

• **COMMENTARY: THE SECOND AFFIRMATIVE CROSS-EXAMINATION**

During this exchange, we see why debaters should use simple questions in cross-examination. Although Asa's questions are ultimately good ones, they would have been stronger if she had phrased them differently: the length of the questions, combined with their complexity, makes it difficult for Alex to answer them—not because he cannot, but because isolating the main question is frustrating and difficult. We can see Alex's frustration when he asks, "Is there a question in this?" It is also frustrating for Asa. Although Alex has difficulty finding a single question to answer among so many, it is simultaneously easy for him to foresee where Asa is going with her line of questioning. Asa is trying to get Alex to admit that sovereignty is being violated, and the way she phrases her questions makes it easy for Alex to see this. Rather than try to get all her questions in at once, Asa would have done better to ask shorter, simpler questions, which could have then led her to the central question she was eager to ask.

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Nevertheless, Asa does achieve her ultimate goal: to point out that sovereignty is being violated under the status quo. Although Alex does not admit this, the exchange suggests that such violations are occurring. Asa begins by asking Alex if it is true that other countries replicate U.S. action against human trafficking. Alex agrees; in fact, he made such a point in his speech. Asa then asks if incorporating American ideals and judicial practices is an infringement on a nation's sovereignty. Alex's answer—"When you follow someone you don't follow everything to a 'T'"—demonstrates that Asa may be correct, despite his attempt at dodging her question. A better answer? If other countries choose to follow the United States, the infringement of their sovereignty is voluntary, rather than the affirmative's solution of giving the ICC the right to violate sovereignty. Thus, Alex could have shown how Asa's analogy between modeling the United States and the ICC was a faulty.

Toward the end of the cross-examination period, Asa gets Alex to concede that the negative's position is that criminals should receive trials in the country where the crime was committed. What is the importance of Asa getting Alex to admit to this? We do not yet know, but Asa's teammates may use this to their advantage. If the affirmative can demonstrate that some countries do not act against human trafficking, then the team will have proved that the negative's proposal is not effective. By contrast, the affirmative's policy would require all nations to submit to the jurisdiction of the ICC. In this way, Asa's questions get to the heart of comparing the affirmative and negative policy proposals.

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