III
IDEOLOGY AND THE LEGAL REGULATION OF THE USE OF FORCE

THE USE OF FORCE IN BLOC SITUATIONS

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My task is to examine the use of force in bloc situations and to discover, if possible, whether there are “rules of the game,” or norms of international law, which govern such use. In analyzing the question, two incidents will be examined in particular—the United States use of force in the Dominican Republic in 1965 and the Soviet use of force against Czechoslovakia in 1968. From a study of these two incidents, as well as others not presently under examination, it appears that a pattern is developing.

It will be necessary in this context to employ the word “intervention” frequently; hence, it should be mentioned at the outset that the word “intervention” will be used to describe the phenomenon of international life in which a state sends military men and materiel across another state’s boundaries.1 This use of the word is not to imply that intervention of this nature is the only kind that exists or matters; rather, it implies that such intervention is the only kind congruent with the use of force in bloc situations. This type of intervention is not only the most traumatic for the international system, but illustrates with the greatest lucidity and forcefulness what appears to be the development of a rule governing the use of force in bloc situations.

Since the Second World War, both the Soviet Union and the United States have engaged in intervention on a somewhat continual basis. Many different methods of intervention, including economic aid, subversion, propaganda, nonrecognition, expression of moral support, as well as direct military assault, have been implemented at one time or another. In accordance with its own interests and ideological commitments, each of the two nations has cast opprobrium on the other for

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1One author has defined intervention as “the attempt by one state to affect the internal structure and external behavior of other states through various degrees of coercion . . . .” Beloff, Reflections on Intervention, 22 J. INT’L AFF. 198 (1968).
engaging in the "shameful and illegal" practice of intervention, thus equating all intervention with immorality. The Soviet Union, in American eyes, has used unwarranted pressures to install and maintain regimes which free peoples repudiate. From the Soviet viewpoint, the United States has practiced intervention, even to the extent of using military force, to support or restore "reactionary" regimes and to retard the progressive course of history. It must be recognized that the two superpowers presently are doing no more than nations before them have done throughout the course of history. The posture of each is sound in the sense that it is unreasonable in the light of history to suggest that a great power should not use its strength to further the cause it has at heart—its so-called national interest. However, wanton use of power for the furtherance of whimsical pursuits of national interests is disturbingly dangerous, and one could not, without difficulty, defend the use of power in such a pattern as serving the best interest of either the intervening power or the host state.2

The present speaker has recently completed an analysis in which he contends that distinct types of forceful intervention clearly emerge.3 That clearly defined political patterns are emerging with respect to the use of force, however, does not necessarily mean that there is currently a clearly developed system of international law on the subject. Political patterns nevertheless tend to translate themselves into norms of law, and a study of the political patterns may help us identify the future legal norms governing the use of force.

The real world is one in which sovereignty and the closely related doctrine of nonintervention are beginning to undergo transformation. To view, in the seventh decade of the twentieth century, the nation-state as independent, self-sufficient, and owing obedience to no other community is not only unrealistic, but dangerous folly. The doctrine of nonintervention is in serious need of reevaluation. Nations in positions of leadership find it difficult to observe, because they cannot do so and at the same time expect to offer leadership.4 This is especially true in bloc situations, as will be shown in the following analysis.

2In this connection, Beloff speaks of the law of "comparative risk": "[I]t is unwise to intervene where the risk involved entails an even greater evil than the one the intervention is intended to prevent." Id. at 202.


United States Intervention in the Dominican Republic (1965)

United States Marines landed at Santo Domingo on April 28, 1965. Justification for the action was based on the need to protect the lives of American and foreign nationals. The "Three Colonels," whose claims to be the legitimate government of the Republic were somewhat ambiguous, found their forces hard put in battle and sent word to Washington that they were no longer able to protect Americans and other foreign nationals. At that juncture the United States dispatched Marines and claimed that intervention was justified on humanitarian grounds, a claim which for a considerable period of time has enjoyed legitimacy.

A few days later, after most Americans and other foreign nationals had been evacuated, a further justification was required for the continued deployment of American Forces. It was claimed that that which had begun as a democratic revolution had fallen into the hands of communist conspirators and that American troops were needed to prevent a communist take-over.

Still later, another justification was introduced, which, for purposes of this paper, was much more informative. It was asserted that the action of the United States in sending military forces into the Dominican Republic was designed to implement the resolutions of the Organization of American States (O.A.S.) and to permit the situation in the Dominican Republic to be dealt with on a regional basis. The Tenth Meeting of the Consultation of the O.A.S. ratified this claim despite a vigorous challenge on the grounds that it was ex post facto. At the same time, the O.A.S. established an Inter-American Peace Force amidst criticism that the forces composing it were primarily from the United States.

Some who accepted the action of the United States Marines as essentially regional were critical of the failure on the part of the United States or the O.A.S. to abide by the requirements of article 53 of the United Nations Charter, which in essence forbids regional enforcement action except under the authority of the United Nations. But Leonard Meeker, Legal Adviser for the Department of State, offered a rebuttal to that

\[^{1}\text{For an informative background on the political situation in the Dominican Republic during the several months preceding the intervention by the United States, see R. Barnet, Intervention and Revolution 153-80 (1968).}\]

\[^{2}\text{Leonard Meeker, Legal Adviser for the Department of State, considered that articles 15 and 17 of the O.A.S. Charter forbidding intervention did not prevent the use of United States troops in the Dominican Republic for humanitarian purposes. See Meeker, The Dominican Situation in the Perspective of International Law, 53 Dept State Bull. 60 (1965).}\]

\[^{3}\text{See Draper, The Dominican Crisis, 40 Commentary 33, 37 (Dec. 1965).}\]

position. He said, “There should be no doctrinaire assumption that the United Nations and its Security Council are the exclusive guardians of world peace. In fact, the United Nations and the OAS,” he continued, “are mutually reinforcing.”

**THE AMERICAN FORMULATION OF THE RULE ON THE USE OF FORCE IN BLOC SITUATIONS: THE JOHNSON DOCTRINE**

Professor Richard Barnet ends his otherwise perceptive chapter on the Dominican intervention by quoting a paragraph from President Johnson’s Baylor University speech of 1965:

> The first reality is that old concepts and old labels are largely obsolete. In today’s world, with enemies of freedom talking about “Wars of national liberation,” the old distinction between “Civil War” and “International War” has already lost much of its meaning. . . . The moment of decision must become the moment of action.

Professor Barnet then makes the observation that “[t]his is the essence of the Johnson Doctrine—a virtually unlimited claim for legitimacy for armed intervention in civil strife.” This is hardly a realistic assessment of President Johnson’s intentions or of the realities of American foreign policy.

A close examination of the President’s speech shows a much more narrow claim than Barnet’s analysis would imply. The President was asserting the right of a bloc leader to use force on behalf of the bloc in intrabloc situations. The doctrinal defense for bloc interventions was enunciated by President Johnson in the same speech referred to by Barnet some four weeks after United States military intervention in the Dominican Republic. The President pointed out that the United States was a member of the O.A.S. and in that capacity had assumed a common responsibility for dealing with communist infiltration into the Western Hemisphere. The United States acted unilaterally because of time pressures, but it acted on behalf of the O.A.S., and it later invited troops from other O.A.S. nations to join the action. The President saw significance in the fact that “for the first time in the history of the Organization of American States [it] . . . sent to the soil of an American nation an international peacekeeping military force.”

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9Meeker, supra note 6.
10BARNET, supra note 5 at 181.
11The text of the President’s speech is reprinted in N.Y. Times, May 29, 1965, at 2, col. 2.
of bloc requirements. A basic bloc requirement, as set forth in the Punte del Este Resolution, was that there shall be no communist take-over in the Western Hemisphere. The President assured the Dominican people that "we intend to work for self-determination of the peoples of the Americas within the framework of freedom." 12

When the Security Council considered the Dominican situation in July 1965, 13 the Soviet Union denied the validity of all claims put forward by the United States. The Soviets charged the United States with flagrant violation of articles 2(4) and 53 of the United Nations Charter. The claim of the United States that it acted on behalf of and for the interests of the O.A.S. was also attacked by the Soviets, who argued that article 34 of the Charter places responsibility for the maintenance of peace in the hands of the Security Council. According to article 30, it was contended, the Security Council is also the only organ competent to determine the existence of a threat to the peace and the measures to be taken in response thereto.

The Soviets also argued that article 51 was applicable only if there is an armed attack against a member of the Organization and if the Security Council has not acted. It was further the Soviet position that the situation in the Dominican Republic did not fall within the provisions of article 51. 14 Even among American scholars there was disagreement on whether or not United States action in the Dominican Republic was in the interest of peacekeeping, as the U.S. claimed, or was enforcement action, as charged by the Russians, and thus subject to the U.N. Charter provisions and restraints. This disagreement cannot be settled conclusively since there is neither a third-party procedure for assessing the facts nor, for that matter, any clear distinction between peacekeeping and enforcement. 15

Despite the strong objections raised by the Soviets and the heated rhetoric which they used to indict the United States for violations of Charter provisions, the lesson to be learned from the American use of regional authority as justification for the use of force in bloc situations was not lost. Reliance on regional support had not been available to the Soviets during the Hungarian revolt of 1956, but they had learned the

12Id.
15For a discussion of this point and an attempt to set up a definition which would aid in making a distinction, see Moore, The Role of Regional Arrangements in the Maintenance of World Order, in 3 The Future of the International Legal Order: Conflict Management (C. Black & R. Falk ed. 1970).
Dominican lesson well by the time of their decision to use force in Czechoslovakia in 1968.

THE BREZHNEV DOCTRINE ON BLOC INTERVENTION

The facts of the Soviet invasion of Czechoslovakia in 1968 are too well known to need elaboration here. Soviet justification turned on a socialist definition of self-determination, which permitted that principle to be applied only within the context of socialism. The U.S.S.R. had already demonstrated its unwillingness to permit a bloc nation to deviate from the bloc when in 1956 it intervened and prevented Hungary from taking a neutralist stance. A decade after the Hungarian crisis, Czechoslovakia showed signs of being attracted by overtures of the West, made especially appealing by promises of economic prosperity and more political freedom.

In the fall of 1967, Czechoslovakian students protested and demanded reforms within the state, including more autonomy from Russia. President Antonin Novotny was forced out of office by popular discontent, and Alexander Dubcek was elected to fill Novotny's position as Communist Party Secretary. Various measures were taken by the Russians to warn the Czechoslovaks that the reforms were unacceptable, even though the Warsaw Pact members met with representatives from Czechoslovakia in Bratislava and appeared to have accepted the reforms. Soviet troops, along with contingents of other Warsaw Pact troops, invaded various points of the nation in August of 1968. Czech troops offered no resistance, and within the course of a year the nation was brought back within the bloc.

Rationalization for the Soviet invasion appeared in Pravda on September 26, 1968, over the signature of Sergei Kovalyov, although the doctrine which the Pravda statement advanced is attributed to Leonid Brezhnev, Secretary of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union. The statement is worth quoting somewhat extensively since the "law" on the use of force in bloc situations was clearly enunciated for the first time as a basis for the legality of intervention. The interventions both in the Dominican Republic and in Hungary had been borne up on the old rule that intervention is permissible when invited by the incumbent government. In both cases this rule was a rather weak reed for support since both the Kadar government in Hungary and the government of the "Three Colonels" in the Dominican Republic were of doubtful legitimacy. Since even this weak reed was not applicable to the Czechoslovak-
kian intervention, Brezhnev set forth a different legal justification:

The socialist states respect the democratic norms of international law. They have proved this more than once in practice, by coming out resolutely against the attempts of imperialism to violate the sovereignty and independence of nations. It is from these same positions that they reject the leftist, adventurist conception of "exporting revolution," of "bringing happiness" to other peoples. However, from a Marxist point of view, the norms of law, including the norms of mutual relations of the socialist countries, cannot be interpreted narrowly, formally, and in isolation from the general context of class struggle in the modern world. The socialist countries resolutely come out against the exporting and importing of counterrevolution.

Each Communist party is free to apply the basic principles of Marxism-Leninism and of socialism in its country, but it cannot depart from these principles (assuming, naturally, that it remains a Communist party).

Concretely, this means, first of all, that, in its activity, each Communist party cannot but take into account such a decisive fact of our time as the struggle between two opposing social systems—capitalism and socialism.

It has got to be emphasized that when a socialist country seems to adopt a "non-affiliated" stand, it retains its national independence, in effect, precisely because of the might of the socialist community, and above all the Soviet Union as a central force, which also includes the might of its armed forces. The weakening of any of the links in the world system of socialism directly affects all the socialist countries, which cannot look indifferently upon this.

The Brezhnev and Johnson doctrines introduced a new concept of limited sovereignty of nations within a bloc, and asserted the right of the bloc leader to intervene even to the point of using force where the situation threatens to remove the target nation from the orbit of the bloc. Urs Schwarz thinks that the Nixon (or Guam) doctrine, announced by the President first at a press conference in Guam in July 1969, and later expanded in his State of the Union message of January 22, 1970, may furnish the basis for reducing the incidence of interventions in the future. In the doctrine the President asserted that developing nations which had formerly leaned on the United States to assume full responsibility for their defense must rely more on themselves. Schwarz may be correct in his assumption that the Nixon doctrine may be instrumental in reducing global interventions on the part of the United States,

but it is hardly likely in the present climate of international relations that bloc interventions or use of force in intrabloc situations will be reduced.18

ROLE OF REGIONALISM IN DOMINICAN AND CZECHOSLOVAKIAN INTERVENTION

Both the Soviet Union and the United States denied the charges of unilaterality in the actions just discussed. For a great power like the United States to overwhelm a small country like the Dominican Republic or for the Soviet Union to overcome Czechoslovakia clearly involves no major logistical problem. Yet both nations took great pains to clothe their respective operations with the more community-accepted standard of collective action. The object, of course, was to give their actions legal coloration. Unilateral action by a single state unless in self-defense is incontestably illegal. Article 2(4) of the United Nations Charter is clear on the point. Similar clarity does not exist, however, when the use of force is undertaken collectively and in the name of a regional organization.

The matter of the Dominican intervention came before the Security Council on July 20 and 26, 1965, with the Soviet Union insisting that the O.A.S. had exceeded its authority by using the Inter-American Peace Force. Russia argued that under article 39 of the Charter the Security Council had sole responsibility for determining threats to the peace and appropriate measures to be taken in response.9 The Soviet Union denied that article 51 permits armed force by separate states or groups of states, except where armed attack has occurred against a member of the United Nations. The Soviet delegate insisted that the situation in the Dominican Republic did not conform to the set of facts necessary to trigger action under article 51.

The United States countered with the argument that the landing of American troops was consistent with article 52 of the Charter whereby a regional agency is permitted to deal on its own with matters relating to the maintenance of international peace and security; thus, American forces, and later the Inter-American Peace Force, were not engaging in an enforcement action under article 51 which would require approval by the Security Council.20

19Security Council, supra note 13.
20Professor Moore has suggested a way of determining the difference between enforcement and peacekeeping functions: "If the purpose of the force is to restore orderly processes of self-determination and is not simply to render assistance to one side or another in an internal conflict,
The Soviet Union defended its use of force against Czechoslovakia by claiming that under article 2(7) of the Charter, the Security Council could not deal with the "internal affairs" of Czechoslovakia. The intervention did not fall within the interdiction of article 2(4), the Soviets contended, since no provision of the Charter condemns collective self-defense as interference; the intervention of the Socialist countries did not impinge on either the "territorial integrity" or the "political independence" of Czechoslovakia, hence article 2(4) was not apposite. But a majority of the members of the General Assembly in 1965 considered the Soviet Union in violation both of the Charter and of international law.

Critics of Soviet action in Czechoslovakia denied that the Warsaw Pact intervention was consistent with either the principles or the spirit of the Charter. For the maintenance of peace and security article 52 of the Charter admittedly permits the existence of regional agencies and arrangements to the extent that they are "consistent with the Purpose and Principles of the United Nations." It was felt at the time, however, that the Soviet action was in willful disregard of article 2(4), forbidding aggressive use of force, and of the principles of the United Nations.

The role of the regional (bloc) organization vis-à-vis the Security Council remains ambiguous, despite the best attempts of international lawyers the world over to define the relationship. The Dominican intervention raised the question of whether the regional organization or the Security Council had the competence to act. In connection with the Czechoslovakian intervention the Soviet argument was that only the Warsaw Pact could authorize responsive action, since only Socialist countries were involved. The practice of states, however, is relatively clear. The principle of self-determination cannot be tolerated to the degree that a bloc nation will be permitted to deviate from the bloc; revolutions which have as their objective the severance of a nation from bloc allegiance will invite quick intervention by the bloc under the leadership of the major bloc power. There would appear to be nothing in the so-called Nixon Doctrine which invalidates this conclusion from the American viewpoint. A fair interpretation of that statement is that it disclaims unilateralism on the part of the United States. But there is

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Footnotes:


21 For a criticism of the Soviet intervention, see Goodman, The Invasion of Czechoslovakia: 1968, 4 INT'L LAWYER 42 (1969); and Reis, Legal Aspects of the Invasion and Occupation of Czechoslovakia, 59 DEP'T STATE BULL. 394, 397 (1968).

See p. 83 supra.
an affirmation that "we shall be faithful to our treaty commitment," and one would suppose this faithfulness encompasses the Rio Pact as well as its commitment to prevent a Communist takeover in Latin America.

CONCLUSION: IDEOLOGY AND THE USE OF FORCE IN BLOC SITUATIONS

In the twenty-five years of the existence of the United Nations, there have been some one hundred separate outbreaks of hostility between states. Only in the Korean conflict, and then by a fortuitous circumstance, has the United Nations been able to take effective enforcement action. It therefore comes as no surprise to discover that states have turned to regional alliances for the preservation of their integrity. As ideological differences eroded the effectiveness of chapter VII of the Charter, states found articles 51, 52, and 53 to be legal justification for the use of various kinds of collective force, where ideological uniformity formed an effective basis for action. Regional organizations (blocs) have come to interpret articles 52 and 53, particularly, as legitimating the use of force in bloc interests and especially as giving primacy to the bloc in settling disputes among its own numbers. At the present time one may safely conclude that the Security Council has been effectively excluded from exercising jurisdiction over disputes in which one member of a regional organization is being forcibly purged of ideological "deviationism" by the rest of the bloc members.

Other facts of modern international life permit one to predict with some assurance that intervention in situations that this writer describes as wars of social change will continue. Under the balance-of-power system which prevailed until the beginning of World War I, noninterference, national sovereignty, and independence represented basic systemic needs. In the loose, bipolar international system that developed after World War II, there are at least two major-power blocs and a number of regional organizations, as well as a group of uncommitted nations called neutralists. The blocs tend to be "permanent" because they are based upon long-term interests rather than short-term needs which characterized the balance-of-power system. The motives which required limited objectives under the balance-of-power system no longer prevail, and the norm of noninterference in the internal affairs of other nations is largely inoperative. Interdependence within the bloc gives

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25 For an interesting discussion of the derogation of the validity of article 2(4) in intrabloc situations, see id. at 822.
26 The terminology employed here is taken from M. Kaplan, System and Process in International Politics (1957).
positive motivation for intervention, and concentration of capabilities within the two leading bloc powers appears to make their role as intervenors inevitable. Major bloc powers find it desirable to prevent other nations from using force, as in the Suez Crisis of 1956, but they find it impossible to abstain from the use of force themselves. The major power within a bloc will undoubtedly protect its interests by intervening when necessary to regulate matters within its own bloc. Such an intervention may be propagandized by the leading nations of an opposing bloc, but they likely will not actively interfere since occasions may arise for intervening within their own blocs to protect similar interests.

International law, like other legal orders, is responsive to social needs and conditions. The practice of states ultimately becomes a normative rule of law if the practice is persistent enough. One legal pattern, if not yet a norm, is clearly delineated in the Johnson and Brezhnev doctrines. Simply stated, the pattern is one of bloc intervention to prevent any social and political alterations in the governmental structure of a bloc member that might result in the loss of that member from the bloc. Inferentially, this means that the bloc (region) has assumed the responsibility of policing its own membership. Since the major bloc power usually makes the decision to intervene and provides in largest part the military personnel and materiel, the intervention appears to be unilateral. More optimistically, however, and perhaps euphemistically, one might use the terminology "regional interventions" or "interventions under regional authority." Both the Brezhnev justification and the Johnson speech at Baylor entered disclaimers of unilateral action based on narrow national interests. The Czechoslovakian intervention was undertaken under the guise of Warsaw Pact policy; the American intervention in the Dominican Republic, under the cloak of O.A.S. interests.

The rationale for the assumption that a pattern of bloc intervention will continue for the foreseeable future, at least until the world's great ideological rift is mitigated, has already been touched upon. That assumption results among other things from the organized relationships which have cemented blocs together totally, unlike the loose alliance systems under the old balance-of-power arrangement. Contemporary blocs are bound together not only by a common ideology, but by joint military-command and supply facilities. They have developed long-range functional plans, including arrangements for joint defense and the exchange of manpower and materiel. While such arrangements within the bloc compromise the independence of the bloc components, they do contribute to the stability of the international system. On the other hand, a nation within the geographic propinquity of a bloc, but socially and politically disoriented from the other bloc nations, constitutes ipso
facto a threat to the peace. Illustrations are the presence of Communist Cuba in the Western Hemisphere, of South Africa in the ambit of the Organization of African Unity, not to mention Israel in the area of the Pan-Arab world.

Georg Schwarzenberger, writing under the umbra of the 1956 Suez crisis, not only foresaw a bloc law of intervention, but justified it as system-serving—as a useful element of the peacekeeping operation. He argued that to classify bloc (hegemonial) intervention as purely self-serving was to take too narrow a view of the process. He felt that there is at least a grain of truth in the assertion that interventions of such a nature are in fact in the interests of world peace. While the nuclear stalemate lasts, each side, by keeping its own bloc house in order (the pun was inevitable), "makes its own indispensible contribution to the maintenance of world peace."

If the above analysis is correct, one might safely predict that blocs and regions will tend to increase in number and in strength. Their peacekeeping activities will increase in number and importance. Unilateralism in bloc situations will tend to disappear, although the bloc leader must assume the initiative (and at times that initiative may be difficult to distinguish from unilateralism). The legal justification for bloc interventions and intrabloc use of force will be clothed in the language of regional commitments. A rationale that supports regional action is being developed with reference to articles 52 and 53 of the United Nations Charter.

When a state attempts to pull out of its bloc and when there is some evidence, or even strong suspicion, that the reasons for it arise from the machinations of the opposing bloc, then there is considerable certainty that force will be used to keep that nation within the bloc. In that situation, the opposing bloc will make the empty gesture of condemning the other as acting illegally, but will do little more. Viewed from the standpoint of the international system as a whole, the development of a bloc law of interventionary force is system-serving. It will tend to maintain order and stability in an area of the world where balkanization, if allowed to develop, would increase the potential for crisis situations.

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*Id. at 261.