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Pre-empting proliferation : international law, morality and nuclear weapons / Michael J. Glennon

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Abstract:	Michael Walzer is right that dwelling on the United Nations Charter's use-of-force rules constitutes 'utopian quibbling'. But he is wrong that 'practical morality' of the sort defended in his Just and Unjust Wars presents a useful analytic framework for addressing issues such as the advisability of using force to counter threats of nuclear proliferation. Walzer's moral evaluations do not meet the standard of consistency that he himself demands, and the foundational inconsistency of his moral appraisals produces the same context-oriented relativism that he rejects. Policy analysis offers a preferable approach because it makes fewer assumptions. Its vocabulary interposes no problematic metaphysical infrastructure between ends and means, and it generates no debate that is not directly pertinent to the decision at hand. However, neither international law, practical morality, nor a consequentialist calculus of national interest can eliminate the need for judicious choice and subjective judgement.
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