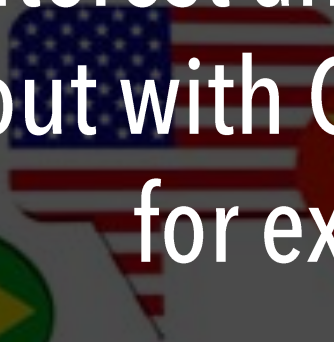




# Human Rights, Self-Interest, and Foreign Policy



How far should our foreign policy be led  
by self-interest and/or human rights?  
What about with China? Saudi Arabia,  
for example.



## Prevention

"World: 'Now it has Spread to the Other Side'" The Evening Star August 18, 1914

The cartoon illustrates the idea that war endangers civilization, causing a rupture of international relations that spreads conflict around the globe.





Herb Block. "Is this what you mean?" ca. 1939. Published by the Newspaper Enterprise Association. Ink, crayon, and opaque white over graphite underdrawing with overlay. Art Wood Collection of Cartoon and Caricature, Prints and Photographs Division, Library of Congress LC-DIG-ppmsca-07910 (2) © Herb Block Foundation [//www.loc.gov/pictures/item/2005676901/](http://www.loc.gov/pictures/item/2005676901/)



The Evening Star September 23, 1939

# Realism



The statesman must think in terms of the national interest, conceived as power among other powers. The popular mind, unaware of the fine distinctions of the statesman's thinking, reasons more often than not in the simple moralistic and legalistic terms of absolute good and absolute evil.

— *Hans Morgenthau* —

AZ QUOTES



Rostow, Kissinger, LBJ 1968



## Crusading Idealism

President Kennedy: We Shall Pay Any Price



# To Intervene or Not



# Climate Change and Foreign Policy





EDUCATION



FOOD



WATER



INFRASTRUCTURE



AGRICULTURE



ENVIRONMENT

# WHAT IS FOREIGN AID?



PEACE BUILDING



HEALTH CARE



MARKETS & TRADE



EMERGENCY RELIEF



RESILIENCE



TRAINING

Source: [bit.ly/2u9LAnv](https://bit.ly/2u9LAnv)

We Only Sell To 'Responsible'  
Governments



## US Traditions, after Walter Russell Mead

**The Hamiltonian tradition** – first US treasury secretary, Alexander Hamilton (1789-95) – commercialism and realism.

**The Jeffersonian tradition** – President Thomas Jefferson (1801-1809) – is apprehensive of the corrupting influence of international commitments and entangling alliances.

**The Jacksonian tradition** – President Andrew Jackson (1829-37) – populist, patriotic, pugnacious, and ultra-sensitive concerning any slight to their country's honour.

**Wilsonian tradition** – wartime president Woodrow Wilson (1913-21) ideas of crusading liberal internationalism.

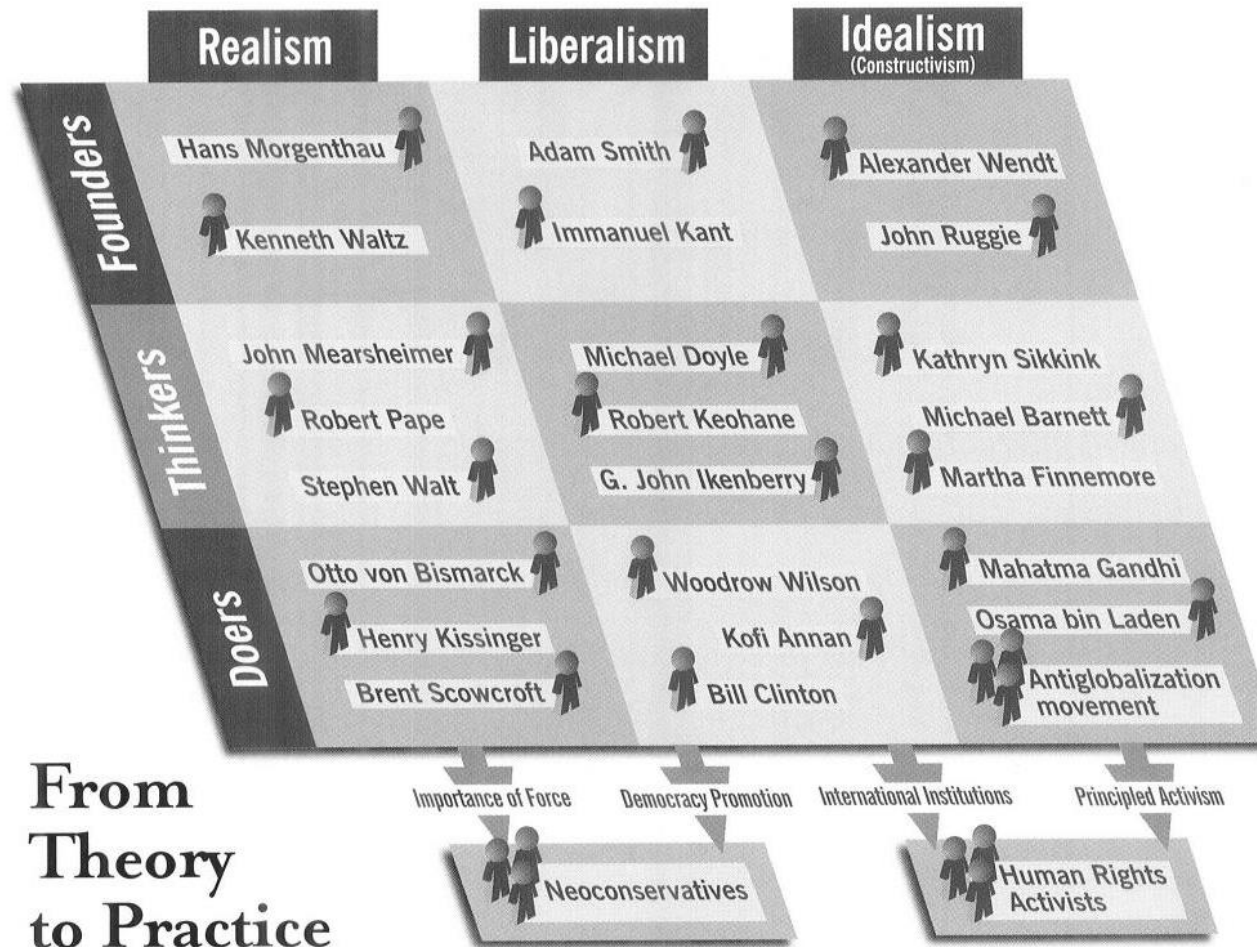
## Australian Traditions, after Owen Harries

**Menzies tradition** –prime minister Robert Menzies (1939-41, 1949-66): Realist, power and interest-based tradition: “sceptical of abstract, general schemes. He looked to interest rather than principle as the motive for action, to history and experience rather than abstract reasoning for the basis of sound judgment.”

**Evatt tradition** –Herbert Evatt (1951-1960). It is both strongly nationalist and internationalist: “... concerned to establish Australia’s independence, is sensitive to slights and about status. It is suspicious of great powers and will go out of its way to assert its independence of them, both in order to preserve its freedom of action and to strengthen its sense of identity.”

**Spender-Casey & Keating tradition** –Liberal foreign ministers Percy Spender and Richard Casey during the Menzies era & the views of prime minister Paul Keating (1991-96) re the importance of regional affairs.

“In contemplating these three traditions, the question is not which one of them is the right one for Australia to adopt in perpetuity, but what balance or mix of them is appropriate at any given time, as circumstances, and the priorities of our interests, change.”

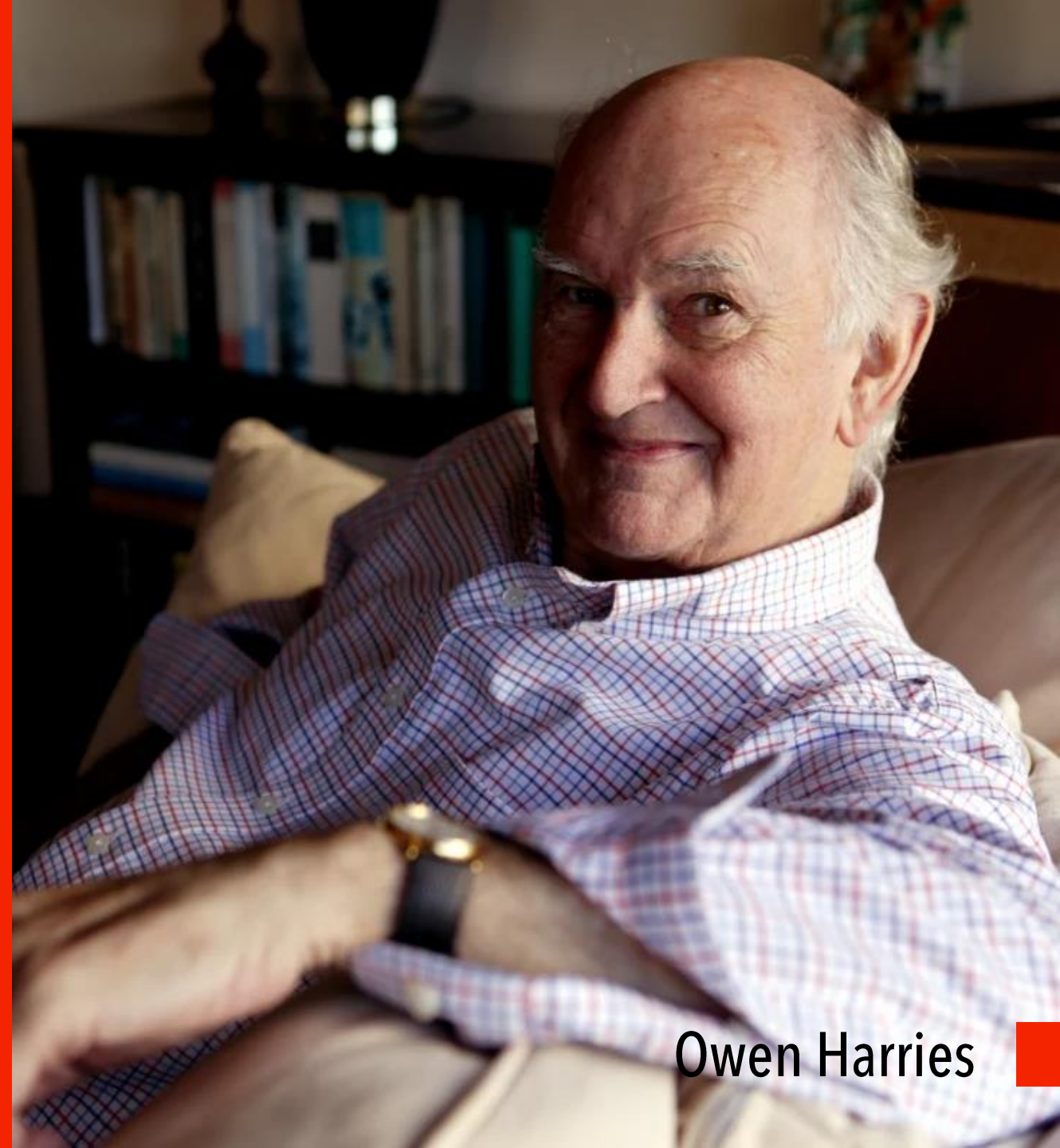


A(n inadequate) representation of three tendencies in morality and foreign policy

# The False Choice

Realism and Morality Owen Harries in 2009

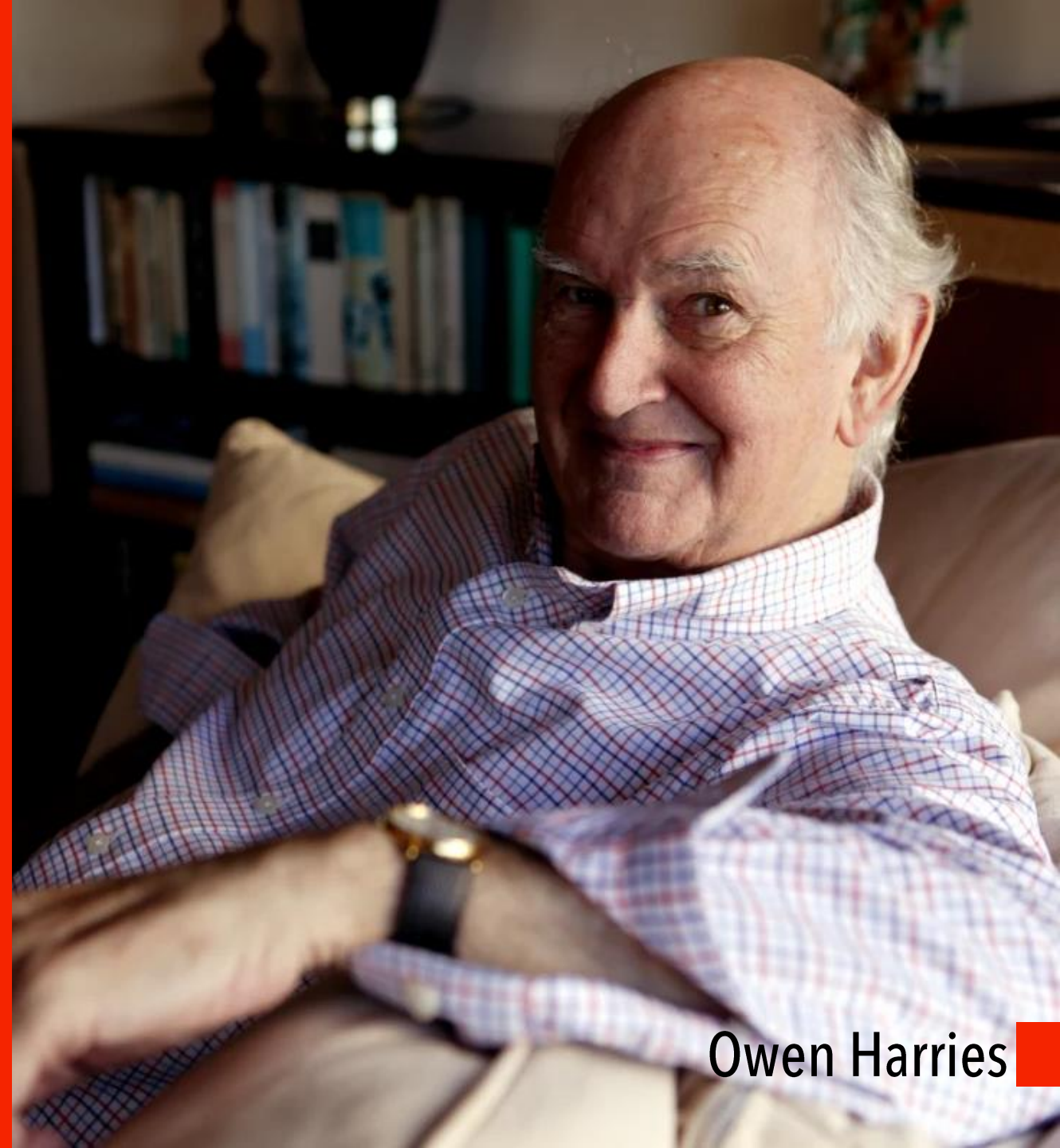
I opposed the invasion of Iraq on a number of realist grounds. In no particular order, they included (a) that it would confirm and strengthen suspicion of and hostility towards America, which I continue to believe is a force for good in the world; (b) that Colin Powell's warning, 'If you break it, you own it', was right; (c) that it did not make sense to fight the 'war on Islamic terrorism' by attacking one of the few secular regimes in the region; (d) that it would strengthen the position of Iraq's main rival Iran, a much more formidable opponent of American interests in the region.



Owen Harries



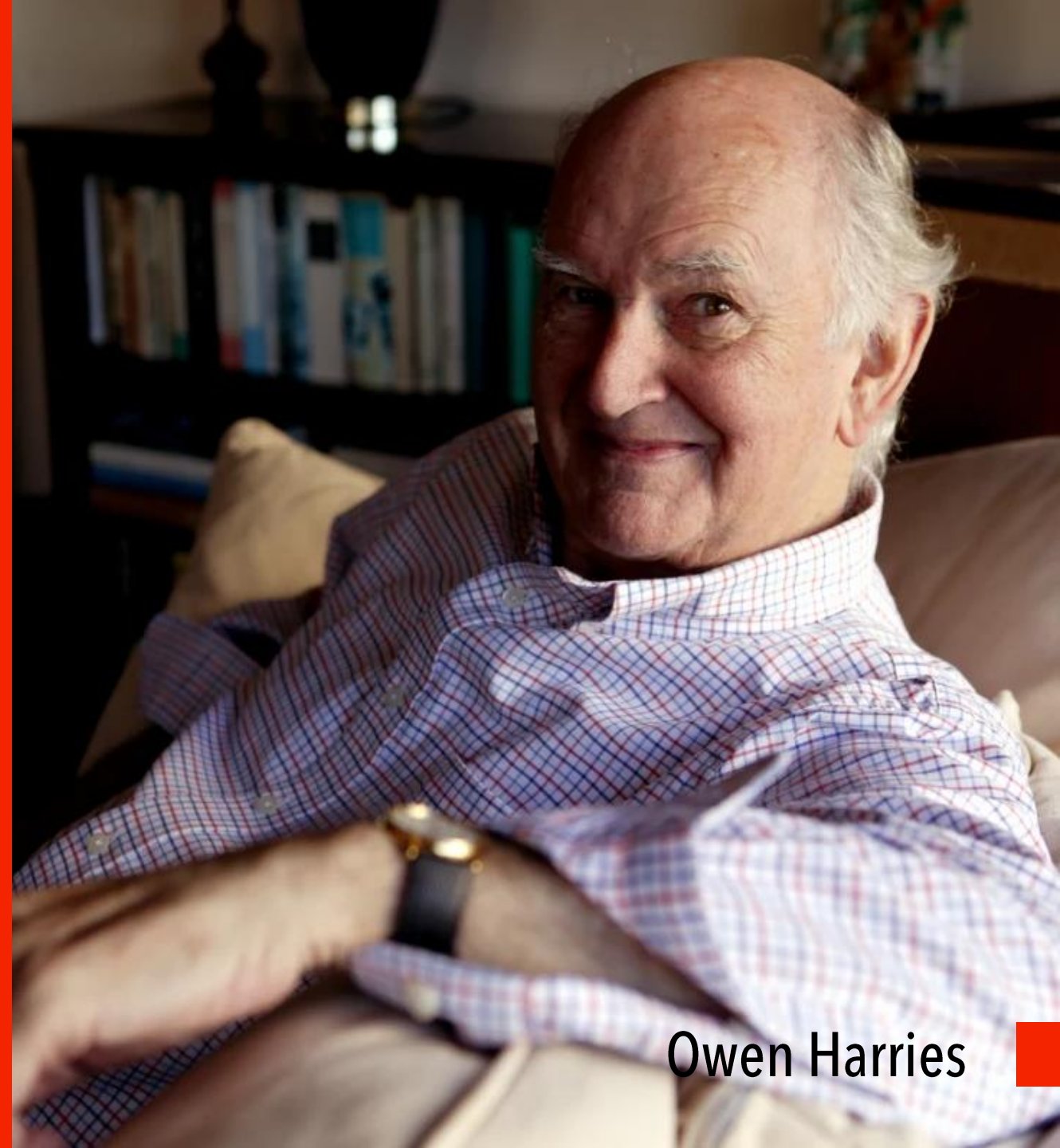
But I also opposed the war on moral grounds, in that it involved a serious and dangerous extension of the claim to the right of resort to pre-emptive attack, a right usually exercised by the strong against the weak. Such a right has long been recognized when an imminent danger of attack exists, but no such danger existed in this case. I also opposed the intervention insofar as it was insisted in its justification that it would result in the installation of a viable liberal democracy in Iraq, of the kind envisaged in the Bush Doctrine. I have never believed that democracy is either an exportable commodity or an easily acquired skill.



Owen Harries

I suggest that instead of classifying people as either wholly realist or wholly moral, it might be better to acknowledge that both elements exist in most if not all of us, the nature of the mix depending partly on temperament, but also on experience and understanding of the facts of a particular situation, and of the nature of the international system in general.

In so far as realism stresses the importance of stability and order, it stands for the necessary (but far from sufficient) condition for a moral life; and in so far as it emphasizes selfishness, secrecy and mutual suspicion, it forewarns against unintended consequences (The road to hell is paved etc., etc...).



Owen Harries

If, as I believe, the ends of men are many and not all of them are in principle compatible with each other, then the possibility of conflict – and of tragedy – can never be wholly eliminated from human life, either personal or social. The necessity of choosing between absolute claims is then an inescapable characteristic of the human condition.



Isaiah Berlin



A modern philosopher who has never once suspected himself of being a charlatan must be such a shallow mind that his work is probably not worth reading --  
Metaphysical Horror (1988)

## Three Quotes from Leszek Kołakowski (1927-2009)

...shall we say that the difference between a vegetarian and a cannibal is just a matter of taste?

The Idolatry of Politics, New Republic, 16 June 1986

We learn history not in order to know how to behave or how to succeed, but to know who we are.

The Idolatry of Politics, U.S. Jefferson Lecture speech (1986)

# China



Hong Kong umbrella protests



Protest concerning China's treatment of the Uyghurs

# One of the Draft ALP Resolutions on China (2021)

## China's treatment of the Uyghurs and genocide

Labor notes with concern reports by human rights agencies about the policies being implemented by the Chinese Communist Party in the Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region that cause grave harm to the cultural, material, psychological and physical well-being of the Uyghur people.

Labor will advocate for Australia to join with the United States, Canada and the Netherlands as well as other concerned members of the international community to condemn these practices as being in violation of Article II of the United Nations Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide (1948).

Labor calls on the government of the People's Republic of China to cease and investigate all activities against the Uyghur people in contravention of these principles, including:

1. Construction and maintenance of large-scale detention infrastructure utilised for government stated purposes of “re-education” or other purposes breaching the Convention;
2. Educational policies in schools including forcibly transferring Uyghur children to state-run facilities that effectively erase Uyghur identity, language and culture;
3. Ethnic dilution of the Uyghur population through forced intermarriage between Uyghurs and Han, mass birth-control measures, and forcibly relocating Uyghur working people to other regions of China and by breaking up Uyghur families;
4. Organ harvesting of Uyghur detainees and systematic mass rape of Uyghur and other Turkic women in re-education camps;
5. Selectively targeting and punitively detaining or disappearing Uyghur intellectuals, rights advocates and community leaders as the voice of the Uyghur people; and
6. That leading officials in China who are part of this process against the Uyghurs will be publicly identified and actions taken against them under the new Magnitsky human rights law.

# Saudi Arabia



Before there was MBS there was...





# Conclusion