

Essay Question I	A
Essay Question II	B+
Research Paper	A
Lecture	A
<hr/> Final course grade	<hr/> A

QUESTION

Present a critique of the Functional theory of David Mitrany, including an analysis of his basic postulates. Does his approach have any application to contemporary problems of economic redistribution? Do the performance of UNDP and the specialized agencies lend support to his thesis?

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(A) Mitrany's Functionalism Theory, Analysis and Basic Postulates

The functionalism theory is basically predicated on the assumption that the development of economic and social co-operation at the international level is a fundamental prerequisite for the ultimate resolution of political conflicts and the eradication of war. David Mitrany is one of the most elaborate and leading exponents of the theory.

Functionalism presupposes that world peace cannot be achieved through political legislation. Rather it is in co-operation by states in functional areas which can help solve the major conflicts of politics and security.

Indeed, Functionalists like Mitrany maintain that co-operation in specific functional spheres like health, welfare or economic co-operation is the only means to solve the problem of world conflict.

Mitrany clearly links functionalism to the ultimate prevention of war and development of authoritative political institutions.

It is argued, that such co-operation would lead states to a level of interlinkages which would be difficult to sever. This is because as co-operation in those areas as health, welfare and economic co-operation are critical to the welfare of the state, the transnational linkages once formed would strongly militate against conflicts which were likely to interfere and in fact sever the links.

International co-operation would also lead to the formation of transnational interest groups. These interest groups which would

be forged across territorial boundaries will have a stake in maintaining peace.

Functionalists argue that poverty and inequality are the main ingredients leading to war. Thus once the deep seated economic and social causes are confronted with a view of eliminating or at least reducing poverty and inequality, the likelihood of the war erupting is equally reduced. Functional theory therefore proposes the raising of the living standard of the developing countries as well as the minimization of the factors of economic instability.

The most crucial aspect of the functionalist formula, however, is the necessity that technocrats and not politicians should be the directors of the cooperative movement, so that selfish national interests would not predominate. And according to Inis Claude, "Functionalism may be regarded as a device for sneaking up on sovereignty, full of hopeful possibilities for establishing the groundwork of the international community." [Inis Claude, Swords into Plowshares, Random House, New York, 1971, p. 386.] It is thus argued by the functionalists that functionalism will bring about new patterns of organization which may change the global international system leading to the erosion of national sovereignty.

An analysis of some of the basic postulates of functionalism reveal that they are based on the erroneous or at least exaggerated assumptions.

To assume that the technical can be divorced from the political is an unrealistic proposition bordering on utopian. Equally unrealistic is the assumption that there can be separation of the social and economic problems from the political arena. Even if such dichotomy was possible, it could only be of a provisional nature. In the final analysis, international action at the economic level cannot be divorced from the political level.

The postulate that technocrats and not political actors should be allowed to direct the course of the cooperative movement is not in accordance with political realities of the world. Technocrats could not insulate the process of co-operation from political crisis since the centrality of the economic and social concerns of the State preclude, particularly in the case of developing countries, being left to the mercy of the technocrats. It is submitted that politicians and political actors are by definition central to the movement towards economic and social co-operation from the onset. This is particularly the case in the developing countries where such issues are considered highly political and technocrats will not be allowed to make such decisions. Because of powerlessness of dependent states, politicians become very jealous of their limited range of power. They would not thus allow technocrats to take over an area of decision-making in which they, the politicians could demonstrate some degree of power and control.

Functionalism's insistence on giving priority over co-operation in social and economic field does not answer one relevant and indeed vital question. Can states be successfully encouraged to cooperate in meaningful functional endeavours before settling out-

standing political and security issues which draws a wedge between them. The example of relations between India and Pakistan would tend to belie this assumption. To say this is not to negate the validity of the hypothesis that inter-state co-operation in functional fields does create favourable grounds for resolution of conflict. It is rather only to assert that experience has so far demonstrated that political questions seem to have had a greater determinant factor in the relations between States. Indeed, it is rather far-fetched to assume that behavioural patterns of co-operation will change the human being and lead him to forget the differences and confrontation in political matters. Thus, the postulate that functional organizations, by focusing upon areas of common interest will lead to the promotion of habits and attitudes which will equip man for the pursuit of a system of international relations in which the expectations of constructive co-operation and collaboration will override the motives for conflict, appear to be exaggerated.

The assumption that poverty is the main cause of war cries for examination. *It is not the most disadvantaged countries economically which have started the great world wars.* The world is rich of experiences of military engagements which have no relevance whatsoever to the issues of hunger and economic injustice. On the other hand, present international trends where the desire of the primary producers of raw materials to assert their rights and the veiled threats of some of the industrialized powers for concerted action including the military option against them, would seem to reinforce the argument in favour of international co-operation.

Lastly, the postulate regarding the forging of transnational linkages suffers at least one drawback. The assumption is made that no firm ideological differences and struggles for power would prevent the initial forging of the linkages.

II

(B) Mitrany's Functional Theory and the Contemporary Problems of Economic Redistribution

A new trend in the pattern of international relations has begun to emerge. The process of decolonization in Africa, Asia, and Latin America, has led to the emergence of a new force in world politics, thus creating new problems and calling for new policies. The new force is playing an increasingly important role in drawing the attention of the international community to the extreme poverty and great affluence which co-exist in the world, and to the necessity of redressing the world's inequalities. These are what one may call contemporary economic problems, the problems of redistribution.

To assert that the approach of functionalism has some application to the contemporary problems of economic redistribution is to suggest that the world's inequalities can be eliminated by economic and social co-operation. This can only be the case if economic and social co-operation is intended to effect the actual transfer of technology and other resources from the developed to the developing countries. It is also true, however, that economic and social co-operation can take place between unequal parties and this has actually been the case over the past several years. For example,

international trade between the developed and developing countries has been conducted on the most unfavourable terms to the developing countries, and the developed countries have continued to be the beneficiaries of this kind of economic co-operation. Or take the case of the economic aid as one form of economic co-operation. Surely, one cannot argue that high interest loans and private investment would lead to the elimination of world inequalities! They are in fact, perpetuating these inequalities. One must therefore be careful in supposing that economic and social co-operation could eliminate or even reduce the vast difference between the haves and the have-nots. The thesis of functionalism can only have some application to contemporary problems of economic redistribution if it pre-supposes the existence of political will on the part of the developed countries to transfer science and technology to the developing countries with a view to closing the gap between extreme poverty and great affluence which co-exist in the world. Otherwise, it would appear to offer measures of a relief nature and not solving the crucial problem of redistribution.

III

(C) Evaluating the Role of UNDP and the Specialized Agencies

Over the past decade, the world has witnessed the creation of a number of specialized agencies by the United Nations. These bodies, particularly the UNDP and UNIDO were intended to be the basis for multilateral technical assistance to developing countries. In principle, one may say that the UNDP and other specialized agencies lend support to the thesis of functionalism. Their perfor-

mance however, has always reflected the unwillingness of the developed countries to narrow the gap between the extreme poverty prevailing in the developing countries and the great affluence existing in the few developed countries.

The developed countries which were expected to be the major contributors to the resources of UNDP, UNIDO and other specialized agencies have shown great reluctance in contributing substantially to these agencies. Even the little they contribute, is normally tied to specific purposes determined by them. Worse still, these same developed countries are striving to shape the policies of these agencies to suit their economic interests which are contrary to the demands of the developing countries. As a result, the specialized agencies are left without adequate resources to execute their duties and without independent policies of their own.

But what may in future become the source of political conflicts is the attitude of the developed countries, particularly the attitude of the western capitalist countries towards the internal economic policies of the developing countries. Having recognized their economic weakness, some developing countries have begun to take some economic measures to safeguard their economies from exploitation by the developed countries. For example, some developing countries have decided to nationalize foreign capital and have taken measures to ensure their sovereignty over their natural resources. Some developed countries have viewed these measures as a threat to their economic interests and had gone to the extent of using military intervention in order to maintain the sta-

tus quo whereby the rich become richer and the poor become poorer. Such attitudes nullify the whole concept of functionalism as it increases the hiatus between the haves and the have-nots and cementing the seeds of discontent and ultimately promote rather than prevent conflict.

So, to the developing countries, economic and social co-operation is only meaningful if it is aimed at redressing the world's inequalities. As long as the well-being of a small number of countries is based on the exploitation and misery of the majority poor, economic and social co-operation will only serve to perpetuate inequalities rather than eliminate them.

Also note the political wrangling between specialized agencies & within UNDP.

Functionalism assumes a gradualist approach. The functionalist presupposes that a long time is available for world order! So we, in fact, have the time?

Functionalism is vague on the transition to world order. The functionalist merely says that world order will grow out of the natural harmony of the experts. Demonstrably, however, there is no more harmony among experts than among politicians.

Also see Haas, Beyond the Nation-State. He revitalizes functionalism. Haas politicizes the theory, substitutes qualifications & probabilities for absolutes, and adds an empirical assessment. His footnotes provide the best sources (bibliography) on the subject -

A good answer. You've grasped the essential point - the ultimate decisions are political!

QUESTION - II

One of the critical issues confronting world organization is the relationship between regional agencies, such as the OAS, and global bodies. Why have the Charter norms (Articles 52 and 53) in effect been reversed? In terms of jurisdiction and sanctions authorization, what is the desirable relationship of regional and global bodies? To what degree are the regional organizations likely to be meaningful in terms of constructing a rational system of world order?

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QUESTION II

THE UNITED NATIONS VS. REGIONAL ARRANGEMENTS OR REGIONAL AGENCIES - A REVERSAL OF EMPHASIS

Articles 52, 53 and 54 of the United Nations Charter provide room for the existence, and encourage the utilization of regional arrangements or regional agencies for the maintenance of international peace and security within the framework of the United Nations.

Although attempts were made, even at the time of drafting the Charter, to define regional arrangements or agencies, no definition has been agreed upon on these terms. However, there seems to be complete agreement in practice that the Organization of African Unity, the Organization of American States and the League of Arab States are such regional arrangements or agencies. Whether military institutions like NATO and the Warsaw Pact are such regional arrangements or institutions are much less clear both in theory and practice.

Quite apart from the question of definition, the exact limits of the role of these regional arrangements or agencies do not come out very clearly in the provisions of the Charter referred to above. It is provided in article 52 that these regional arrangements or agencies are empowered to promote the settlement of local disputes either at their own initiative or at the initiative of the Security Council and that priority is to be given to the regional arrangement or agency in the settlement of such local disputes. In the same article, regional arrangements or agencies are also empowered to deal with other matters relating to the maintenance

of international peace and security on two conditions: (a) that such matters relating to the maintenance of international peace and security are "appropriate for regional action" and (b) that the regional arrangements or agencies themselves and their activities are "consistent with the Purposes and Principles of the United Nations". Article 53 while requiring the Security Council where appropriate, to utilize these regional action under its authority precludes these regional arrangements or agencies to take enforcement action without the authorization of the Security Council, with the exception of measures taken under article 107.

The limitations imposed on regional action seem therefore to indicate forcefully that as between the regional role and the United Nations role in the maintenance of International peace and security emphasis as distinguished from priority has been put on the role of the United Nations as the overriding authority. While this is the correct interpretation of the relationship between the two types of institutions, in practice however, the line delineating the provinces of authority of the two is very blurred. This situation is primarily caused by the lack of clear definitions of the otherwise decisive terms used in the two articles of the United Nations Charter.

The requirement of consistency with Purposes and Principles of the Charter in any such regional arrangements or agencies and their activities are fairly clear. But the interpretations given to the critical terms "dispute", "matters.....appropriate for

regional action", and "enforcement action" are far from uniform or authoritative enough to be of much assistance. Consequently regional arrangements or agencies, have often taken action purportedly consistent with articles 52 and 53 of the United Nations Charter which may not so convincingly qualify for regional action under these articles.

The cases of quarantine imposed by the Organization of American States upon Cuba and the actions against the Dominican Republic have been cited as enforcement actions taken by a regional arrangement or agency in violation of article 53. In justification of the actions by the OAS, it has been contended that since the quarantine in either case did not involve the use of force they were not enforcement actions mentioned in article 53.

Thus the question whether the OAS took upon itself powers which belonged to the United Nations revolved around the meaning of "enforcement action". By inference, it may indeed be concluded that by attempting to define the action taken by the OAS as something less than enforcement action an admission was thereby made to the effect that the powers of the Security Council in the employment of enforcement action override those of regional arrangements or agencies.

The problem of definition of "matters.....appropriate for regional action" and "dispute" arose in connection with the Cuban question and Guatemalan complaint of aggression in 1954 respectively. In the former case, the imposition of a quarantine on Cuba was con-

sidered by some as an action appropriately dealt with by the OAS while others contended that it was not. In the latter case, the act of aggression complaint was held by some as a dispute while others held a contrary view.

In each case, the difference in views centred again not on the principle itself but on the interpretation given to the terminology used in articles 52 and 53 of the United Nations Charter, once more confirming the overriding role of the United Nations over that of the regional arrangement or agency.

In any case, however, article 54 of the United Nations Charter obligates such regional arrangements or agencies to keep the Security Council fully informed of activities undertaken or in contemplation under regional arrangements or by regional agencies for the maintenance of International Peace and Security. The intention here can clearly be seen as an indication of the primary role of the Security Council in all matters relating to the maintenance of International Peace and Security. It is in that sense a subordination of regional arrangements or agencies to the United Nations.

As in many other cases where member states of the United Nations perpetrate or appear to perpetrate irregularities in contravention of the provisions of the Charter and rationalize these actions or omissions by doubtful interpretations of the very provisions of the Charter, the actions taken by regional arrangements

or agencies like the OAS do not necessarily indicate a reversal of the emphasis placed by member states on the United Nations over regional arrangements or agencies. Rather these seemingly irregular actions reflect the inadequacy of the United Nations in dealing with the cases in question to the satisfaction of the expectations of the member states. It is probably more appropriate to consider such irregularities as expedient attempts to pursue certain interests. It is not so much a question of general emphasis being removed from the universal organization to the regional institution irrespective of whether the international organization could still handle the matter as satisfactorily as the regional institution. Nor can it be considered as a proof that states of a particular region have realized that the regional institution is a more effective means of dealing with a problem in all or most cases.

It is interesting to note that in all these cases, the problems were ultimately or at some point referred to the Security Council although the regional arrangements or agencies concerned did not cease to exist.

In conclusion, it may be said that a great deal of the contradictions demonstrated by state practice in relation to articles 52, 53 and 54 owe their origin to the lack of clarity in the terminology used in these articles. The Charter has no interpretation clauses. The "travaux preparatoire" are of little assistance in this respect for one can only find in them divergent views ending in vague compromises. To a large extent, faithful abidance by the

Yes! It was a compromise

Charter depends upon the good faith of member states. And it can be confidently stated that despite the occasional or even frequent departure by member states from the actual provisions of the Charter nobody has openly rejected the general principles elaborated in the various articles including articles 52, 53 and 54.

II

Regional organizations have played and can continue to play - perhaps more effectively than has hitherto been the case - a role in the building up of a more rational system of international order. It is submitted that such a new system ought to be based on certain fundamental attributes which truly constitute some basic prerequisites for the preservation of international peace and security. Among those prerequisites, we can mention a more just and equitable international political and economic order.

To the extent that regional organizations can provide an important input towards the restructuring of the present order, they play a significant role in the democratization of international relations. Caution must nonetheless be taken not to overstretch this argument. A regional approach - say by the Organization of African Unity - on vital issues effecting the international community help to enhance the otherwise weak position of the individual components of the region vis-a-vis the more powerful members of the international community. Current efforts at establishing new laws for the exploitation of the resources that lay in the sea bed, the ocean floor and subsoil thereof, beyond the limits of national jurisdiction,

is a case in point. Clearly, without the Organization of African Unity, it would not have been possible to have an 'African' position on such a vital issue and thus the important contribution in the setting up of the rules of the game in this field. Indeed, it can be surmised that, from a general third world perspective, regional organizations are an indispensable institution in the creation of what can be described as a rational system of international order.

But regional institutions can become competitive among themselves.

But regional organizations can also be used as instruments for obstructing the discussion, if not resolution, of some serious "regional" problems whose ramifications are of international relevance and importance. The OAU's approach that the Burundi civil strife (involving as it did the killings of tens of thousands of people) is an example of how the monopolistic claims of a regional organization to settle "local" or "internal" conflicts can be to the detriment of the aims of the international organization, whose objectives include the promotion of fundamental freedoms irrespective of racial, political, ideological and geographical boundaries! In the same context, reference could be made to the attempts of the ASEAN (Association of South Asian Nations) to give themselves an exclusive privilege and responsibilities of finding a solution to the Cambodian conflict.

Another area of crucial relevance is the behaviour of the components of the regional organizations in terms of how they interpret and relate their loyalties to their organization when facing the larger issues of the international community. In other words,

should they give priority to the regional rather than international organizations when they are faced with problems which demand a clear cut position whose effects would result in a conflict of interests. These are not abstract questions. Indeed, recent experiences at the United Nations has demonstrated that this problem is one of very topical nature. For example, should the members of the African group have kept quiet and in the process demonstrated their solidarity with a member of their group, when the execution of certain ex-officials of the Ethiopian Government took place.[?] Or should they approach the problem in the context of the larger interests of the world community and dispense with narrow regional solidarity.[?] Put differently, in a situation of this nature, was it appropriate to argue, as some indeed tried to maintain, that it was wrong to initiate a United Nations appeal and that the matter should have been dealt within the context of the Organization of African Unity.[?]

Finally, it can be stated that whatever the short-comings of the regional organizations, they do indeed have a great potential of constructing a rational system of world order. This is particularly relevant with the current triangularity of power set-up (USA, USSR and China). Regional organizations like the OAU (which is the most active regional political institution to-date), the League of Arab States, the EEC and the ASEAN can assist in providing an important thrust to a more equitable international order. Admittedly, the OAS' role in this context is severely handicapped by the United States membership and role. But with the growing trend

towards a more independent approach and with the diminishing influence of the United States, it is conceivable that in the future, an Organization of Latin American States may emerge of comparable significance like that of the OAU. The EEC is mentioned in this category only to the extent that it helps to project European voice and thus is a way cut across the dominance of the super powers.

The Charter provides no clear line of demarcation as to when a regional organization or when the UN should handle a dispute. Despite the "ambiguous compromise" reached at San Francisco, the weight of Charter norms came down on the side of Article 53. In 1945 it was thought that the SC would have priority over regional organizations. However, as statesmen realized that collective security was only an ideal, the dominant trend was toward "selective security" (regional defense pacts). The U.S. led and the other powers followed suit. Consequently, Article 52 received increasing emphasis to the detriment of Article 53. The reasons include the growth + intensification of the East-West rivalry as well as the related fact that the SC never acquired viable military power.

You could do a good deal more with the (difficult) question of the desirable relationship between regional and global bodies in terms of jurisdiction + sanctions authorization.

- There is little doubt that regional organizations are meaningful in constructing a rational system of world order. The key question today is how to best facilitate relations between regional organizations + the UN. I find the growth of layers of common interest - at whatever level - an important step in building world community.