from a hopeless cause cannot be morally justified;
- ◆ The consequences of the war must be better than the situation that would exist had the war not taken place;
- ◆ The violence and destruction must be proportional to the injury suffered;
- ◆ Civilians must not be targets of the fighting and great care must be taken to avoid civilian casualties.

Others, however, would argue that the concept of a just war remains very subjective, and still others argue, usually for moral or religious reasons, that war can never be justified.

The principles themselves raise many issues. Are wars just only when fought in self-defense? Wars may be fought to redress an injury to a people or a society, yet it is unclear who determines that an injury has occurred. Also, upon what basis can one establish whether civilians were deliberately targeted or that the violence was proportional? Those who argue for “just wars” believe that the goal of a just war must be to bring about peace, a peace that is preferable to whatever situation would have existed in the absence of the war. How can this claim be substantiated, and who should determine whether peaceful options have been exhausted or the extent to which one party has been wronged?

### In a 1,500-word essay:

- ◆ How did the leaders justify these wars to their people, and to the international community?
- ◆ One of the fundamental principles is that war must be waged only as a last resort after all non-violent options have been exhausted. In your opinion, what criteria determine when the point of last resort is reached? Did either war meet such a standard?
- ◆ Finally, do you agree with the above just war principles? How do the two wars you have cited support these principles, or do your cases lend themselves to other principles? If you think that war is never justified, how would you refute those who make the case for a just war?



# Kuwait and Kosovo: The Harm Principle and Humanitarian War

## Kevin Kiley

GRANITE BAY HIGH SCHOOL

GRANITE BAY, CA

COORDINATOR: MS. RITA PRITCHARD

War causes harm; of this there is no doubt. In determining the justification of war, the question hence becomes: when is it justified to cause harm? The only morally acceptable answer is that causing harm is justified if it prevents further harm. Thus, in general terms, the only justifiable reason to go to war is to minimize harm—if war is the lesser of two evils.

Underlying the issue of just and unjust war is the concept of sovereignty, for declaring war on a nation is a direct violation of its right to self-government. This adds another element to the harms calculation involved in justifying war. Even the United Nations accepts the view that sovereignty has inherent value, stating in a 1970 declaration, “Every state has an inalienable right to choose its political, economic, social, and cultural system, without interference in any form by another state.”<sup>1</sup> Waging war against a sovereign nation constitutes a direct violation of this “inalienable right.”

In determining what circumstances justify violating a nation’s sovereignty, the laws governing the conduct of individuals provide a useful analogy. In *On Liberty*, John Stuart Mill establishes the Harm Principle, a criterion for when it is justified to violate an individual’s sovereignty. Mill writes, “The only purpose for which power can be rightfully exercised over any member of a civilized community, against his will, is to prevent harm to others.”<sup>2</sup> Mill’s aphorism can be taken a step further; it applies with equal force to sovereign nations. Just as an individual’s freedom must be restricted if it harms other individuals, so too must a nation’s freedom be restricted if it harms other nations. This principle, however, does not simply govern the relationship between two warring nations, for today’s complex world is one of political interdependence. With the North Atlantic Treaty Organization, the United Nations, the Arab League, and other alliances, even those wars that are relatively limited in scope are becoming “world wars.” Therefore, in applying the Harm Principle to the realm of nation states, any just war standard must specify what circumstances justify intervention by an international coalition. International intervention in Kuwait and Kosovo illustrate the success and failure of meeting just war criteria.

In 1990, Iraq sent shockwaves around the world by invading Kuwait, its small but wealthy neighbor. Within twelve hours of the invasion, “all of Kuwait . . . was under Iraqi control.”<sup>3</sup> Following Iraqi dictator Saddam Hussein’s overwhelming victory, the resolve of U.S. President George Bush quickly became apparent; he immediately declared that the invasion “will not stand,” that “no nation should rape, pillage, and brutalize its neighbor.”<sup>4</sup> In the five months between Iraq’s invasion of Kuwait and the dropping of the first U.S. bomb, Bush tried to convince the American people, along with the international community, that intervention was a moral responsibility.

At the time of the invasion, the depth of Hussein’s motives was unclear. Was he a power-hungry despot—another Hitler—or was he simply trying to claim the territory he felt was rightfully his? Would he stop with Kuwait, or did he have his sights set on hegemony in the Middle East? While Hussein’s territorial ambitions remained uncertain, there were more tangible consequences of appeasing Iraq’s territorial gains. Western oil interests in the region—and the fate of these interests if Hussein were to gain control of OPEC—were undoubtedly a weight on the scale. Moreover, beyond these utilitarian considerations, the fact remained that Kuwait’s sovereignty had been violated, and according to the Harm Principle, a military response was justified on this basis alone.

When the war was over, the stated objectives of the United States and its allies had been achieved: “Kuwait was liberated, Saudi sovereignty assured, Persian Gulf oil secure.”<sup>5</sup> Given these results, the ejection of Iraq from Kuwait was a just end, but a just end is only half of the just war equation. For a war to be justified, the benefits must outweigh the costs—the harm of action must be less than the harm of inaction. Whether this was possible in the Persian Gulf was a matter of much speculation. As with any war, the loss of American lives was a foremost concern. This

concern led some—including General Colin Powell—to suggest that economic sanctions might be a viable alternative to war. In late 1990, however, it became increasingly clear that sanctions would do little more than starve the Iraqi people. According to a PBS Frontline report, “the CIA was telling President Bush it could take years for sanctions to drive Saddam Hussein from Kuwait.”<sup>6</sup> Furthermore, it also became clear that U.S. technology could enable the U.S. to fight a relatively painless war, one with few U.S. lives lost and minimal civilian casualties. And this optimistic outlook became a reality, as the United States and its allies waged one of the most flawless military campaigns in history. Thus, the Gulf War meets the criteria of a just war: It achieved a just end and minimized harms.

While the involvement of the United States in the Gulf War demonstrates the validity of Mill’s Harm Principle as a justification for war, a key distinction must be made between the principle’s applicability on an individual level and on a national level. The constituent parts of an individual have no inherent worth; it is only the individual himself that is of value. Nations, conversely, are comprised of individuals. Thus, the constituent parts of the nation are themselves valuable. While Mill holds that morality demands the individual be completely sovereign in his sphere—that no just law could prevent him from harming himself—this is not the case with nation states. For if the actions of a government cause harm to its citizens, the sovereignty of the nation and the sovereignty of the individuals conflict. And on this basis, a case can be made for humanitarian war—military intervention that prevents a nation from harming its citizens, its constituent parts.

In the last decade, the most vivid example of humanitarian intervention was the crisis in Kosovo, a “paradigmatic instance of humanitarian intervention in the very name of humanity itself.”<sup>7</sup> There was little doubt, in 1999, that Slobodan Milosevic’s ethnic cleansing of Albanians constituted a crime against humanity. While Milosevic’s actions did not directly harm another sovereign nation, they so egregiously harmed his own people—so “shocked the conscience of mankind”<sup>8</sup>—that international action was deemed necessary. The end of saving Albanian lives was certainly justified. In fact, the moral responsibility espoused by U.S. President Bill Clinton was perhaps even greater than that Bush spoke of in 1990. And aside from war, there existed no viable option for fulfilling this responsibility. The means employed by the Clinton administration and NATO, however, were inconsistent with just war principles.

The history of the Kosovo crisis is replete with “collateral damage” to civilians. According to Jean Elshtain, “once we had exhausted the obvious military targets, we degraded the infrastructure on which civilian life depends.”<sup>9</sup> Largely as a result of high altitude bombing by NATO forces, 2,000 civilians were killed and 6,000 wounded, and countless others would suffer and die because of infrastructure destruction.<sup>10</sup> This “collateral damage” can be directly attributed to the “no-cost” strategy employed by NATO troops, which refused to risk American and European lives even as the welfare of the Serbian people hung in the balance. In the end, this overemphasis on some lives and devaluation of others undermined the moral authority of NATO’s crusade. In “War and Sacrifice in Kosovo,” Paul W. Kahn sums up this contradiction well when he writes of the “incompatibility between the morality of the ends, which are universal, and the morality of the means, which seem to privilege a particular community.”<sup>11</sup>

The incompatibility Kahn speaks of not only caused unnecessary civilian casualties, but also expedited the very atrocities NATO forces had entered Kosovo to prevent. According to Elshtain, NATO attacked Milosevic to halt ethnic cleansing, but “our means speeded up the process, as the opening sorties in the bombing campaign gave Milosevic the excuse he needed to declare martial law and move rapidly in order to complete what he had already begun.”<sup>12</sup> As a tragic consequence, an estimated 20,000 Kosovo Albanians were murdered by Serbs in the first eleven weeks of bombing, compared with some 2,500 people that had died before the bombing campaign.<sup>13</sup> Thus, the just end NATO entered Kosovo to achieve was not merely tainted, but completely undercut by unjust means.

The United States’ crusade to liberate Kuwait, along with NATO’s effort to free the Albanians from the torturous grip of Milosevic, demonstrate two separate, but equally justifiable criteria for waging war. In the case of Kuwait, the Harm Principal criterion was met, as one sovereign nation had harmed another, and a successful war minimized costs. But in the case of Kosovo, a righteous cause was rendered unjust by immoral means. The conflicts in Kuwait and Kosovo demonstrate two situations in which sovereignty can be justifiably violated and illustrate the necessity of just means in waging war.

## NOTES

1. United Nations General Assembly, *Declaration on the Inadmissibility of Intervention in the Domestic Affairs of States*.
2. Mill, *On Liberty*, 9.
3. Smith, *George Bush's War*, 13.
4. Smith, *George Bush's War*, 6.
5. Atkinson, *Crusade*, 4.
6. *Frontline* transcript.
7. Elshtain, "Just War and Humanitarian Intervention."
8. Walzer, *Just and Unjust Wars*.
9. Elshtain, "Just War."
10. Elshtain, "Just War."
11. Kahn, "War and Sacrifice in Kosovo."
12. Elshtain, "Just War."
13. Elshtain, "Just War."

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## Comments on the National Peace Essay Contest

“The eagerness of my students to participate next year as seniors . . . means that they have found something about this contest to be beneficial to them. Yes, they are motivated by the \$1,000+ award, but they are also challenged intellectually by the academic and intellectual demands of the process.”

—**Vinetta Bell**, contest coordinator, Enloe High School, North Carolina

“This program truly motivated me to keep on learning and I thank you all at the Institute for taking the time to help students widen their horizons.”

—**Lilah Sabones**, U.S. Territories (Puerto Rico) winner

“The Peace Essay Contest is a model of the kind of thoughtful, well-run, intellectually stimulating program that can make a profound difference for young people of talent and intelligence.”

—**David and Lucy Hopcroft**, parents of Connecticut state winner

“It was the experience of a lifetime!”

—**Julie Bales**, Tennessee winner and third-place national winner

“I use this contest to give direction to students on the construction of a research paper. I cover MLA form, the basics of research, and correct precis and direct quoting methods. In addition, the class as a whole uses the writing process, as well as read/response groups and editing groups.”

—**Valorie Foy**, contest coordinator, Alliance High School, Nebraska

“I really enjoyed the simulation because it introduced me in a direct way to the processes that international diplomats have to go through to attain peace. This was a unique experience for me that I’ll remember for a long time.”

—**Deverraux Jones**, Florida winner

“More than anything else, the NPEC helped me discover my passion for international affairs. This essay was one of the most challenging pieces I have written, but at the same time it wasn’t a burden to me because I enjoyed the subject and the level of analysis.”

—**Kelly Phipps**, Ohio winner

“The most important thing I learned was from the simulation. I learned the discipline and critical thinking skills necessary for people to work out conflicts. I have a new admiration and respect for those who work day and night to make the world a less violent place.”

—**Angela Allred**, Utah winner

“We use the topic for the term paper project, which is done cross-curricularly with American History. Students discuss the topic in history class and analyze their position in English class, culminating in an essay; challenging but worthwhile!”

—**Dawn Davidson**, contest coordinator, Udall High School, Kansas

“Essay Contest entrants were presented a formidable challenge when they began to study the Essay Contest topic. It demanded that they use all of their resources to prepare the essays. . . . There are not many opportunities for high school students to tackle such an ambitious project.”

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Flat Head High School, Montana