

HOW TO ASK FOR GOOD GOVERNMENT¹

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If governments of India had wanted to maximize the country's national product, they would have defied the industrialists' demand for protection; overridden the industrial workers' preference for security of employment; rejected the rich farmers' demands for limits to land reform and agricultural taxation and low prices for inputs and high prices for their output; and ignored the requests from poorer regions for investment and spending (Datta-Chaudhuri 1990:37). If Indian governments had actually decided to maximize the national product, however, and had resisted these requests, they might not have stayed in government for long. Or, as Mrs Gandhi actually did think of doing in the 1970s, they would have had to change the rules of rule. They could not have left the country as a coalition of interests negotiating with each other on the understanding that no one would act irremediably to disable any of the others. What makes issues like this issues of politics and not issues of another kind about how best to allocate scarce resources for agreed ends under agreed constraints, or about how most effectively to execute an agreed decision, is that they necessarily have no best answer. The point is elementary. Yet those who think in terms of optimal paths to optimal outcomes and assess the actions of governments accordingly do not see it (Bardhan 1984 and more generally Krueger 1990). And those who make the distinction between 'government' and 'governance', between the capacity to get things done with authority and the capacity simply to get them done (Czempiel 1992:250), seem simply to evade it. In any society with any degree of economic complexity, there will be a number of different and usually conflicting interests. If these are within acceptable bounds, that is to say if their realization would not inflict unreasonable harm on others; if none rests on misinformation or misunderstanding, such that if those whose interest it is were to know better (to know that to pursue it would be self-defeating or would defeat other interests which they held to be more important, or came to see that it was an interest which they'd come to hold under conditions they would not themselves now assent to) they would change it or abandon it; and if we assume that there are no 'real interests', interests which can be shown by all rational parties to be true or false; then there will be no good grounds for rejecting any (Geuss 1981). Many governments, though, do reject some. Indeed, it is

difficult to think of a government anywhere which does not reject any.

There are two reasons for this, which between them explain why it is that the questions of politics can have no settled answer. The first is that there is no single best solution in social choice. Some interests always have to suffer. The second is that even if there could be such a solution, no government would always be able to enact it. All states aspire to be sovereign, and some of the demands of sovereignty will always clash with some of the things that some of the citizens want. Sovereignty is in part an internal matter, of ensuring the citizens' security and having the power to impose what that security demands, and in part an external matter, of ensuring the security of the state itself against threats from others. It is not clear in what sense a state can properly be said to be sovereign if it cannot do both these things. Yet if it cannot be sovereign, it is not clear that it can meet the minimum condition for being a modern state.² In all such states, therefore, there is a necessary tension between what the citizens want and the demands of the state itself.

This is why from 4th century Athens to 18th century Scotland it was a commonplace of political thinking that security, the security of persons, property, and the state itself, required at best a mixed constitution. Democracy was thought to be too great a risk. This conclusion, most would now argue, was unduly pessimistic. Modern representative democracies have been reasonably successful in guaranteeing the security of most of their citizens for most of the time. Few have had to face implacable demands by the property-less against the propertied. And most democracies have been good at respecting each other's integrity (Doyle 1983). But this is because they have at best been representative democracies. Rule by the people themselves is impossible to sustain, and is everywhere replaced by rule that is electively derived from them. And in so far as electively derived rulers in what we call democracies can be said to represent, they do so, as the old American distinction used to have it, 'virtually' rather than 'actually' (Wood 1992). Democracy is everywhere elective aristocracy (Manin forthcoming). What we now describe as 'representative democracy is democracy made safe for the modern state: democracy

governed international relations since the establishment of the modern state system in the 17th century and which in Africa and Asia was for the first 30 years or so after decolonization compounded by a degree of post-imperial guilt.

¹ I have been helped in developing some of the thoughts in this article by Paul Seabright; he and I are writing an extended version of it.

² That most of those which do not are nevertheless accepted as if they did merely indicates the cynicism, hypocrisy and fear which has

converted from unruly and incoherent master' or so it once was feared 'to docile and dependable servant' (Dunn 1992:248).

In so far as 'good government' means 'good politics' and not just 'good governance' — the capacity to get some particular thing done — there can therefore be no settled answer to what it consists of. Any answer will depend upon which interests are thought important and upon judgements about how best, constitutionally and institutionally, to satisfy the ones that are. International bankers will have one set of interests; aid donors will have another; the guardians of the state will have yet another; and the citizens will have others again. It would seem to be true, and would seem also to be final, that the answer to the question of 'good government', in so far as it is not simply resolved by who has the power to impose their interests on those of others, will merely depend on what one's own interest in government happens to be.

This conclusion, however, is too simple. It is the conclusion to an argument which starts from the assumption that one should proceed in politics by considering interests as preferences, calculating on the basis of these preferences what utility or consequence to pursue, and if there is the causal knowledge and the practical capacity, deciding what then to do. This assumption, however, the assumption of what is often loosely called 'utilitarianism', of what can more precisely be described as 'sum-welfare consequentialism', is questionable (Sen and Williams 1982). To rely solely on expressed preferences quite apart from the well-known difficulties that arise in trying to weigh and aggregate them can lead one to overlook the fact that these are 'shifting and endogenous rather than exogenous, and as a result are a function of current information, consumption patterns, legal rules, and general social pressures', and are not prior to politics (Sunstein 1991:10). In concentrating on the consequences of preferences rather than on the question of for whom they are the consequences they are, a sum-welfare consequentialism can lead one to overlook or even override the identities and integrities of the entities, individuals, groups and whole nations whose welfare is at issue. And in its assumption that a single incontestable decision can be taken with the use of purely technical procedures, perhaps through an accurate survey and summation of the preferences, it reveals by an informed central power, a sum-welfare consequentialism pre-empts the question of what kind of politics it requires. It can also lead one to overlook the question of which preferences are the proper province of government and which are not.

The standard alternative to such consequentialism is a contractualism (Scanlon 1982). There have been and continue to be many suggestions for what the terms of a

social contract should be. If we are thinking about the good government of modern states, we can start from the presumption that their rationale is to maximize the benefits of social co-operation. That is to say, the reason for having states at all, and the standard by which we might now assess them, not the way in which we might explain them, is that they can do what individuals and the institutions of 'civil society' severally or together may want to do but by themselves cannot. A state which obstructs more than it facilitates is accordingly bad; one which facilitates more than it obstructs is not necessarily. In the modern world, as distinct from that of the late 1640s and early 1650s, when the idea of the modern state can be said to have crystallized (Skinner 1989), states are standardly expected to provide not only for the security of their subjects against attack from each other and from other states, but also to furnish the conditions in which its citizens can maximize their well-being (Dasgupta 1990). It is these conditions, of security and well-being more generally, that we can expect any modern state to try to maximize.

A modern contractualism would also be pluralist. It would reject prior conceptions of the good, or people's expressed preferences for one or another substantive outcome, in favour of conceptions of what has been described as 'the right'. In Sen's now familiar way of putting it, it would not be concerned with realizing particular levels of wealth or with supplying particular sets of commodities or with satisfying particular sets of utilities or actual or revealed preferences; it would not concern itself with these or other things as ends. It would concern itself rather with means, with people's 'capability' to 'function', to meet the minimum standards of human decency and beyond that, to go on to realize, within acceptable and practicable limits, whatever ends or goods they wish to realize (Sen 1987). It would also insist that not all components of the standard of living, or well-being, or whatever one wants to call it, can sensibly be the province of the state; for the purposes of public policy, it would say, the standard of living consists only of those components 'the enhancement of which would be the appropriate subject of a social contract between individuals wishing to share the benefits of social co-operation' (Seabright n.d.: 9, 13). Acknowledging pluralism, such a contractualism concludes that to the best of its ability, in the circumstances in which it finds itself, a government has an obligation not actually to decide what the appropriate standard of living or any other substantive good or outcome is, and then to work towards it, but to provide the rights, entitlements and empowerments with which its citizens can themselves decide and act effectively to realize whatever it is that they want to realize.

Such a contractualism is not, of course, without its own internal difficulties. There is the question of the time

period over which 'the benefits of social co-operation' are to be considered; the question of what the desirable rights or entitlements and empowerments are, and of how they might be guaranteed; the question of what in general in modern societies and in any particular case is to be included in 'the standard of living' and what the actual standard should be; the question of which components of this standard, and which other rights and entitlements, are 'appropriately' a matter of implicit contract between the state and its citizens; and the question of how to decide between those rights and entitlements which conflict. Moreover, the line between the consequentialist and contractualist positions itself is not sharp. What rights, entitlements and empowerments are thought desirable will turn in part on what the consequences of the citizens' being able to exercise them are thought to be. Moreover, if the desirability of this or that right depends on what these consequences will be, and if these consequences conflict, as they are likely to do in a plural society, then the rights and entitlements (and by extension the empowerments too) will also, as Dasgupta puts it, have to be 'traded' (Dasgupta 1990). Contractualism does not do away with questions of politics.

Nonetheless, it does avoid the objections to sum-welfare consequentialism. It also provides a criterion with which to decide how good governments are. This is, simply, whether they are acting to maximize the benefits of social co-operation. In political theory, this has usually been used as a criterion with which citizens can assess their own government. But it can also be extended by one government, or by an analogous institution, like the World Bank or the United Nations, to assess another. If our confrontation with another government is purely notional, and is not a real relation, the decision will be private, and have no public purchase. If however the relation is real — that is to say if we, whoever we are, have a relation with another state in which what that state does has consequences for us as well as its citizens — this will not be so.

Consider the example of the relation between a donor and a Third World state. This could be seen in at least three ways. In the first, the donor can be seen to have a relation with the state as regime, that is to say, with those who direct it. In this case, if those in office in the regime in question accept the conditions that the donor imposes, fine; and if not, not. In the second, the donor can be seen to have a relation with the regime as the representative of the citizens of the state. In this case, if the citizens are in favour of the suggested conditions, fine; and if not, not. In the third, the donor can be seen to have a relation with the state in question as the agency which has a contract to maximize the benefits of co-operation in its territory. In this case, if no-one, donor, government or citizens, can reasonably reject the claim that the donor's conditions satisfy this

criterion, then fine; but if any of them can, then the donor's conditions have to be reconsidered.

This is, as it stands, very general. And it obviously does not remove the need for complex and particular judgements. But it does discriminate. All international financial institutions, like the IMF, and some multilateral donors, like the World Bank, have been concerned entirely with outcomes, have had a clear idea of how the outcome that matters to them might be achieved, and have tried to avoid questions of politics. They have been straightforwardly consequentialist. (This is why they like to talk of 'governance'). But in their relations with a recipient they have come to see themselves as entering a contract. This is financially to support a government if and only if, with due allowance for slippage, that government agrees to implement a specific set of policies. This is a contract of the first of the three kinds I have mentioned, a contract with the government, in effect with the economic ministries, rather than with the citizens or with the state as the maximizer of social co-operation between the citizens. Other multilateral donors, like the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD), and many bilaterals, like the French government in Africa in the later 1980s, have been concerned with outcomes that are pursued under more explicitly political conditions. ('In contributing to economic progress and reconstruction', states the first chapter of the agreement setting up the EBRD, 'the purpose of the Bank shall be to foster the transition towards open, market-oriented economies and to promote private and entrepreneurial initiative in Central and Eastern European countries committed to and applying the principles of multi-party democracy, pluralism and market economics'.) This is a contract of the second kind, with governments as representatives of their citizens. Or at least, it is a contract of this second kind unless there is a further and unstated assumption that social co-operation within any state can only be maximized if the politics through which the government of that state holds power is of a particular kind. If there is such an assumption, it is a contract of the third kind.

If it is a contract of the second kind, however, then it is not well grounded. The citizens' preferences, I have argued, are not paramount. If, on the other hand, it is a contract of the third kind, it is unacceptably preemptive. It is perfectly possible that neither the government of a state nor a majority of that state's citizens believes that the benefits of social co-operation are in fact best served by a competitive multi-party democracy. And it is perfectly possible that they could be right in that belief. This has arguably been so in the recent past. Mobutu, for instance, like some other African presidents, has always claimed that to allow a competitive multi-party democracy in Zaire would be to licence disorder. The claim may now be strained like

Moi's in Kenya in the early 1990s; it has certainly been self-serving, but in the years after the civil war in Congo-Kinshasa between 1960 and 1965, it was not self-evidently false. Likewise, the factional disputes within Chang's Democratic Party in South Korea in 1960 and 1961, and his consequent inability to form stable cabinets and govern effectively, made it easier for Park Chung Hee and Kim Jong Pil to justify and consolidate the coup against him which they'd initially planned against Syngman Rhee before Rhee and the First Republic fell (by other hands) in 1960. Exploiting the discredit into which political competition had fallen in Chang's Second Republic, and playing on fears of renewed attack from the north, these officers made a tacit bargain with South Koreans that they would forsake an open democracy for security and prosperity. It is of course possible now to argue that in each of these two cases, the risks of a competitive electoral politics were overstated. The conflict in Congo-Kinshasa was exacerbated by the fact that at a hot moment in the Cold War, the United States and the Soviet Union decided to contest each other there. But when that conflict was over and the Soviet Union had retreated, most Congolese were impoverished and exhausted, and had Mobutu been willing to share power, a competitive democracy might have been peaceful. In their own history before and after the Japanese occupation, Koreans, like the Congolese before Leopold's Congo Free State and the subsequent Belgian occupation, had had little or no experience of competitive democracy and the rules which it requires to work. But Chang did manage to secure the redirection of economic policy on which the subsequent success of Park and Kim's coup depended, and it might in retrospect seem that there was no reason why, with will and some skill, the country could not, like de Gaulle's Fifth Republic at the end of the 1950s and the beginning of the 1960s, have implemented the new policy in the midst of incipient civil war. These, however, are the judgements of hindsight. It is much less easy persuasively to claim that looking forward from Kinshasa in 1965 or from Seoul in 1961, open political competition would have been a rational choice. In each country, security, and the authority of the state to provide it, were at a premium, and such competitive democracy as there had already been had turned into a self-defeating shambles. Those who established the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development in 1990 presumably thought that the world had changed. After 1989, external threats to nation-states had all but disappeared. Governments predicated on 'national security', therefore, were no longer defensible. For many parts of the world, including those countries in Central and Eastern Europe which the European Bank was set up to help, this may be correct. But internal disorder or the real threat of such disorder is still

widespread in what was Yugoslavia, in republics in the former Soviet Union, in Turkey, Iraq, India, Sri Lanka, Myanmar, Cambodia, and Indonesia, in Peru, and in Africa from Algeria to South Africa. If Przeworski is correct, that democracy is about rules, not outcomes, and that competing parties will only accept defeat if they can be sure that the rules will stay in place and give them a chance of victory in the future (Przeworski 1991:1040); and if Schumpeter was right, that such rules will only be accepted if there is widespread agreement on the general shape and direction of the society and if not too many issues are politicized (Schumpeter 1950); then it may be asking too much to expect many of those citizens who are protesting against what their regimes are doing to them to accept such rules.

Moreover, internal disorder is not always incidental to economic development. In its earlier stages, which can be prolonged, such development is notoriously uneven. It can disproportionately benefit one sector, or class, or gender, or region. It can also actively disbenefit others. It can accordingly produce new discontents and divisions. It can also itself be pursued, and often has been, as a tacit civil war. It can require decisions about how to allocate or more painfully reallocate existing assets, new resources and immediate benefits. For this reason, and because they have to be effective, often to be long-term, these are not decisions that are always best arrived at through open political competition or an attempted compromise between existing interests. They can be decisions that are better taken outside the arenas of electoral contest altogether. But if it is difficult reasonably to reject the claim that the development in question makes sense, that is to say to argue that in pursuing development in this way the state is in the medium or long run not maximizing the benefits of social co-operation, it may also not make sense for donors to insist that a condition of continuing to support it is that the government which is directing it be 'democratic'. Drastic measures can require drastic politics. The demands of financial stabilization and structural adjustment, in which heads of state and ministries of finance are asked by the donors to assume exceptional powers, and by which the poor are disadvantaged, but which are not everywhere and always wholly unreasonable, are only the most recent cases in point.³

Alternatively, it may be that even if formally democratic, and so on the face of it acceptable to those donors for whom constitutional democracy is a desirable pre-condition, a regime is able to work its constitution and exploit its other advantages in such a way as to stay in power without effective opposition at all. Yet on the maximization of co-operation criterion,

³ The exceptional powers are frankly explained by William Rhodes, who is now the vice-chairman of Citicorp and led the international

banking community's response to the debt crisis of the 1980s (Rhodes 1992).

the likely benefits of its rule to its citizens may be sufficiently promising to justify external support (Ascherson 1992a, 1992b). This is what might be said of some states now in Central and Eastern Europe, which Ascherson has in mind; it might also be said of Mexico, where despite the vigour of his other reforms, Salinas still resists the pressure to open the ruling Party of the Institutional Revolution to full political competition, or of Vietnam, or Sri Lanka, or Ghana, indeed of a host of Third World states; and it can certainly be said of Italy at least until the early 1990s and of Japan still. And if there is anything in the belief that a degree of 'development' is conducive to a more truly competitive politics, such support may in time produce what is by this standard a more acceptable set of political rules.

But suppose that it can reasonably be said that a regime is not acting in such a way as to be maximizing the benefits of social co-operation among its citizens, and that it therefore fails this test of good government. On what grounds could a donor then refuse aid, or insist that if aid is to continue, the policies must change? It is important to see that this is only a question either if it is assumed that governments do adequately represent their citizens and that the citizens' preferences are sovereign, an assumption I have already questioned; or if it is assumed that the sovereignty of states themselves, as states, is sacred, and overrides all other claims. This, in the world that was established in 1648, has been a common argument. The delegates who met in Westphalia then to negotiate the end of the religious disputes of the Thirty Years War were clear and almost unanimous: princes must be considered to be absolutely sovereign over their territory, and could have good reasons to go to war if and only if this sovereignty was threatened. After almost exactly another 300 years, in the course of which arguments from nationalism and democracy had modified existing defences for the internal authority of the state, the authority of the prince or sovereign himself, or the authority of what Hobbes in 1651 recast as the impersonal sovereignty of the state itself, and in the course of which existing justifications of empire had been rejected by the United States and the Soviet Union (and with the support of these two powers, by a majority in the new United Nations), these old arguments for the absolute sovereignty of states were extended to make them arguments for the absolute sovereignty of states-as-nations. The United Nations' Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples in 1960 put it plainly: all 'peoples', it said, had a right to 'self-determination', and no 'inadequacy of political, economic, social or educational preparedness should . . . serve as a pretext for delaying [their] independence'. Until then, all states had been defined by force. Now, sovereignty was not just a condition which, when successfully fought for, had to be respected; it was also something that had to be

conceded to those who, being nations, had a right to it. On what grounds could anyone now override this argument?

A conventional answer is, if a state is violating the 'human rights' of its citizens. There are two distinct arguments for such an answer. The first and more extreme is simply that a certain set of basic rights has precedence over the claims of any state. The second is that states have a duty to acknowledge these rights, and that if they don't, they are breaking the implicit contract they have with their citizens. This is more consistent with what I have been arguing here. It is also more practical. For against the first defence, there is the simple fact that there is (as yet) no authority above all states which has the power to enforce decisions on them. (An International Court of Justice exists, but its judgements are not binding.) For all the talk of 'international society', there are still at best associations of states, like the United Nations itself and the European Community, or institutions, like the World Bank, in which individual states have the say (Mayall 1990). In practice, it is still only states which, severally or together, can talk to and act on other states.

But why should states concern themselves with the rights of other states' citizens? Once again, there seem to be essentially two arguments. The first and more general is an extension of the conclusion that was reached in Westphalia in 1648. There, it was supposed that states had a responsibility for the security of their territories and the subjects in those territories. That was the thought which Hobbes spelt out as a justification for the new modern state's internal authority. Now, more than 300 years later, it is widely assumed that states have responsibilities beyond security, and beyond extending the civil and political rights of citizenship itself, to provide 'social rights'. In the late 20th century, the argument is increasingly that the right to rule implies a more extensive set of duties. This is the kind of social contract that I have gestured at here. In fact, of course, many states which fall down on such duties, and also those which acknowledge that others do, have an interest in inaction. It is one thing for Brussels to press London on this matter, or for Paris to press Cotonou. It is quite another for Beijing to support action in the Security Council against Colombo's treatment of the Sri Lankan Tamils, or for Moscow to support action against Belgrade's treatment of ethnic Albanians in Kosovo. To do so would be to hostage their own future fortune. They will prefer to stay with the principles of 1648. (It is also more difficult, as donors privately acknowledge, to press an India or a Brazil than it is to press a small African state.) This first argument for states' concerning themselves with the rights of citizens in other states, therefore, may be morally persuasive, but in the existing Realpolitik of relations between First World states and many within

the Third World, and of relations also between most Third World states themselves, it will not have much bite.

The second of the two arguments, however, could have. States in their role as donors, and a *fortiori* the international institutions whose *raison d'être* is to be donors, exist solely and explicitly to improve the standard of living or well-being of the citizens of other states. That's to say, on the line of thinking I have been pursuing here, they exist to ensure that the social rights of the citizens of these states, and those civil and political rights without which these social rights as claimable rights would be incomplete, are extended and observed. States, in short, are assumed to have a contract with their citizens to provide the best possible conditions for an improvement in the standard of living. Donors exist to improve the conditions for improvements in standards of living. They can accordingly be seen to put themselves under an obligation to assist states which do their best to observe this contract with their citizens, and to have reason to argue with those which do not.

This conclusion has two attractions. In the first place, it satisfies the intuition that donors, including states in their role as donors, should not be indifferent to the politics of the states whose citizens they exist to help, yet sidesteps the strong support still for the assumption, outdated though this may be, that no state, as a state, should 'interfere in the internal affairs' of another. Indeed, it is consistent with the thinking that does now guide many donors. The economists in the IMF and World Bank and elsewhere who argue that states should spend less on inefficient production, invest in the infrastructure, and do more to raise taxes; those in the EBRD and the foreign ministries of some Northern states who ask for fair and open elections; as well, of course, as those negotiators who insist that political prisoners be freed before aid is disbursed, are not necessarily misguided. But they run the risk of imposing their own particular interests, economic and political, in circumstances where these may not be appropriate, and of exciting aggravation where they could avoid it. The attraction of the kind of contract I have been suggesting here is that it can accommodate these particular interests as long as they meet a wider test: the test not of whether they are positively acceptable to the recipient that is too strong, but of whether, once the principle in the contract itself is accepted, the relevant parties could not reasonably reject them (Scanlon 1982; Nagel 1991).

This is the other attraction. The conclusion allows for a great deal not reasonably to be rejected. This matters. Not only is it unproven that the failures of government always and everywhere outweigh failures of the market. There are also radically different conceptions of just what does count as maximizing the benefits of co-

operation. The present impulse in thinking about 'good government' for development comes from the United States, and present conceptions of good government reveal their origins (Kruger 1990). As I have said, the American argument has been that everyone has their particular interests, those of the citizens are sovereign, and the actual representation of their particular interests is the ideal. Hence the ideological attractions of 'the market', in which it is supposed that each person can pursue his or her interests without any mediation at all. In politics, however, virtual representation is the reality, and politicians and those who execute political decisions must always therefore be suspected of pursuing their own particular interests at the expense of others. Such suspicion may often be justified, even if the old American grounds for it, that politicians are just one more set of citizens with particular interests, may be too simple. In all other representative democracies, however, virtual representation is accepted for what it is, the tribute that the democratic aspiration pays to the modern state. The state is presumed to have information that the citizens do not, to be able to interpret it in ways that the citizens cannot, and to be able to act on it and to do so unless there is evidence to the contrary in what it takes to be the common good. Indeed, in many of these other democracies, not least those now in East Asia, it would be thought absurd to suppose that each citizen's interest, let alone the interests of all, would best be served by devolving decisions to them. It is taken for granted that the state exists to maximize the benefits of co-operation or at least, of co-ordination, and that without it, there would be a radically sub-optimal disorder. In some other cultures, it is true, including many in sub-Saharan Africa, politics is seen in a different way, as a means of enriching oneself and one's own people, and there has been little or no conception of any wider good (Hawthorn 1993). Here, the donors have more difficult choices to make. But the pure types of modern government — the actual rather than virtual representation of all particular interests (urged in Pennsylvania in the 1780s); electoral competition between the virtual representatives of one political class which agrees on a mixed economy (Britain in the 1950s), factional competition within an effectively uncontested party of virtual representatives in a directed market economy (Japan since the late 1950s), the use of office solely for personal gain (Zaire in the 1980s, not to mention North Korea all through) are rare. In most states now, including most of those in sub-Saharan Africa and the rest of the Third World, there are elements of each. This second attraction of the contractualist formulation is that it provides a criterion of good government but allows many readings of what that might actually consist. The onus is on the donors reasonably to reject what the recipients suggest; not on the recipients to agree that what the donors suggest is acceptable.

Nonetheless, a question remains. What if a regime can reasonably be said not to be practising good government, and refuses to change? Does the donor then turn away, condemning the citizens to a bad government which in the nature of the case they're unlikely to be able to change? The harsh answer must be yes. The argument I have made, and the distinction I have used to make it — the distinction between states as states and states (or associations of states) as donors — allows no other conclusion. Only if we were to inhabit a world in which this distinction marked no difference — a world in which every state was assumed not only to have a duty to provide security for its citizens and respect the absolute sovereignty of every other state, but also to extend civil, political and social rights to its citizens; and in which it was agreed that any government which did not meet this obligation was justifiably subject to coercion by others — could we argue for active intervention. Such a world would have its attractions. It would be a world in which it was agreed that what had been wrong with the civilizing mission of European imperialism and its neo-imperialist successors was not the idea of a civilizing mission, but imperialism. The practice of development, itself a civilizing mission of a more civilized kind, will be incomplete so long as such interventions are not accepted.

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