James is an engineer working for an American company in Morotavia, a non-industrialized country. He has the responsibility for procuring certain parts for his plant. The parts are manufactured in Morotavia. The Morotavian supplier’s representative has told James that to get the materials on time, he should pay a “customary fee” to the representative. James believes that the representative is engaging in extortion and does not want to pay the fee. But his colleague, Ronald, says, “Everybody does it over here; you just have to get used to it.” James wonders whether he should pay the fee.

Most of us would probably have some sympathy with James’ feeling that there is something wrong about paying the “customary fee.” We might also have some sympathy with Robert’s feeling that there is something right or at least morally permissible about paying the fee.

What is it that might be wrong about paying the fee?

1. Is the wrongness captured by the Self-Defeating Test? How would the test apply and what would be the conclusion? (2 points)

2. Is the wrongness captured by the Golden Rule? How would the test apply and what would be the conclusion? (2 points)

3. What OTHER test might capture or explain the wrongness of the action? In other words, what is the best argument, other than 1 and 2, that would show the action to be wrong? Explain this test clearly. The argument might be one based on utility (rule or act), or rights, or a line-drawing test, or some other consideration. A mere appeal to some authority (e.g. a professional code) would not be sufficient. (2 points)

4. What is it that might be right or morally permissible about paying the fee? Explain the argument as clearly as you can. The argument might be one based on utility (rule or act), or rights, or a line-drawing test, or some other consideration. A mere appeal to some authority (e.g. a professional code) would not be sufficient. (2 points)

5. What do you think James should do, all things considered? Explain and defend your position. (2 points)

Note: If there are significant factual issues, for which you make factual assumptions, please identify the factual issues and the assumptions you make. If there are significant conceptual issues that are crucial to your analysis, please give the required definitions. If there are significant application issues, please show how you resolve them.