

A: Well, my argument is that when an oppressive government uses violence against

Q: No, no, no. I'm just asking you a question outside of the scope of the resolution. Is there proportionality with self-defense?

A: The individual is allowed to use violence in response to the oppressor.

Q: So, if I take a dollar from you right now, can you beat me?

A: The problem with your analysis is ... no, I wouldn't be able to beat you.

Q: Why not?

A: The situation you are drawing is not similar to the situation of an oppressive regime.

Q: Okay, but we can say that there needs to be some sort of proportionality in terms of the response to political oppression, correct?

In this exchange, Bilal Malik is trying to set up a key argument of his negative case that violent revolution is a disproportionate response to oppression when nonviolent means are available.

CREATING BURDENS FOR YOUR OPPONENT

Often cross-examination can expose the fact that an opponent failed to support a claim. Perhaps your opponent presented a definition for a term without offering any authoritative support for such a definition. Perhaps the account of a historical event fails to square with your own interpretation of that event. When these weaknesses are pointed out, your opponent will often offer to read supporting evidence in the next speech. If such an offer is not forthcoming, you can ask your opponent to present such evidence. Your cross-examination is productive in the sense that you are creating performance benchmarks that your opponent might fail to meet. Even if the evidence is presented, you have succeeded in changing the time your opponent planned to spend on an argument.

FURTHER READING

Goldman, Robert E. *The Modern Art of Cross-Examination*. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall, 1993.

Mann, James L., II. "Cross-Examination in Policy and LD Debate." *The Rostrum*, November 1994. www.nflonline.org/uploads/Rostrum/pol1194mann.pdf (accessed August 30, 2007).