ABSTRACT. This paper explores some of the problems which arise from Immanuel Kant’s commitment to both human rights and the rights of states. Michael Doyle believed it was contradictory for Kant to defend both human rights and non-intervention by states in the affairs of other states, but I argue that for Kant there was no such contradiction, and I explore Kant’s claim that the state is “a moral personality.” I also discuss Kant’s belief that “Nature guarantees” that perpetual peace will obtain, and I consider Kant as a teleologist.

KEY WORDS: Michael Doyle, human rights, Immanuel Kant, intervention, moral personality, states, teleology

In the past few decades Immanuel Kant’s previously neglected political philosophy has become the center of serious attention. This has been true especially of his reflections on the relations of states. Kant wrote that the task of establishing a universal and lasting peace “is not just a part of the theory of right within the limits of pure reason, but its entire ultimate purpose.”¹ We must, he believed, act as if perpetual peace among states “could really come about (which is perhaps impossible).”² However, since no one knows that perpetual peace is impossible, we have a duty to try to bring it about. Of course, no one is duty bound to assume an objective can be realized, because no one can be obliged to accept a given belief, but we can be duty bound to act in accordance with the idea of such an end: “for this is based upon duty, hence also upon the rights of man and of states, and can indeed be put into execution.”³ Kant’s ultimate hope lay not in

the formation of a single world government, but in a federation of states, a federation which would be furthered by states committed to what Kant called "republicanism," which corresponds roughly to what we have come to call liberal democracy. But what makes Kant difficult to interpret is that he believed both in the "rights of man" and in the rights of states, which sets him apart from cosmopolitan liberals on the one hand and political realists on the other.

I assume the reader is familiar with Kant's classic essay "Perpetual Peace" (1795), and so I shall begin with Michael Doyle's famous "democratic peace" interpretation of Kant's essay. Modern day liberal democracies do not go to war with one another, according to Doyle, but they sometimes go to war against non-democratic states. Citizens in a liberal democracy must bear the costs of war in lives and resources in ways in which despots do not, and hence they will be disinclined to wage war; and because of their shared values they will be especially disinclined to fight one another. My reaction to Doyle's "democratic peace" hypothesis was first to attempt to trivialize it, but second to defend it against the charge that it is self-contradictory. In the days of the Soviet Union, communist countries did not fight one another. Differences between the Soviet Union and Yugoslavia and China, respectively, while partly differences over the proper interpretation of Marxism, did not lead to war, perhaps in part because of the basic values they continued to share. Arguably, there may have been a "Communist peace" comparable to Doyle's "democratic peace." Also, after the Napoleonic Wars, Europe in the nineteenth-century enjoyed the longest period of peace in its history. Could this be called a "monarchical peace" as European monarchies cooperated to stave off the threats of revolution and liberalism? Of course, the difference between democratic peace on the one hand and Communist peace and monarchical peace on the other hand is that it is alive and well. But could the "democratic peace" also fall into the dustbin of history?

I wish now to defend the democratic peace hypothesis against Georg Cavallar's charge that it is self-contradictory: either liberal democracies are not peace-loving or else they are not really liberal democracies. Liberal democracies, I think, can be liberal democracies without being fully or perfectly so, but the claim that they are not

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