THE U.N. & HUMANITARIAN INTERVENTION

Shimko, ch. 10, notes by Denis Bašić
ARE HUMANITARIAN INTERVENTIONS JUSTIFIED?

• Advocates of humanitarian intervention come mainly from a liberal perspective, arguing that states forfeit their sovereignty rights when they violate or fail to protect the basic rights of their citizens. Though willing to make rare exceptions, they strongly prefer that interventions take place under the auspices of international organizations such as the United Nations because this framework increases legitimacy and reduces opportunities for abuse.

• Opponents of humanitarian intervention, often reflecting a realist perspective, believe that sovereignty should remain a principle of international order. The primary obligation of states is to the interests and well-being of their own citizens, not that of the citizens of other states.

• Furthermore, no matter how noble the ideal of humanitarian intervention is in theory, in practice it will become another tool for the powerful to impose their will and values. Because the United Nations is merely another arena, rather than an alternative, for power politics, its participation will not solve the problem of abuse.
• When the United Nations was founded in the immediate aftermath of World War II, memories of two devastating total wars and the League of Nations’ failure were still fresh. An effective international organization was considered essential to avoiding another global war.

• Unfortunately, the United Nations fell victim to the superpower Cold War rivalry. Nowhere was the impact of the Cold War more evident than on the UN Security Council, whose five permanent members—the United States, the Soviet Union, China, France, and Britain—each possessed a veto that could block any action.

• The ten nonpermanent members of the Council, elected for two-year terms by the UN General Assembly, have one vote each but no veto power.

• During the Cold War, geopolitics combined with veto power produced paralysis. With the end of the Cold War, many hoped that the United Nations, freed from its geopolitical shackles, would finally fulfill its promise.
UN Security Council

Permanently members with right to veto:
- Britain
- China
- France
- Russia
- US

Members until Dec 31, 2013:
- Azerbaijan
- Guatemala
- Morocco
- Pakistan
- Togo

New members until Dec 31, 2014:
- Argentina
- Australia
- Luxembourg
- Rwanda
- ROK

Total 15

*Elected by the General Assembly for two-year terms

Source: UN
VETO POWER IN THE U.N.
THE RWANDAN GENOCIDE OF 1994

• Like many African states, Rwanda is characterized by a division between ethnic groups—the majority **Hutus** and minority **Tutsis**.

• The animosity and suspicion between them is largely a legacy of **colonialism**. The Germans and Belgians had imposed this ethnic classification, encouraging the notion that Tutsis were somehow superior to Hutus. **Dividing the native population this way facilitated external domination.**

• After independence, the Hutu-controlled government treated Tutsis as second-class citizens. This simmering conflict eventually erupted into a civil war lasting from 1990 until the signing of a ceasefire in February 1993. At this point the United Nations became involved, sending a small force of 2,500 peacekeepers.
THE RWANDAN GENOCIDE OF 1994 (II)

• Things began to unravel on April 6, 1994, when a plane carrying the Hutu president was shot down as it approached Kigali airport.

• Hutu extremists exploited the attack to incite violence against the minority Tutsis. Within days, it was clear to UN officials in Rwanda that a systematic campaign, not merely spasmodic violence, was under way. The head of UN peacekeeping forces “understood that Hutu extremists were carrying out ethnic cleansing … [and] emphasized to headquarters the magnitude and scale of the crimes.” Over the course of the next few weeks, between 500,000 and 1,000,000 Tutsis were slaughtered in a horrific orgy of violence.

• No significant action was taken to halt the genocide. The post–Cold War optimism concerning the United Nations’ ability and willingness to act was replaced by doubt and soul searching.
THE BOSNIAN GENOCIDE OF 1995

The term **Bosnian Genocide** refers to either genocide at Srebrenica and Žepa committed by Bosnian Serb (Orthodox Christian) forces against the Bosniaks (Bosnian Muslims) in 1995 or the **ethnic cleansing** campaign that took place during the 1992–1995 Bosnian War. Between 100,000 and 250,000 people were killed during the war.
SOVEREIGNTY & HUMAN RIGHTS

• The idea of national **sovereignty** was codified in the **Peace of Westphalia (1648)** as the only feasible solution to the religious conflict that gave rise to the bloody **Thirty Years War (1618–1648)**.

• By making each ruler the sole authority on questions of religion over the territory they controlled, the Peace of Westphalia gave the monarchs of Europe sovereignty, but **sovereignty did not entail religious tolerance**. Monarchs frequently repressed subjects who did not share their faith, and this was deemed to be nobody else’s business.

• Because rulers did not recognize the rights of their own subjects, they could hardly be expected to care about the rights of another monarch’s subjects. **Sovereignty was intended to restore international order, not protect individual rights.**
THE BIRTH OF LIBERALISM

• With the Enlightenment (17th & 18th centuries) and the emergence of liberalism, notions of individual rights were introduced into political discourse.

• Liberalism established the principle that governments needed to respect the rights of their own subjects.

• The result was the gradual erosion of absolutist monarchism.

• But even though individuals increasingly gained rights in the domestic realm, they still lacked rights under international law.

• If a government refused to respect the rights of its people, this was still no justification for violating its sovereignty.
NUREMBERG WAR CRIMES TRIALS (1945-46)

• It took the horrors of the Holocaust and World War II to finally shake the bedrock principle of national sovereignty. As advancing allied armies liberated the concentration camps, they uncovered Nazi atrocities beyond anyone’s wildest imagination.

• When those responsible were prosecuted at the Nuremburg war crimes trials, their defenses were predictable. Some claimed the charges were all lies, whereas others said they were just following orders.

• Those at the top who issued the orders needed a different defense. Confronted with the evidence, one of Hitler’s deputies, Hermann Goering, shouted, “But that was our right! We were a sovereign state and that was strictly our business.”

• Nuremberg war crimes trials (1945-46) - Post–World War II trials in which top officials of Nazi Germany were tried for violations of international law, including massive violations of human rights.
THE LIMITS OF SOVEREIGNTY

• There were two problems with Goering’s defense:

  • First, many of these crimes took place on non-German territory acquired through aggression.

  • Second, even claims of sovereignty proved unacceptable in the face of such barbarism. The limits of sovereignty had finally been exceeded.

• The Nuremberg trials (and similar trials in Tokyo for Japanese leaders) represented the first time that “a legal proceeding attempted to make government leaders internationally responsible as individuals for crimes against humanity covering so much time, so many nations, or so many people, including their own citizens.”

• Goering was convicted of crimes against humanity but cheated the executioner by taking his own life.
THE U.N. CHARTER (1945)

• After Nuremberg, sovereignty was no longer absolute. Some actions were now beyond legitimate claims of sovereignty. The exact limits of sovereignty were less clear. Since World War II, the tension between individual rights and national sovereignty has remained unresolved.

• This can be seen in the United Nations Charter (1945), which obliges “all members [to] refrain in their international relations from the threat or use of force against the territorial integrity or political independence of any state.” The organization as a whole faces the same restriction as member states: “Nothing contained in the present Charter shall authorize the United Nations to intervene in matters which are essentially within the domestic jurisdiction of any state.”

• The only instance in which the United Nations, acting through the Security Council, can authorize forceful intervention in a state’s domestic affairs is when “international peace and security” are threatened. The real dilemma, however, concerns large-scale human rights abuses that do not pose any wider threat to peace and security.
THE UNIVERSAL DECLARATION OF HUMAN RIGHTS (1948)

• While seeming to strengthen norms of national sovereignty, the UN Charter also “reaffirm[s] faith in fundamental human rights, in the dignity and worth of the human person, in the equal rights of men and women.”

• In addition to the UN Charter, there is also the Universal Declaration of Human Rights that specifies an almost comically long and detailed list of rights, including the right to “rest and leisure.”

• Universal Declaration of Human Rights (1948) - A non-binding United Nations declaration that recognizes a long list of basic human rights. Combined with the United Nations Charter, it revealed an emerging tension between the principles of state sovereignty and human rights.

• What good are treaties guaranteeing human rights if outside forces are prohibited from intervening to protect those rights?
NON-GOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATIONS (NGOs)

• For ideas to have consequences there must usually be a political movement working on their behalf.

• The growth of human rights organizations is part of a much larger explosion of nongovernmental organizations (NGOs)—private and voluntary advocacy groups and networks that seek to influence the policies of states, international organizations, and even non-state actors such as multinational corporations across a whole range of economic, political, environmental, cultural, and humanitarian issues.

• Although NGOs have been around for some time (the International Committee of the Red Cross was founded in 1863), the last few decades have seen a sharp rise in their numbers. As of 2000 there were almost 40,000 such organizations, and they continue to proliferate at a rapid pace. By one count there are well over 300 NGOs focused on the issue of human rights alone.
AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL

• The most well-known international human rights NGO is probably Amnesty International (website). Founded in 1961 as a neutral, impartial organization proclaiming to defend the rights of all as embodied in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

• Amnesty has been involved in numerous high-profile campaigns on behalf of prisoners of conscience in countries of all political persuasions. Though these campaigns may be its most visible activities, Amnesty has employed a wide array of tactics on a host of human rights issues, including abolition of the death penalty and torture, the humane treatment of prisoners of war, the end of extra-judicial executions and disappearances, and the provision of fair and prompt trials. Widely-praised for most of its actions, Amnesty was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize in 1977.

• Nonetheless, Amnesty has not been without its critics. Governments that routinely find themselves the object criticism, such as China, bristle at what they see as interference in their domestic affairs. Even in the United States many are unhappy with Amnesty’s blanket opposition to the death penalty and criticism of some post-September 11 policies (e.g., the treatment of prisoners at Guantanamo Bay detainment camp).
HUMANITARIAN INTERVENTION

• Humanitarian intervention is defined as the uninvited interference by a state, states, or international organization in the domestic affairs of another state to prevent and/or end human rights abuses.

• The humanitarian part of the equation speaks to the motivation, and intervention implies the absence of the target state’s consent.

• This is not to be confused with peacekeeping operations, which generally occur with the consent of the relevant parties in order to preserve a peace that has already been achieved. It is also different from interventions that happen to produce collateral humanitarian benefits.

• U.S. intervention in Afghanistan in the wake of the 2001 terrorist attacks, for example, may have “liberated the Afghan people from the Taliban and impending starvation.” However, humanitarianism was not the primary goal of the U.S. invasion of Afghanistan, but rather “national security.”
THREE QUESTIONS OF HUMANITARIAN INTERVENTION

• Three questions are central to the debate over humanitarian intervention:

  • First, should states forfeit their right to sovereignty if they engage in massive human rights violations?

  • Second, if intervention is justified, who has the right to intervene? Can states act on their own (unilateral intervention), or must intervention be sanctioned by an international organization, namely the United Nations (multilateral intervention)?

  • Finally, if such interventions need to be endorsed by the UN, and the Security Council in particular, is the organization equipped to carry out this mission effectively?
TYPES OF INTERVENTION

• **Humanitarian intervention** - Uninvited intervention by external actors into the domestic affairs of a state with the primary motive of ending or preventing violations of **human rights**.

• **Unilateral intervention** - Uninvited intervention by a state or small group of states into the affairs of another state **without** the approval or sanction of some larger international organization such as **the United Nations**.

• **Multilateral intervention** - Uninvited interference in the domestic affairs of another state carried out by many nations **with** the approval or sanction of a legitimate international organization such as **the United Nations**.
POPULAR SOVEREIGNTY

• In fact, we long ago discarded the idea that states possessed some automatic right to have their sovereignty respected.

• **Sovereignty** is no longer seen as a *divine gift* as it was in the age of Louis XIV. **Monarchical absolutism** has been replaced by **popular sovereignty**, the principle that governments must derive their legitimacy from their citizens.

• Because it is the people who grant legitimacy, any state that denies basic rights to its citizens can hardly claim legitimacy.

• And if a state becomes illegitimate in the eyes of its own citizens, why should other states be obligated to respect its sovereignty?
HISTORY OF INTERVENTION

• Advocates of humanitarian intervention see no reason why sovereignty should be absolute. In the first place, the idea that states have consistently respected each other's sovereignty since the Peace of Westphalia is a fantasy.

• Over the past four hundred years, states have routinely meddled in each other's domestic affairs. Some of these interventions were even "humanitarian" in nature, according to Shimko, such as those to protect Christian minorities from mistreatment in the Ottoman Empire during the 1800s.

• Most interventions were motivated by less admirable concerns, such as undermining strategic rivals, exacerbating ethnic conflicts, or crushing revolutionary governments.

• On the other side, liberals still hold that the newfound reverence for the principle of sovereignty when it comes to saving people from outrageous assaults on their basic human rights seems like little more than a convenient and hypocritical evasion of moral responsibility.
THE RIGHT TO INTERVENE

• Does one state’s forfeiture of its sovereign right necessarily give others a right to intervene?

• Not directly. The right of intervention derives not from the target state’s loss of sovereignty but from the rights of those who are being abused.

• “The victims themselves have a right of resistance to crimes perpetrated against them … [and] other groups in the same society have a good claim (if not in fact an obligation) to come to the aid of the victims.” And if the victims have a right to ask for outside help, it would be downright perverse if outsiders lacked the right to come to their assistance.

• Thus, the right to intervene is a natural extension of a principle that virtually no one rejects — that people and groups within nations are entitled to resist when their rights are violated, even when the perpetrator is their own government.
THE OBLIGATION TO INTERVENE

• The more complex question is whether outsiders have a **positive obligation to help**.

• If intervention is only a **right**, it becomes tantamount to an act of charity, but if intervention is an **obligation**, it is a **duty**.

• “Once it is accepted that there is nothing natural or given about sovereignty as the outer limits of our moral responsibilities, it becomes possible to argue for a change in moral horizons … [in which case] governments are responsible not only for protecting the human rights at home but also for defending them abroad.”

• In recent years this sentiment has been reflected in calls to accept a **responsibility to protect**, or “a duty to react to situations in which there is a compelling need for humanitarian protection.”
RESPONSIBILITY TO PROTECT DOCTRINE

• This doctrine was endorsed at the **2005 World Summit** whose final document declared that “the international community, through the United Nations, also has the **responsibility** to use the appropriate **diplomatic, humanitarian and other peaceful means** … to protect populations from genocide, war crimes, ethnic cleansing and crimes against humanity.”

• The same language was adopted by the **Security Council in 2006**.

• Two aspects of these statements stand out:
  • first, the requirement for UN involvement, and
  • second, the absence of any endorsement of forceful or military intervention.

• It is not altogether clear, however, why if there is sometimes a **moral right** to intervene **forcefully**, there is not also sometimes a **moral responsibility** to intervene **forcefully**.

• A predecessor of this doctrine in a much sharper form was the **Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide (1948)**.
WHO SHOULD INTERVENE?

• Can any external actor intervene whenever it thinks a state is violating its citizens’ rights, or does intervention need to be directed by the international community as a whole (or at least with its sanction)?

• **Advocates of humanitarian intervention** lean toward opposing a right of unilateral intervention. And even those who concede that in some very rare instances unilateral intervention may be acceptable, it is always seen as preferable that intervention be multilateral. Why?

• **The commitment to multilateralism** has more to do with practical and political, not moral, considerations.

• Supporters worry that individual nations will only intervene in defense of human rights when abuses occur in areas of strategic interest (e.g., in Yugoslavia but not Rwanda) and that selective and opportunistic intervention will breed skepticism and erode international legitimacy.
INTERNATIONAL RULE OF LAW

• **Rule of law** - The principle that laws need to be applied to all in an equal fashion.

• The desire is to establish an international equivalent of the domestic **rule of law**, or the principle that rules need to be applied even-handedly. Consistency is important because in the realm of moral principles, principles applied inconsistently are not really principles at all.

• Thus, in order to provide **consistent implementation**, **minimize opportunities for abuse**, and **sustain international legitimacy**, **humanitarian interventions** need to be conducted by, or at least with the sanction of, the world’s most inclusive organization, **the United Nations**.
ARE UNILATERAL INTERVENTIONS EVER JUSTIFIABLE?

• Faced with the choice between human rights and a requirement for multilateral action or sanction, which should prevail? Given the moral case for humanitarian intervention, the answer seems clear: Human rights win every time. But does this mean we should explicitly recognize the legitimacy of intervention without international sanction?

• Former UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan himself confessed that he would have been hard pressed to object to an unsanctioned intervention that stopped the Rwandan genocide. This position appears to concede a moral right to unilateral humanitarian intervention but unwillingness to codify such a legal right.

• That is, unilateral intervention could be morally justifiable even if it remained a violation of international law.
Calls for recognizing a right of humanitarian intervention resonate mostly with a liberal perspective on international politics. As with individual rights and popular sovereignty at the domestic level, “the international law of human rights is based on liberalism.”

The primacy of individual rights and the view that governments receive their legitimacy from their citizens both strike deep cords with liberal social and political philosophy.

Without liberal assumptions of individual rights and popular sovereignty, it is difficult to imagine a case for humanitarian intervention.

Arguments for humanitarian intervention rest on a profoundly liberal vision of a common humanity, a world in which the moral obligations and people and states are not limited by artificial and transitory lines on a map.
CONSTRUCTIVISM & HUMANITARIAN INTERVENTION

• As long as citizens and leaders believed in absolute sovereignty, the possibility of humanitarian intervention was precluded.

• The acceptance of norms of human rights and popular sovereignty provides a foundation for changing state practices.

• One sees elements of this conviction in constructivists’ observation that sovereignty is a social construction, an idea that limits the actions states are willing to consider.

• Social constructions, however, can be replaced with other constructions.

• We may be in the middle of a process in which some fundamental ideas or norms about international politics are being transformed, and the increasing willingness to consider humanitarian intervention may be part of this evolution.
THE CASE AGAINST HUMANITARIAN INTERVENTION

• The critique of humanitarian intervention is both **moral** and **political**.

  • “Since views about [human rights] are culturally conditioned, no definition of humanitarian intervention can be culturally neutral.”

• This harsh reality is often avoided because it smacks of an extreme **moral relativism** in which there is no such thing as right and wrong. Actually, it is just a realization that people and cultures do not always agree on what is right and wrong.

• “If the same doctrine [of humanitarian intervention] had been enunciated in an earlier era, would today’s proponents have been in favor? Would the U.S. agree that other countries had the right to punish it for practicing slavery? Would Britain, France, Italy, Belgium, and other European countries agree that others had the right to bomb them to protect the human rights of their colonial subjects?”
PROBLEMS OF HUMANITARIAN INTERVENTION

• Double Standards
  • the strongest advocates of intervention are often unwilling to concede that others have a right to intervene in their affairs.

• Cultural Relativism
  • If notions of morality vary from one era to another, they can also vary from one culture to another.
  • Apart from genocide, it is very difficult to delineate a list of basic human rights that merit intervention.
MORAL UNIVERSALISM & HUMAN RIGHTS

• **Bernard Kouchner** adopts an extreme form of moral universalism: “**everywhere, human rights are human rights** … if a Muslim woman in Sudan opposes painful clitoral excision, or if a Chinese woman opposes the binding of her feet, her rights are being violated.”

• In the face of such abuses, he proposes that we “establish a forward-looking right of the world community to actively interfere in the affairs of sovereign states to prevent the explosion of human rights violations.”

• This sort of universalism denies the culturally specific nature of rights and gives critics of humanitarian intervention the chills. The application of a single moral code in which “**human rights are human rights everywhere,**” leading to a norm of “**active interference**” in the domestic affairs of states, could provide a license for **endless intervention and meddling.**
IMPERIALISM WITH A HAPPY FACE

• Many in the Third World detect an element of ethnocentrism and fear that humanitarian intervention will be nothing more than imperialism with a happy face.

• Notice the examples Kouchner cites—clitoral excision in Somalia and foot binding in China. Humanitarian intervention always seems to be suggested outside the confines of Western Europe and North America and directed against weaker powers.

• Many nations and societies have long been on the receiving end of outside intervention, which was often accompanied by noble rhetoric of spreading the virtues of civilization and Christianity.

• These nations had to fight long and hard to achieve their independence. Having finally achieved the sovereignty they were denied for so long, they are now told that the time has come to give it up.
WHEN TO ACT?

• The issue of deciding which conflicts merit intervention has been a difficult one. In other words, how many of its opponents a government needs to kill to lose its legitimacy?

• Intervening powers decide on this issue based on a number of criteria, such as the severity of the humanitarian emergency, the potential expense of such intervention, or the logistical problem of dispatching troops, etc.

• According to Stephen Solarz and Michael O’Hanlon, humanitarian intervention should be considered “only to stop extreme violence when the death rate reaches or threatens to reach at least tens of thousands a year.” They cite the usual examples of Rwanda and Cambodia but eliminate virtually every other case because they “were simply not bloody enough to justify outside military intervention.”

• Should there be any intervention against a country that kills up to 10,000 of its citizens?
REALITY OF POWER POLITICS

• The fact is that nations with the power to conduct and resist interventions will surrender much less of their sovereignty than nations lacking equivalent power.

• As a result, "any right of state intervention, however clearly delineated, would in fact and perception empower the already powerful."

• In theory, accepting the principle of humanitarian intervention erodes every nation’s sovereignty.

• In practice, however, there is no danger that foreign troops will land in the United States to stop the death penalty or in China to save the Tibetans.
THE U.N. & HUMANITARIAN INTERVENTION

• Can the U.N. be considered an impartial, international institution capable of fairly addressing a humanitarian crisis?

• The United Nations is often viewed as merely another arena for, rather than an escape from, power politics. As an organization of independent states, it cannot help but be influenced by the relative power of its members.

• Hans Kochler gets to the heart of the matter: “We have to admit that the step from idealistic vision to the realization of an international policy of intervention cannot be responsibly made … An implementation of the doctrine outside the realm of power politics … is impossible. Any act of humanitarian intervention, whether exercised on a unilateral, regional or multilateral level, will be determined by the interests of the power(s) initiating it.”
THE U.N. SECURITY COUNCIL & HUMANITARIAN INTERVENTION

• We need not even look very deeply to see the impact of power politics because it is built into the basic structure of the Security Council in which any of the five permanent members can scuttle an intervention with a simple “no” vote.

• As Stanley Michalak explains, “The United Nations was explicitly designed so that it would be unable to act against any of the permanent members or even against their pleasure.”

• This is one reason that NATO intervention in the former Yugoslavia was conducted without the authorization of the Security Council.

• Everyone knew that Russia or China would have vetoed any intervention because “each has ethnic minorities whose treatment might be used by other countries as an excuse for military intervention.”
THE REFORM OF THE U.N.

• Too much power in the hands of the U.N. Security Council members is as an argument for reforming the United Nations and the Security Council. The obstacle, of course, is that the United States, Russia, and China are not likely to look kindly on reforms that erode their power.

• The United Nations is an organization of imperfect independent states. It is not a world government; it does not have its own armed forces; and it relies on voluntary contributions from members to fund and implement its operations.

• Nations can refuse to provide troops for humanitarian intervention and they can withhold their financial support.
REALISTS ON HUMANITARIAN INTERVENTIONS

• **Realists** do not believe that states should risk their own citizens’ interests and even lives to defend the rights of others.

• According to realists, the “commitments and moral obligations of governments are not the same as those of the individual. Government is an agent, not a principal. Its primary obligation is to the interests of the national society it represents.”

• Samuel Huntington reflected this sentiment when he argued that “it is morally unjustifiable and politically indefensible that members of the [U.S.] armed forces should be killed to prevent Somalis from killing each other.”

• Though perhaps regrettable, states are simply unwilling to incur substantial costs to defend the rights of others when their own national interest is not involved.

• Somalia > Rwanda > Bosnia > Kosovo
FEMINISTS ON HUMANITARIAN INTERVENTIONS

• **Feminists** certainly welcome an international discourse that elevates human rights to a central place, though they are quick to stress that prevailing notions of rights tend to ignore the deprivations that women are routinely subjected to around the world.

• Why, feminists wonder, did the plight of women under Afghanistan’s Taliban regime become a justification for intervention only after September 11, 2001? And now that women in **Afghanistan** may have been liberated to some degree, what about the women in **Saudi Arabia**, a U.S. ally, whose status is only slightly better?

• Many feminists are also **uncomfortable** with using military intervention or force to protect human rights, because militarism is seen as an integral part of domestic and international systems of oppression. This is not to say that feminists would **never** see military force as justified (except for those who combine feminism with pacifism), but there is a strong presumption against it in most feminist analysis.
MARXISTS ON HUMANITARIAN INTERVENTIONS

• A definitive Marxist position is also difficult to identify. In general, however, Marxists find it hard to imagine that a doctrine of humanitarian intervention can be applied consistently and impartially in the current international system.

• Such a policy is almost certainly going to be used by the dominant powers to pursue their interests vis-à-vis the poor, weak, and vulnerable of the world. David Gibbs suggests that in the contemporary world “perhaps the doctrine of humanitarian intervention is merely a way of excusing US aggression.”

• And Walden Bello urges people to “forcefully delegitimize this dangerous doctrine of humanitarian intervention to prevent its being employed again in the future against candidates for great power intervention like Iran and Venezuela.

• Like its counterpart concept of ‘liberal imperialism,’ there is only one thing to do with the concept of humanitarian intervention: dump it.”