

Comprehension 2: CSS 2021

Q. Read the following passage and answer the questions given at the end. (20)

Prime Minister Tony Blair has consistently argued that the only option in the face of hyperpower is to offer wise counsel. But increasingly this is a course that governments and people across the world have refused. The mobilization for war against Iraq split the United Nations and provoked the largest anti-war demonstrations the world has ever seen. And through it all, America maintained its determination to wage war alone if necessary and not to be counselled by the concerns of supposedly allied governments when they faithfully represented the wishes of their electorates. Rather than engaging in debate, the American government expressed its exasperation. The influential new breed of neoconservative radio and television hosts went much further. They acted as ringmasters for outpourings of public scorn that saw French fries renamed 'freedom fries' and moves to boycott French and German produce across America. If one soundbite can capture a mood, then perhaps it would be Fox News' Bill O'Reilly. At the height of the tension over a second Security Council resolution to legitimate war in Iraq, Mr. O'Reilly told his viewers that the bottom line was security, the security of his family, and in that matter 'There's no moral equivalence between the US and Belgium'. It is, in effect, the ethos of hyperpower articulated and made manifest in the public domain of 24-hour talk. And America's willingness to prosecute war has raised innumerable questions about how it engages with other countries. Afghanistan has seen the removal of the Taliban. But there are no official statistics on the number of innocent civilians dead and injured to achieve that security objective. The people of Afghanistan have witnessed a descent into the chaos that preceded the arrival of the Taliban, a country administered not by a new era of democracy under the tutelage of the hyperpower, but merely by the return of the warlords. Beyond Kabul, much of the country remains too insecure for any meaningful efforts at reconstruction and there is enormous difficulty in bringing relief aid to the rural population.

Questions:

(4 Marks each)

1. Why does the doctrine of power set by neo-imperial America deny space to counselling?
2. What is the essence of 'moral equivalence' whereas War has no moral justification?
3. Why do countries occupied and under the tutelage of hyperpower have no peace?
4. Arguably Europe and hyperpower US are at cross purposes over the concept of war. Are they? Why?
5. What Tony Blair's meant by 'wise counsel', and did it prevail?

(i)

America's doctrine of power denies space to counselling because it sees itself as a hyperpower that does not need advice from others. It gives priority to its own security and national interests even when allied governments raise concerns. This attitude is strengthened by inner public and political pressure.

(ii)

The essence of 'moral equivalence' in this context means that America sees itself as morally superior to other countries. Even though war has no moral justification, it stills presents its own decisions as morally upright. It thinks its security and interests are more important than anyone else's.

(iii)

Countries occupied and placed under the tutelage of a hyperpower have no peace because it removes the existing government but does not establish a stable political or

security system. There is no effective plan to build strong institutions. Moreover, the civil suffer due to insecurity and lack of basic needs. As a result, these countries remain unstable.

(iv)

Arguably, Europe and the hyperpower United States are at cross purpose over the concept of war. Europe prefers conciliation and negotiation with allied governments and the international organizations. Whereas, U.S. prioritizes its own security and national interests over the concerns of others.

(v)

Tony Blair's idea of 'wise counsel' was that countries should engage in consultation and negotiation with each other and with international organizations to promote peace. However, this approach did not prevail because the U.S. largely ignored such advice and pursued its own decisions.