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PRM-1

THE PRESIDENT HAS SEEN *af.*

THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

January 24, 1975

MEMORANDUM TO THE PRESIDENT

THROUGH: DONALD RUMSFELD

FROM: ROBERT A. GOLDWIN *rag*

PR-7

Morality is not easy to talk about publicly. It would probably be better if a President could answer such questions by letting his actions speak for him. But John Chancellor did ask the question, and others will, too, in the future. It seems necessary, therefore, to develop strong answers that are well grounded in moral philosophy.

I have composed one possible alternative answer to Chancellor's question, based on a discussion of the same question by John Locke, the British philosopher whose writings had such a profound influence on the authors of the Declaration of Independence and the Constitution.

I also attach the excerpt from Locke, to show you his argument in its original form.

- Q. (Chancellor) What about the moral implications? If a country is being strangled by a country or another set of countries that own a natural resource, is it moral to go and take that? It is their oil, it is not ours. Isn't that a troublesome question?
- A. Yes, it is a troublesome question, but it is a question that I have thought about and there are answers that seem to make sense to me.

We start with the fact that there is, and always has been, uneven ownership of goods and resources, among individuals and among nations. But I think

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that ownership does not give one man or one nation the moral right to use his ownership to subjugate or starve another. What kind of morality would that be, to strangle or subjugate others by withholding food or water or oil or some other necessity? It has been done, from time to time, through history, I know, but that doesn't make it right. Such actions cannot be defended on the grounds of morality.

I believe that being rich doesn't give a person or a nation a just power over the life and liberty of others. I also believe that resisting the efforts of others to strangle or destroy our nation is morally right. That's my view of the moral question you raise.

Attachment

42. But we know God hath not left one Man so to the Mercy of another, that he may starve him if he please: God the Lord and Father of all, has given no one of his Children such a Property, in his peculiar Portion of the things of this World, but that he has given his needy Brother a Right to the Surplusage of his Goods: so that it cannot justly be denyed him, when his pressing Wants call for it. And therefore no Man could ever have a just

Power over the Life of another, by Right of property in
10 Land or Possessions; since 'twould always be a Sin in any
Man of Estate, to let his Brother perish for want of af-
fording him Relief out of his Plenty. As *Justice* gives
every Man a Title to the product of his honest Industry,
and the fair Acquisitions of his Ancestors descended to
15 him; so *Charity* gives every Man a Title to so much out
of another's Plenty, as will keep him from extream want,
where he has no means to subsist otherwise; and a Man
can no more justly make use of another's necessity, to
force him to become his Vassal, by with-holding that Re-
20 lief, God requires him to afford to the wants of his Brother,
than he that has more strength can seize upon a weaker,
master him to his Obedience, and with a Dagger at his
Throat offer him Death or Slavery.