

CHAPTER 7

The Middle East Crisis

We cannot fully understand the nature of the crisis in the Middle East by just following today's and yesterday's headlines. There are far deeper and longer lasting factors at work than merely who commands the Strait of Tiran or who is responsible for the latest border skirmish in the Gaza Strip. The first thing that we as Americans should be concerned about is the absurdity of the fundamental foreign policy position of the U.S. government. This is a doctrine that the United States first adopted, to its woe, in the late 1930s and has clung to ever since: the doctrine of "collective security." The collective security thesis assumes that, at whatever moment of time one happens to be in, the territorial distribution of States on the world's surface is just and proper. Any forcible disturbances of any governmental boundary anywhere, then, automatically becomes "aggression" which must be combated either by all other nations or by the United States itself, acting as "world policeman."

In short, the whole thesis of collective security that has guided American policy for thirty years rests on a ridiculous analogy from private property and the function of police in defending that property. Mr. Jones owns the property; it is then certainly not absurd to say that he has an absolute moral right to that property and that, therefore, any invasion of that property by force is immoral and unjust. It is also not absurd, then, to say that it is

just for Mr. Jones's property to be defended by some form of police (whether public or private is not here at issue).

But surely it is worse than absurd to leap from this concept of just private property to say that a *State's* territory is equally just, proper, and sacrosanct, and that therefore any invasion of that State's self-acclaimed territory is just as wicked as invasion of private property and deserves to be defended by some form of "police." All State territory, without exception in history or in any part of the world, was obtained, not by legitimate voluntary productive means such as used by Mr. Jones or his ancestors, but by coercion and violent conquest. Therefore no one allocation of territory — certainly no allocation of territory that happens to exist at any moment of time — is *ipso facto* proper and just and deserving of any form of defense. If, in Year 1, Ruritania grabs part of the territory of Waldonia by force, then surely it is nonsensical for the United States or some other group to step in with righteous indignation when, in Year 5, Waldonia tries to grab that territory back. Yet this is precisely what is implied in the whole theory on which the United Nations is grounded, and in the U.S. foreign policy to "guarantee the territorial integrity of all the nations in the Middle East."

Basic to the current crisis in the Middle East is the fact that such Israeli territory as the port of Elath, and indeed the entire Negev desert area surrounding Elath, which is now a big bone of contention between Israel and the Arab powers, was grabbed by force from the Arabs by Israel in 1948. For the US, then, to go to war to "defend the territorial integrity" of Israel in the Negev would be, on this and on many other grounds, the height of folly.