To State the Obvious

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Borrowing from Patrick Henry's comments in 1775, "Gentlemen may cry peace, peace – but there is no peace." [1]   Why is that so true today? If asked whether they wanted war or peace, almost every human alive would express a preference for peace; but war is a predominant theme in today's current events and in the history of humanity. A species that continually does that which it wants not to do must have serious flaws in its psychology. Those flaws may be so deeply ingrained that they cannot be remediated. However, to comply with Apollo's "Know Thyself" advice at his temple at Delphi, we should consider what those flaws are.

Before considering why there is no peace, what is peace? Webster defines peace as a state of tranquillity or quiet, freedom from civil disturbance or war, public order or security, harmony in personal relations, or freedom from fears, agitating passions or moral conflict. [2] Most people like peace.

General Carl von Clausewitz gives a basic definition of war: "War therefore is an act of violence intended to compel our opponent to fulfil our will." [3]   Later in his first chapter, titled "What Is War?", he clarifies that "our will" is the political object of the War. [4] War is politics carried into the realm of violence and force. At the end of the chapter, von Clausewitz points out that the nature of the political object is driven both by emotions of hatred and animosity and by purely rational considerations such as desire for a province. [5]

In addition to this classic definition of war that von Clausewitz recorded a few years after Waterloo, other forms of warfare are regularly employed to worsen the situation of one party to induce conformance to the will of another party. Currency manipulation, financial sanctions, trade embargoes, international debt, and cyber-attacks are used to attempt to coerce changes in the behaviour of nations.

The Causes of War cake can be sliced several different ways, but some of the major human flaws that cause wars can be categorized as: greed, poverty and overpopulation, lust for power, fear, and cultural issues such as basic human nature (competitive instinct, excessive machismo, prejudice), ingrained militarism, religion and literature. False assumptions about the other party and miscommunication between governments frequently make situations worse than they need to be. Eruption of these flaws into death and destruction is facilitated by a moral double-think pervasive in most cultures – while individuals are almost universally condemned for individual murder, vandalism and theft, governments doing those same crimes as acts of war is generally accepted.

Presumably, every mentally competent adult in the world knows that the results of war are death, physical and psychological maiming, and destruction of wealth and the environment. However, in the developed nations, most citizens have not personally experienced war, so they hold it in lighter regard than they would if they knew more about it. War is an abstraction rather than a concrete misery.

I spent most of 1970 as an artillery lieutenant in Viet Nam. Even though my tour was much less traumatic than that of many others, I do believe that the experience gives me better insight into the evils of war than I would have had otherwise. Therefore,

before getting into the causes of war and what we might do to reduce warfare on the planet, allow me to indulge in some personal war stories.

Upon receiving my Army commission through the Reserve Officer Training Corps at Texas Tech, I volunteered for service in Viet Nam. Two main motives caused me to do this. First, I believed the domino theory that aggressive, coherent Communism, driven primarily by the Soviet Union and China, was determined to conquer the world by successively taking control of the small nations bordering the Communist bloc. I felt honour bound to do my share in stopping Communism. Second, I felt a significant hero worship toward my father's service in the Pacific theatre of World War II, and wanted to prove to myself that I was as good as he was. My ancestral battle list includes the Driniumor under MacArthur, Gettysburg under Lee, and Drogheda under Cromwell. Like most of us, my family's participation in war goes back a long way.

So, two war experiences that I find to be significant…

One day, after the mail had come and been read, a Delta Company infantry squad leader was bubbling with pleasure and excitement. The epistle he had just received from Indiana informed him that his wife was pregnant. He was telling everyone about his impending paternity. Before long, he was speculating about his upcoming R&R in Honolulu: he could bend the rules a bit, cram a round trip to Indiana into the week, and see his wife.

In my opinion, The Squad Leader was a good person. He was a draftee who was doing his best in a situation he had not sought. His helmet graffiti was a sketch of a wilted flower with the motto, "War is harmful to flowers and other living things." But, despite his lack of military ardour, he was doing a good job and had earned his three sergeant's stripes.

On 7 May 1970, Delta Company was ordered into Cambodia to destroy a North Vietnamese Army bunker complex. We helicoptered in to a big grassy area and set out through thin jungle for the bunker area. The bunkers were there in a large cleared area and were almost completely deserted.

Off to the left, we heard a few shots from an M-16. The company commander received a radio report that one man had popped out of a bunker and tried to flee. He was dead.

The company commander went over to where the shooting had occurred. Since I was the artillery forward observer, I went wherever the company commander went.

The Squad Leader, who had shot the fugitive from a range of about twenty metres, was quite wound up. The deceased lay belly down on the ground, with his face turned slightly to the right. His left hand was near his waist with his arm in a graceful arc like an opening parenthesis. One 5.56 mm bullet had entered the lower left back of his head and had come out his forehead above his right eye. A stream of blood about a finger wide was running out the exit wound and making a long river on the ground. His right arm was reached up and forward, like he had tried to catch his brain parts as they exited his skull. He looked to be in his twenties. I don't

remember what he was wearing; but since he was dead he was Communist by definition.

The Squad Leader, I think, was both horrified and elated. The area we had been working in was mostly pacified, so we would go for a month without contact with the opposition. Someone suggested that this action might earn a Bronze Star Medal for The Squad Leader. That really got him excited, saying that from that medal his child-to-be would know his or her dad had been a good soldier.

Delta Company spent about a week in Cambodia before being sent to Dau Tieng, Viet Nam, to ambush in and around the Michelin rubber plantation.

Almost everyone had boils, nasty staphylococcus skin infections about the size of a cigarette burn, with yellowish tops and deep cores. We ate tetracycline like candy to fight the boils.

One day about mid-way in a five-night ambush cycle, the medic declared that The Squad Leader's lower legs were so covered with boils that he had to go back to Dau Tieng with that day's supply helicopter. The company was scheduled for a three day stand down at the division base camp, Cu Chi, when this field adventure was over. While waiting for the helicopter, I wrote a note to the medic in Dau Tieng, suggesting that he send The Squad Leader on to Cu Chi to meet us there for stand down. That way, he could get some rest rather than being stuck on perimeter guard at Dau Tieng. I was an artilleryman attached to the infantry company but was not assigned to the company. I was meddling outside of my proper boundaries.

My note was effective, though. By late afternoon The Squad Leader, along with three other men from Delta Company, were on a twin-rotored CH-47 headed from Dau Tieng to Cu Chi. On the way, the helicopter had to make one stop to pick up and deliver people and supplies at Fire Support Base Tennessee.

While landing at FSB Tennessee, the CH-47 was shot down with a rocket propelled grenade and burned up. Two of the extra Delta Company men were killed.   The Squad Leader was medevac'd to Cu Chi with ninety-five per cent third-degree burns. The fourth man from the company got out of the wreck and shot back at their attacker with jet fuel burning on his clothes. He also went to the hospital at Cu Chi.

Three days later, on the first night of stand down, we got word that The Squad Leader was dead. I believe his desire to get home and see his baby is what drove him to live as long as he did.

I do not know if The Squad Leader took his Indiana R&R. I do know he never saw his child. I do not know if the man The Squad Leader killed in Cambodia had a wife or children.

At dusk on 3 May 1970, Delta Company moved into its ambush positions on the Vietnamese side of the Cambodian border. The three platoon sized ambushes were about four hundred metres apart in this rice farming area northwest of Saigon. Starting two days before, other American and South Vietnamese units had gone into

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the North Vietnamese Army's former sanctuaries on the other side of the border. Our job was to kill any of the opposition that were flushed out.

As the company's artillery forward observer, I was part of the command group. The other members of the command group were the company commander, his two radio operators, the company medic, the artillery reconnaissance sergeant, and the artillery radio operator. The seven of us were rear guard of the centre platoon ambush. We set up on slightly high ground in an expanse of dry rice paddies. The spot had once been a farmstead, and was mostly surrounded by thin hedges of bamboo, which are a cooler source of privacy in the tropics than are thick walls in a house. The rear guard set up twenty or thirty metres behind the main ambush, which was strung out behind the hedge closest to the border. Two big bomb craters between us and the main ambush explained why the house site was bare.

The moon was two days past new, so the night was going to be dark. The low, dark clouds from horizon to horizon indicated that the night would be especially dark, and probably rainy.

About ten o'clock, a thump came from the right end of the main ambush, just where the hedge ended. Three or four streaks of yellow light skimmed away from the hedge, low and parallel to the ground. They were a star cluster from a 40 mm grenade launcher and indicated that we had customers. The whole hedge line began to sparkle and roar with M-16 and machine gun fire, and the detonations of claymore mines. Everyone was tense and alert, with fast reactions.

I got on the radio and started 155 mm illumination rounds coming on one of our pre-planned defensive targets. The time fuse of these forty-four-kilogram projectiles ignites the magnesium parachute flare and blows it out of the base of its steel canister, at a point 750 metres above the target. The flare free falls for 150 metres, and then drifts down the remaining 600 metres over the course of a minute. So, by firing one round per minute, an area the size of a rugby field can be lit up continuously with a garish orange light. The deeply pitched whistle of the big shells coming in will make the hair stand up on the neck of the most hardened.

The bottom of the dense clouds was far closer to the earth than 600 metres. For about half of their drop, the flares were only providing a dull glow in the clouds, Halloween colours of orange and black. The lighting effect, combined with the red tracers arcing toward Cambodia and the roar of massed small arms fire made a scene directly from hell.

In a few minutes, off to the right, we heard a similar roar and the crack of claymore mines as one of our other ambushes opened fire on our surviving visitors.

When things had settled down, I asked the Fire Direction Centre to turn out the light, just in time for the torrential rain to begin.

At first light, we examined the area to figure out exactly what had happened in the night. Our ambush killed six men. The second ambush killed three. Of the dead men, two stand out in my mind.

Because the night was so very dark, the North Vietnamese Army single file column had been very close to the right edge of the bamboo when the first shot from the grenade launcher was fired. An M-16 round brought down the second man in their column, directly at the feet of one of the infantrymen, who emptied an M-16 magazine into his head. In the morning, after the blood was washed away by the rain, his head looked like a truck had run over it: a flattened mass of white skull fragments and pink brains. He was face down in a position of prayer, with his knees drawn up under him and his arms flung out to each side. Walking in the dark, his jandals had been a tripping hazard. That morning the jandals were still slipped over his wrists, where he had put them for safe keeping. The man who killed him reported that he had smelled a peculiar odour all night. In the daylight, his shins were covered with brains, the source of the smell. I wonder if the American infantryman ever dreams about that smell. He had to wear those pants for three more days in the heat.

The initial star cluster had been fired by the platoon sergeant, who had been sitting cross-legged at the right end of the hedge. When a North Vietnamese lieutenant appeared in front of him at a range of about a metre, the sergeant shot him just below the breast bone. The star cluster went completely through the man and functioned on the other side.

The lieutenant had been carrying a big back pack, which had held him up in a sitting position through the night. His legs were V-ed out in front of him. He had a large hole in his abdomen, through which some viscera protruded. At the time of his last breath, his hand must have been in front of his middle; all that was left of it was a couple of tendons hanging from his wrist. Most strikingly, his head was flung back onto his pack so his rain-washed face was turned up to the sky, and into my face. I will never forget contemplating him and thinking he looked like a decent sort of fellow, who in different circumstances could easily be a friend.

To me, the thirteen deaths described above are a personalized microcosm of the grief, suffering and waste caused by wars. The time in Viet Nam also provided an opportunity to see the physical waste of war – burned houses, rice paddies pocked with interlocked bomb craters each of which was the size of a modest swimming pool, jungle hardwood trees turned to toothpicks by eight-inch high explosive shells, vegetation deformed by Agent Orange, destroyed helicopters, *et cetera, et cetera, ad nauseum.*

So, what causes wars? Or, as the Emperor of Japan asked the Chiefs of the Army and Navy General Staffs on 5 September 1941, by reading to them a quote from a poem by his grandfather, Emperor Meiji:

> "Since all are brothers in this world,
> Why is there such constant turmoil?" [6]

Greed

"Greed" is a word that carries a lot of baggage. Some use greed in a class warfare connotation that implicitly condemns the profit motive. Since a farmer planting seed is seeking a profit at the harvest, and since growing food is essential to human civilization, this aspect of the word should be rejected for considering greed as a cause of war.

The dictionary definition of greed is: "acquisitive desire beyond reason." [1] The beyond reason part is what gets us into trouble.

Unreasonable acquisitive desire leads to war down many paths. Desire for the land and wealth of neighbouring communities has produced wars, colonies and empires since the beginning of history. The desire for profit from military spending pressures governments into policies that increase the probability of war. Desire for control of oil supplies has been a source of war and tension for the past century. The desire to acquire wealth without creating wealth has produced a world financial system that both increases the social stresses motivating wars and can be used as a weapon in non-shooting wars. Non-shooting wars can include currency manipulations, trade wars, and advancement of geopolitical objectives through use of boycotts and sanctions.

The oldest complete books in the Western world, Homer's *Iliad* and *Odyssey* [2] deal with the Trojan War, the official cause of which was Paris' unreasonable acquisitive desire for Menelaus' wife. Whether the war was really caused by lust for Helen or was actually fought to control trade between the Black and Aegean Seas, the Trojan War makes the point that greed has been motivating wars for a very long time.

Desire for Land and Wealth

Empires and colonial powers have been making or threatening war to seize their neighbours' land since the beginning of history. The list of conquerors includes the Mesopotamian empires, the Egyptians, the Greeks, the Romans, the Germanic tribes, the Arabs, the Normans, the Vikings, the Aztecs, the Incas, the Mongols, the Chinese, the European colonists in the Americas, the Turks, the Portuguese, the Spanish, the Dutch, the British, the French, the Germans, the Japanese, and the Americans, to name a few.

In his book *Hoodwinked*, John Perkins describes this march of empire. "For centuries human beings have clung to a belief that in order to get ahead, communities – including countries – have to exploit their neighbours. This is the foundation of the old military empires – from ancient China and Greece to the British Empire – to today's post-World War II neocolonialism. The insatiable quest to beat out any possible competitors – real or imagined – has been rapidly draining our planet of its most precious resources." [3]

Winston Churchill gave a good summary of colonialism in a speech to Parliament in 1914: "We are not a young people with innocent record and a scanty inheritance. We have engrossed to ourselves [an] altogether disproportionate share of wealth and traffic of the world. We have got all we want in territory, and our claim to be left

in the unmolested enjoyment of vast and splendid possessions, mainly acquired by violence, largely maintained by force, often seems less reasonable to others than to us." [4] If "client states" is substituted for "territory", Churchill's words may apply to the United States today. China's invasion of Tibet in 1950 and Soviet westward expansion of control after World War II also can be described as imperial expansion.

I can hear protests from many of my American friends to the effect that the United States is not an empire. John Perkins, to my mind, gives an excellent definition of the word. "**Empire:** nation-state that dominates other nation-states and exhibits one or more of the following characteristics: 1) exploits resources from the lands it dominates, 2) consumes large quantities of resources – amounts that are disproportionate to the size of its population relative to those of other nations, 3) maintains a large military that enforces its policies when more subtle measures fail, 4) spreads its language, literature, art and various aspects of its culture throughout its sphere of influence, 5) taxes not just its own citizens, but also people in other countries, and 6) imposes its own currency on the lands under its control." [5] Perkins subsequently explains Item 5) with the fact that by exporting inflation through the world reserve currency, the U.S. dollar, a tax is effectively imposed on non-Americans. This process was implemented on Sunday, 15 August 1971, when the U.S. refused further redemptions of gold for U.S. dollars.

The beginning of the Spanish Empire provides a simple picture of the empire process. Four years after the first voyage of Christopher Columbus, Spain established a colony at Santo Domingo on Hispaniola. By 1515 Cuba was conquered and Havana was established. With a secure base on the two largest islands of the Caribbean, exploitation of the mainland could proceed. Hernando Cortez arrived in Mexico in 1519, defeated the Aztecs militarily and shipped their gold and silver back to Spain. Between 1531 and 1537, Francisco Pizarro repeated the process with the Incas in Peru. Once the initial conquest and looting were complete, the process of colonial occupation began. [6]

England initiated their colonial empire in a much more gentlemanly manner – they were invited to Ireland in 1166 by King Dermot MacMurrough of Leinster to help him regain his kingship after being deposed by the new high-king, Rory O'Connor. The high-king was helping his ally, Tighearnan O'Rourke, king of Breifne, in a squabble with Dermot about overlordship of the province of Meath. Of course, the Norman lords were delighted to exert themselves and intercede in the cause of justice - thus began a lucrative adventure that lasted until 1922. [7]

Once empires are created, the manoeuvring of the imperial power to protect the empire and its trade routes can increase the tendency toward war. For example, the British desire to protect access to the Suez Canal as the route to India and other colonies contributed to the creation of the State of Israel and subsequent wars in the Middle East. In 1840, British Foreign Secretary Lord Palmerston advocated a Jewish return to Palestine to thwart French ambitions in the area and to prop up the Turkish Empire. Both objectives were based on the desire to protect the path to the Empire. [8]

The Witwatersrand's gold was a significant motive for the Second Anglo-Boer War. [9]

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A big motivator for World War II in Europe was the German desire for more *Lebensraum* in Europe, articulated by Adolph Hitler in *Mein Kampf* and in his speeches. His intent was to obtain the land he wanted from the nations east of Germany, up to and including part of Russia. [10] His land hunger was strongly driven by his racial theories. He wanted a unified Fatherland for the German tribe. In *Mein Kampf* he states, with his own italics: "*The German Reich as a state must embrace all Germans and has the task, not only of assembling and preserving the most valuable stocks of basic racial elements in this people, but slowly and surely of raising them to a dominant position.* [11]

The desire of the Japanese Empire to control the resources of East Asia, from what is now Indonesia to the Philippines, was the motive for World War II in the Pacific Theatre.

Israel is not an empire, but its desire for land occupied by Palestinians has produced conflict since before creation of the state of Israel in 1948 and continues to produce conflict today. For nearly two millennia, the diaspora Jews of western Europe and America have longed for a return to their fabled homeland in Palestine. After World War II, four major factors led to creation of the nation of Israel by the United Nations, on land lived in by the Palestinians. The Nazi attempt to exterminate the Jews of Europe created justified sympathy for the plight of the survivors and increased the international inclination to provide them a home land. British control of Palestine under mandate from the League of Nations provided the physical control that allowed the transfer of land from the Palestinians. Because Christianity is based upon Judaism, a lifetime diet of Bible stories predisposed Christians, and especially Protestants, in Britain and America to believe that the Promised Land should be controlled by the descendants of Jacob. Since the nineteenth century, the British have wanted a friendly buffer state in the Levant to thwart non-British expansion toward the Suez Canal, the route to the Empire. With the advent of the Cold War, the Americans also wanted a pro-Western state in Palestine. The net effect of this is that today we have constant tension and periodic wars because the Palestinians want their land back. For a history of the relationship between Britain and Palestine up to the Balfour Declaration on 2 November 1917, the reader is referred to Barbara W. Tuchman's *Bible and Sword*. [12]

The Viet Nam War began as an imperial war. In four stages between 17 February 1859 and 25 August 1883, Viet Nam was added to the French empire by force to help satisfy the French demand for overseas markets and outlets. [13] Colonial policies prior to World War II created an economic situation that prepared the way for Communist domination of any nationalist movement. Under the French, the pattern of land ownership changed from a fairly uniform distribution of a land shortage to an uneven distribution of a quadrupled cultivated area, with a few large landowners and many landless peasants. Rubber production began and grew large during the colonial period, with the French owning the plantations and the profits while the Vietnamese provided the labour under very oppressive conditions. [14]

On 22 September 1940, the Japanese Empire began taking control of Viet Nam with French colonials as their agents, control that they maintained to the end of World War II. [15] The Japanese motives were the same as the French motives: control of the material resources of Indochina and military bases. After the Japanese

surrender on 10 August 1945, the South was occupied by British troops and the North was occupied by Chinese troops, whose duty it was to disarm the Japanese and hand the country over to France. By March 1946, the British and the Chinese had completed the hand-over to French troops. During the period of British occupation, on 24 September 1945, a general strike in Saigon began Viet Nam's war of national liberation against French control. [16]

Joseph Buttinger summarizes the causes of the Indochina War: "Fighting starts once political decisions that make war inevitable have been taken. On this level, the French can say that there would have been no war if the Vietnamese had settled for less than full independence. And the Vietnamese can counter that there would have been no war if the French had not insisted on re-establishing the colonial rule after World War II that a Vietnamese national revolution had liquidated. In this political sense the French unquestionably were the aggressors and primarily responsible for the war…On this historical level, responsibility for the Indochina War rests primarily with General de Gaulle, who in 1945 had the power to foil the schemes of his country's colonial party." [17]

After years of lack-lustre military performance, the final French defeat in Viet Nam occurred at Dien Bien Phu on 7 May 1954, twelve days into an international conference in Geneva convened to find an end to the conflict. The conference ended on 21 July 1954 with an agreement to end hostilities and to partition the country at the 17th parallel. [18] That agreement ended the colonial war in Indochina, and set the stage for an even bloodier war motivated by nationalism, the desire for power, and the international conflict between Communism and anti-Communism.

To summarize, imperial asset expropriations are theft on a grand scale.

Desire for Military Spending Profits

On 17 January 1961, former five-star general and departing President Dwight D. Eisenhower, in a televised speech, delivered his famous warning against the military industrial complex:

> …we have been compelled to create a permanent armaments industry of vast proportions. Added to this, three and a half million men and women are directly engaged in the defense establishment. We annually spend on military security more than the net income of all United States corporations.
>
> This conjunction of an immense military establishment and a large arms industry is new in the American experience. The total influence – economic, political, even spiritual – is felt in every city, every state house, every office of the Federal government. We recognize the imperative need for this development. Yet we must not fail to comprehend its grave implications. Our toil, resources and livelihood are all involved; so is the very structure of our society.
>
> In the councils of government, we must guard against the acquisition of unwarranted influence, whether sought or unsought, by the militaryindustrial

complex. The potential for the disastrous rise of misplaced power exists and will persist. [19]

For the sake of perspective, by 2017, United States active duty armed forces strength had shrunk to 1.3 million service members, thirty-seven per cent of the number Ike quoted. [20] From 1960 to 2016, U. S. defense spending as a percent of Gross Domestic Product had shrunk from 8.4 per cent to 3.1 per cent. [21] However, technological improvements from Eisenhower's time to the present have greatly increased the destructive power of the military. In 2017, U. S. military expenditures were U.S. $610 billion, a little more than twice the combined expenditures of China and Russia and thirty-five per cent of total world military spending. [22]

The military and the arms industry are both products of the human tendency toward conflict and are also encouragers of it. Many officers, like General Eisenhower and General Ulysses S. Grant, who have been to war are less likely to support militarism than are officers who have not seen war first-hand. Other officers with combat experience are undeterred by the misery they have observed during wartime service. For the arms industry, 3.1 per cent of U. S. GDP is a tremendous market. The industry is also an excellent second career for retired military officers.

In *Merchants of Death*, Engelbrecht and Hanighen state that American commercial interests were one cause of the United States entering World War I:

> We have the word of A.D. Noyes, financial editor of the New York *Times*, that Wall Street picked the Allies to win at the very start and never wavered in this firm belief." [American aid to the Allies was based on credit, which was essentially exhausted by the end of 1916.]
>
> At the beginning of 1917 the Allies had little more to offer than their IOU's. Some of the vast loans already made had virtually been unsecured and the announcement was actually made that henceforth Allied loans would have to be wholly unsecured…
>
> But this hour of darkness was also the beginning of the dawn. On April 6, 1917, the United States entered the conflict, and the heart-beats of the war traffickers became normal again. It is not contended here that the United States fought in the World War solely because of its armament makers and their financiers…[But] American commitments with the Allies were so enormous that only our entry into the war saved the country from a major economic collapse.
>
> In 1917 on the floor of Congress it was charged that as early as March, 1915, the Morgan interests had organized and financed a huge propaganda machine, including 12 influential publishers and 197 newspapers, for the purpose of 'persuading' the American people to join the Allies. Furthermore, the French politician and historian, Gabriel Hanotaux, tells in his story of the war that in 1914 he and a member of the Morgan firm had drawn up plans for a great war-scare campaign in the United States in order to embroil the country in war. He adds that France was ready for peace in 1914, but that the Morgan partner dissuaded French leaders from talking peace at that time. [23]

According to William Manchester in *The Arms of Krupp*, two military men and an arms maker were key actors in rearming Germany between the World Wars. Admiral Paul Behncke, a veteran of Jutland, was chief of Weimar's naval command from after World War I to 1924. [24] General Hans von Seeckt commanded the army of the Weimar Republic 1919 to 1926. [25] Gustav Krupp von Bohlen und Halbach was head of Fried. Krupp A.G. from 1906 to 1943. To quote Manchester, "Yet Behncke, together with Krupp and Seeckt, had made the early Nazi triumphs possible. Unable to see over the horizon – with only their faith in the German character to assure them that a strong leader would emerge at the appointed hour – the admiral, the general, and the armourer had staked everything on the eventual resurrection of the mighty Reich they had known and loved. They had joined hands early, less than nine months after Chancellor Wirth had accepted the Allied terms on behalf of the country. After they had conferred, a Krupp memorandum noted that while 'an official contract' between them was impossible for 'political reasons,' they had nevertheless reached 'a gentleman's agreement' (*die Vereinbarung*). It added: 'These most significant agreements of 25 January 1922 are the first step jointly taken by the *Reichswehrministerium* and Krupp to circumvent, and thereby to break down, the regulations of the Treaty of Versailles which strangle Germany's military freedom." [26]

In the 1932 elections, several German munitions manufacturers supported Adolph Hitler. "As early as 1925, Carl Duisberg of I. G. Farben had called for 'the strong man' who is always necessary for us Germans'; now [1932] Duisberg had found his man and was delighted with him. Similarly, Fritz Thyssen [head of United Steel Works] had joined the Nazi Party in December 1931 and contributed a hundred million marks to it, and even Seekt, raised in the tradition of total separation between state and army, advised his sister to vote for Hitler, explaining, 'Youth is right. I am too old.'" [27] In this indecisive election, the Nazis lost seats and the Communists gained.

On 20 February 1933, Hitler spoke to the twenty-five wealthiest men in Germany, announcing that the 1933 election would be "the last election" and that "Private enterprise cannot be maintained in a democracy." He said that he would eliminate the Communist threat and restore the Wehrmacht to its former glory. After Hitler finished, Hermann Goring reminded the audience that the purpose of the meeting was to solicit funds for the Nazi Party, and that their sacrifice would be easier to bear if they realized that the election of 5 March 1933 would be the last one for the next ten years, and perhaps for the next hundred. At the end of the meeting, Gustav Krupp pledged one million marks to the Nazis. The others in the audience pledged a total of two million marks in addition to Krupp's.   As a result of that election, Hitler formed a government and the Third Reich was established. [28]

The continued influence of arms sales on foreign relations is amusingly exemplified by the British royal family's representation to the party at Persepolis in October 1971 celebrating the founding of the Persian Empire. In *The Prize*, Daniel Yergin describes who went: "As signal proof of his grandeur, the Shah had invited Queen Elizabeth II to attend his party. But Her Majesty's ambassador in Tehran had the unhappy task of explaining that the Queen was already committed to a state visit elsewhere. The 'elsewhere,' however, happened to be in neighbouring Turkey, which could not but aggravate the Shah. He then asked for Prince Charles. Sorry,

Charles was not available; he was on naval duty on a frigate in the North Sea. Never mind that Persepolis was not just another party, but a once-in-a-twenty-five-hundred-year celebration – and that the Shah was, among other things, in the process of ordering several hundred British-built Chieftain tanks, which happened to be critically important to Britain's balance of payments. London offered him Prince Philip and Princess Anne. The Shah accepted, but he was not exactly placated. [29]

Desire for Control of Oil Supplies

For well over a century, petroleum and natural gas have been essential for a modern economy to function. Because of the importance of these commodities, many of the areas 'blessed' with hydrocarbon reserves have become war zones or areas of high geopolitical tension.

During World War II, oil production in the Dutch East Indies was a major motivator for the Japanese invasion. The German army was driving toward the oil fields of Baku when it got held up at Stalingrad. Ploesti, Romania, was heavily bombed to destroy its refining facilities.

Desire to control the hydrocarbon resources around the Persian Gulf has encouraged Western meddling in an already fractious area, which has elevated the scale of violence in the region. After the end of World War II, the American and British governments feared the Soviet Union would take over the Middle East oil that was essential to Great Britain maintaining its standard of living. [30] Their attitude toward Middle Eastern oil is neatly summarized by Daniel Yergin.

> "President Carter responded [to the Iranian hostage crisis, religious unrest in Saudi Arabia, and the Soviet invasion of Iran's neighbour Afghanistan] in January, 1980, by enunciating what became known as the Carter Doctrine: 'Let our position be absolutely clear. An attempt by any outside force to gain control of the Persian Gulf region will be regarded as an assault on the vital interests of the United States of America, and such an assault will be repelled by any means necessary, including military force.' The Carter Doctrine made more explicit what American presidents had been saying as far back as Harry Truman's pledge to Ibn Saud in 1950 [to protect Saudi Arabia]. With even more historical resonance, it also bore striking similarities to the Lansdowne Declaration of 1903, by which the British Foreign Secretary of the day had warned off Russia and Germany from the Persian Gulf." [31]

The first crisis of the Cold War was over Iran in the spring of 1946. [32] Russian and British troops jointly occupied Iran in 1941 to protect a supply line to Russia and to protect Iranian oil from the Germans. In 1942, Iran, Russia and Britain signed a treaty agreeing that the occupying troops would leave Iran six months after the end of World War II. Since the Japanese surrendered on 2 September 1945, the six-month withdrawal deadline became 2 March 1946. The British troops left before the deadline, but the Russians did not. During debate in the UN Security Council on the subject of the continuing Russian occupation, Andrei Gromyko, the Soviet Representative, walked out. In the end, Tehran and Moscow reached an agreement and the troops had all departed by early May. [33]

In *Fractured Peace*, Daniel Yergin analyses the meaning on this crisis:

> At the United Nations General Assembly in London in January 1946, the difficulties over Iran began to break into public view. The subsequent crisis of March 1946 was a landmark in the development of the Cold War. For it was the first time that the new, tougher American attitude took force as policy. It also represented a shift in the East-West contention from Eastern Europe to a new periphery of conflict that involved a collision in what had been traditionally Russian and British spheres. Finally, it became the first public breach among the superpowers. The United States also took the lead away from Britain and sought to make the Russians back down by playing to the gallery of world opinion. One further factor complicated the situation – oil. Anxieties about Russian expansionism coincided with fears about an imminent oil drought in the United States. Yet, removed from its place in the history of the Cold War, stripped of ideology and idealistic protestations, the Iranian crisis was primarily but a classic scramble by Great Powers – in an area in which Great Powers had been in the habit of scrambling – for influence, for strategic position, and for possession of that most valuable of all natural resources, oil. [34]

Steve Coll gives a good description of American Middle East policy when he summarizes comments made by Anton Smith to his State Department colleagues debating American policy toward the government of Equatorial Guinea, a policy which he felt was overly opposed to the local repressive dictator. Mr. Smith was charge d' affaires in Equatorial Guinea during parts of the Bush and Obama administrations. "…since the Second World War, during its search for oil security, the United States had entered into deep alliances with Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, and the United Arab Emirates, among other Middle Eastern oil producers. All were authoritarian states with dismal human rights records, particularly in the realms of free speech and assembly. Yet a diverse number of American presidents continually sold these regimes jets, tanks, and missiles so they could protect their oil inheritance in an unruly neighborhood, and by doing so, assure supplies would be available to the United States. American military forces intervened directly to liberate Kuwait after Iraq's 1990 invasion, and the U.S. military provided an ongoing de facto defense of Saudi Arabia's oil fields. These geopolitical bargains had endured despite evidence that the Saudi government tolerated financial flows to violent anti-American Islamist radicals." [35]

Although the civil war in South Sudan is largely an ethnic conflict, its fighting focuses on control of oil production. [36]

China is now pushing claims in the South China Sea that are partially motivated by oil potential there, and are also motivated by a desire to have more control over the maritime trade routes that they use.

Desire for Unearned Profit through Financial Manipulation

In 1944, the Bretton Woods Agreement established a world currency system under which the U.S. dollar was exchangeable for gold at thirty-five dollars per ounce and all other currencies had a fixed exchange rate to the U.S. dollar. Since the United

States went off the gold standard in 1971, the world monetary system has been based completely on debt and the credit-worthiness of the debtors, a *fiat* system. Because the U.S. dollar remains the principal reserve currency against which all others are referenced, and since the United States can create as many dollars as it chooses, the U.S. has a powerful advantage with respect to, among many other things, importing much more than it exports, paying for its oil imports, and maintaining the most powerful military in the world. The military has a strong role in supporting the U.S. dollar hegemony.

Richard Nixon's motive for taking the U.S. off the gold standard was the rapid drawdown of U.S. Treasury gold stocks, shown in the graph below. [37]
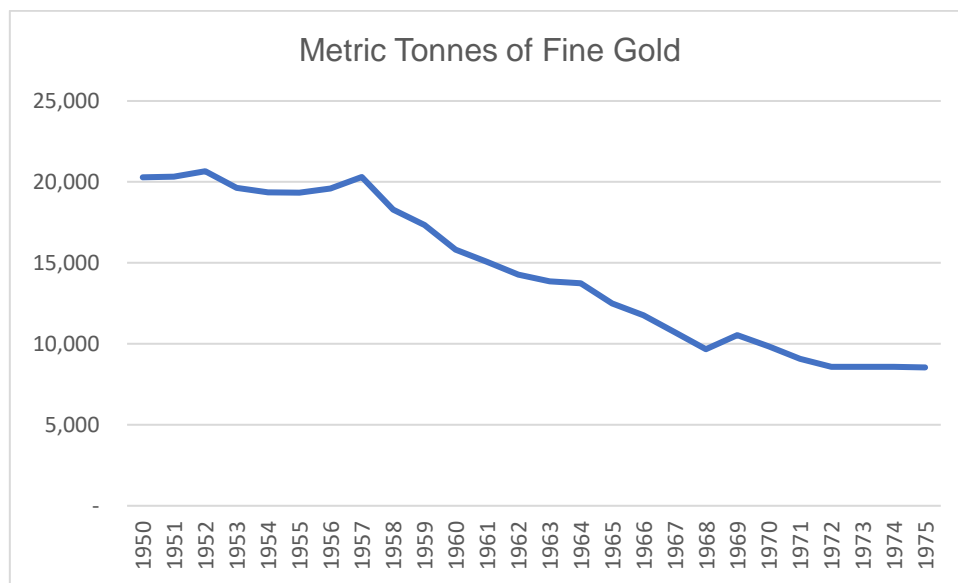
United States Treasury Gold Stocks

Source: World Gold Council

America finished World War II with the largest gold hoard in the world. From the end of 1952 through the end of 1971, that treasure pile had diminished by fifty-six per cent, an average rate of nearly three per cent per year. During Lyndon Johnson's presidency, the depletion rate was 836 metric tonnes per year, which is generally attributed to money creation through deficit spending to pay for the Great Society and the Viet Nam War. Interestingly, many historians consider deficit spending for the military and for bread and circuses to be a major contributor to the fall of the Roman Empire.

The U.S. dollar's reserve currency status is reinforced by the petrodollar. The environment for the petrodollar was created by the Yom Kippur War, which began on 6 October 1973 when Egypt and Syria attacked Israel, and by the subsequent Arab oil export ban against the United States, the Netherlands, Portugal, South Africa, and Rhodesia. The export ban ended for all except the Netherlands on 18 March 1974. As a result of the Yom Kippur War and the oil embargo, the oil price quadrupled from October to December of 1973. [38] In mid-1974, William Simon, the American Secretary of the Treasury, negotiated an agreement with Saudi Arabia whereby "the U.S. would buy oil from Saudi Arabia and provide the kingdom military aid and equipment. In return, the Saudis would plow billions of their petrodollar revenue back into Treasuries and finance America's spending." [39] "Just a few years later,

The Saudi Kingdom's control over OPEC [the Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries] led to all of OPEC's members pricing oil in US Dollars in exchange for weapons and military protection…The Dollar's role as the global reserve currency has largely been hinged on the existence of the Petrodollar because the demand for the Dollar is off the back of crude oil transactions. This gives the Federal Reserve a free pass to print Dollars..." [40]

Thus, the petrodollar and the reserve currency status of the dollar form a key pillar supporting the massive economic and military power of the United States today. Attacks on such a pillar are likely to be met with a vigorous response.

In November 1999, Saddam Hussein began selling Iraqi oil for euros, a currency that was only ten months old. That action could be viewed as a threat to the petrodollar. On 20 March 2003, the U.S. attacked Iraq. Fifteen years and 288,000 deaths [41] later, the U.S. military is still there. Justification of the invasion was attempted with several weak rationalizations from non-existent weapons of mass destruction to Saddam Hussein being a cruel dictator. Note that he was a fine fellow when Iraq was waging an aggressive war against Iran in the 1980's. He even had pictures of himself shaking hands with Donald Rumsfeld during the Regan administration, some years before Mr. Rumsfeld became the American Secretary of Defense. Britain and Australia joined the U.S. in attacking Iraq. Both of these nations are close allies of the U.S. and are not part of the euro. France and Germany, participants in the euro, and the United Nations Security Council opposed the invasion. These facts make a strong circumstantial case that selling oil for euros was Saddam Hussein's fatal sin. In March 2003, Geoffrey Heard, a Melbourne, Australia, writer made an excellent presentation of this case, [42] one of many that are available.

Prior to 2011, the currency of Libya was the gold dinar, issued by the state-owned Central Bank of Libya and backed by 143.8 metric tonnes of gold. In 2009, Muammar Qaddafi, dictator of Libya and, at the time, Chair of the African Union, proposed that the sovereign states of Africa unify with a single gold-backed currency. African oil producing states were planning to abandon the petrodollar and demand payment for oil and gas in gold. [43] Requiring gold to buy African oil would be a major blow to the petrodollar and to the international fiat money system upon which the Western economies rely. Paying for oil in a gold-backed currency would also resurrect the depletion of U.S. gold reserves that Richard Nixon put a stop to on 15 August 1971. As a personal aside, I remember watching Nixon's speech on TV that Sunday night. He pre-empted *Bonanza* and kept me from knowing what the Cartwright family was doing. I was new in Houston, and lonesome, and needed some familiar faces, even if they were only favourite TV characters. I was also too ignorant to appreciate the implications of what Tricky Dicky was saying.

On 15 February 2011, anti-government rallies in Benghazi, Libya, protesting the arrest of a human rights lawyer, became violent. The violence quickly spread and turned into a civil war, with units of the army joining the rebels. By the end of the month, there were international calls for Qaddafi to step down, the U.N. Security Council had imposed sanctions and an arms embargo against the regime, and the U.S. had frozen thirty billion dollars of Libyan assets. This rebellion developed with remarkable speed, almost as if skilled regime changers were helping it along.

The Transitional National Council (TNC) was set up to provide military leadership to the rebellion and to act as a government in rebel-held areas. On 10 March, France officially recognized the TNC as Libya's official government. Other countries worked to establish contact with the TNC. On 11 March, the European Union unanimously called for Qaddafi to step down. A heavy assault by Qaddafi forces produced a strong military advantage for them and caused the U.N. Security Council to authorize military action, including a no-fly zone on 17 March. On 19 March, U.S. and European forces attacked Libya's air force and air defense systems to facilitate the no-fly zone. Attacks on Qaddafi's forces continued. On 27 March, NATO officially took over the military operations that had been directed by the United States, France and the United Kingdom. On 19 April, the U.K. announced it was sending military liaison officers to aid the rebels. France and Italy followed suit the next day. By September, the rebels had control of most of the country and Qaddafi was in hiding. The U.N. General Assembly recognized the TNC as the representative of Libya in the U.N. On 20 October, Qaddafi was found and murdered. [44] The chaos of the Libyan civil war continues to this day, has caused many deaths, has displaced refugees who have been a destabilizing influence in Europe as well as experiencing great individual hardships themselves, and has made Libya a base for radicalization and organized crime.

Amid all this violence and turmoil, the rebels were financially prudent and responsible, however. At about the same time in March when American and European forces began attacking Qaddafi's forces, the TNC announced "that they have designated the Central Bank of Benghazi as a monetary authority competent in monetary policies in Libya, and that they have appointed a governor to the Central Bank of Libya, with a temporary headquarters in Benghazi…" [45] The early emphasis on banking offers a clue to the real reason for the war and to the motives of the outsiders who facilitated it.

France's zeal in coming to the aid of the rebels is explained by a 2 April 2011 e-mail from Sidney Blumenthal, Bill Clinton's attorney in the Monica Lewinsky affair, to Hillary Clinton, the U.S. Secretary of State at the time. This e-mail, which is quoted by Ellen Brown in *Exposing the Libyan Agenda: A Closer Look at Hillary's Emails*, was one of three thousand released from Ms. Clinton's private server in late December 2015. To quote Ms. Brown's presentation of the e-mail:

> *Qaddafi's government holds 143 tons of gold, and a similar amount in silver...This gold was accumulated prior to the current rebellion and was intended to be used to establish a pan-African currency based on the Libyan golden Dinar. The plan was designed to provide the Francophone African Countries with an alternative to the French franc (CFA).*

> In a 'source comment,' the original declassified email adds:

> *According to knowledgeable individuals this quantity of gold and silver is valued at more than $7 billion. <u>French intelligence officers discovered this plan shortly after the current rebellion began</u>, [underlining is mine] and this was one of the factors that influenced President Nicolas Sarkozy's decision to commit France to the attack on Libya. According to these individuals Sarkozy's plans are driven by the following issues:*

1. A desire to gain a greater share of Libyan oil production,
2. Increase French influence in North Africa,
3. Improve his internal political situation in France,
4. Provide the French military with an opportunity to reassert its position in the world,
5. Address the concern of his advisors over Qaddafi's long-term plans to supplant France as the dominant power in Francophone Africa." [46]

A cynical person might suspect the accuracy of the phrase underlined above, and might instead believe that French intelligence knew about the gold and the golden Dinar plan a year or so before the "current rebellion." The same cynic might also believe that American and Britain were motivated by the requirement to protect the world *fiat* money system and the petrodollar that supports it. Given the strength of the motives, this modern Diogenes might further suspect that the Americans, the British and the French played a significant role in instigating the February protests and subsequently the rebellion.

Diogenes' suspicions would have been strengthened by considering a brief summary of Libya's and Muammar Qaddafi's recent history, using data from Encyclopaedia Britannica:

In 1969, Qaddafi lead a group of junior military officers in a coup that took over Libya.

In 1970, he nationalized the oil industry and told American and British military forces to leave the country.

In 1979, the U.S. imposed economic sanctions on Libya as a state sponsor of terrorism.

In 1986, the Americans conducted air strikes on Tripoli and Benghazi in retaliation for a bombing of a Berlin night club popular with U.S. soldiers.

In 1988, Pan Am Flight 103 was blown up by Libyan agents over Lockerbie, Scotland.

In 1999, Libya extradited its Lockerbie agents to the Netherlands for trial, the U.N. suspended sanctions against Libya, and Libya - U.S. contacts officially occurred for the first time in eighteen years.

In 2003, Libya took several actions to re-engage with the international community, including passing reforms to open the country to foreign investment, paying $2.7 billion in compensation to victims of the Pan Am 103 bombing, and abandoning its nuclear and chemical weapons programs.

In 2004, most U.S. economic sanctions were lifted and renewal of Libyan – U.S. diplomatic ties began, to be completed in 2006. [47]

Thus, for about six years, the relationship between Libya and the West was on the mend. During this period, one of my friends spent several months in Libya working for a major American oil company that was drilling in Libyan waters. He told me that he enjoyed Libya, finding the people friendly, feeling the environment to be safe and well governed, and experiencing absolutely no corruption.

Then, shortly after the advent of the golden Dinar, the picnic was rained out by a sudden and well-organized rebellion. Diogenes would only shake his head at those who claim regime change in Libya was caused by anything but protection of the currency and the system.

These comments should not be interpreted as praise for the dictatorship of Muammar Qaddafi. He and his regime were repressive; but replacing him and destabilizing the country was not the duty of outside powers. The government of Libya is the business of the Libyans, who were probably better off under Qaddafi's tyranny than under the chaos that has followed his being deposed.

The financial system of most of the world is based on the U.S. dollar and, to a lesser degree the euro, and is run by a few unelected institutions: the U.S. Federal Reserve, the European Central Bank, the Bank of England, the Bank of Japan, the International Monetary Fund, the World Bank, the Bank for International Settlements, etc. The system runs on debt-based *fiat* money issued by the banks and secured by nothing but the credit-worthiness of the institutions borrowing the money. Since 2008, the central banks have been creating money and buying assets to prevent a system collapse caused by the irresponsible practices of the banks themselves. This practice increases wealth inequality in the world, which in itself is a cause of war. Proverbs 22:7 sums it up nicely: "The rich rule over the poor, and the borrower is servant to the lender." [48] The debt-based system can only be sustained by perpetual growth in population and / or consumption, which places increased strain on the earth's resources and adds to the tensions that cause wars. The current financial house of cards created by the system will eventually crash, causing suffering that will be the Petri dish for war. The computerized trading fostered by the current financial system shuffles electronic assets but produces no tangible wealth. Adjusting interest and currency exchange rates to help one group to the detriment of another is a sophisticated form of theft.

A major motivation for the rise of Nazism in the 1930's, and therefore a major cause of World War II, was the financial distress in Germany. Germany was impoverished to some degree by the cost of World War I. It was further impoverished by the reparations imposed by the Treaty of Versailles. Additional, catastrophic impoverishment resulted from the Depression that began with the American stock market crash of 1929. The American stock market boom of the 1920's was largely caused by the easy money policy of the Federal Reserve, which encouraged heavily leveraged stock speculation with money borrowed at a low interest rate. When the Federal Reserve raised interest rates at the end of the decade, stocks went down from reduced buying and then crashed from panicked selling to meet margin calls. The reduction in liquidity that resulted caused American lending to Germany to dry up. This lending had been important in staving off total collapse of the German economy. When that money went away, the Weimar financial debacle was complete and the path was paved for Hitler. Thus, poor financial policy was a significant

contributor to World War II in Europe. Since today's *fiat* money system is much more pervasive, interconnected and over extended than in 1929, the world is very vulnerable to a financial crash causing wars.

Since 1971, the developed economies have moved significantly away from economies based on production of goods and services toward economies based on financial manipulation and speculation. In the period between the world wars, the period of the Great depression and the rise of Hitler, H.G. Wells wrote about the effect of financialization on the Roman Republic in its twilight days:

> Another respect in which the Roman system was a crude anticipation of our own, and different from any preceding political system we have considered, was that it was a cash- and credit-using system. Money had been in the world as yet for only a few centuries. But its use had been growing; it was providing a fluid medium for trade and enterprise, and changing economic conditions profoundly. In republican Rome, the financier and the 'money' interest began to play a part recognizably similar to their roles to-day.

> We have already noted – in our account of Herodotus – that a first effect of money was to give freedom of movement and leisure to a number of people who could not otherwise have enjoyed these privileges. And that is the peculiar value of money to mankind. Instead of a worker or a helper being paid in kind and in such a way that he is tied as much in his enjoyment as in his labour, money leaves him free to do as he pleases amidst a wide choice of purchasable aids, eases, and indulgences. He may eat his money or drink it or give it to a temple or spend it in learning something or save it against some foreseen occasion. That is the good of money, the freedom of its universal convertibility. But the freedom money gives the poor man is nothing to the freedom money has given to the rich man. With money rich men ceased to be tied to lands, houses, stores, flocks, and herds. They could change the nature and locality of their possessions with an unheard-of freedom. In the third and second century B.C., this release, this untethering of wealth, began to tell upon the general economic life of the Roman and Hellenized world. People began to buy land and the like not for use, but to sell again at a profit; people borrowed to buy, speculation developed. No doubt there were bankers in the Babylon of 1,000 B.C., but they lent in a far more limited and solid way, bars of metal and stocks of goods. That earlier world was a world of barter and payment in kind, and it went more slowly – and much more staidly and stably – for that reason. In that state the vast realm of China has remained almost down to the present time.

> The big cities before Rome were trading and manufacturing cities. Such were Corinth and Carthage and Syracuse. But Rome never produced a very considerable industrial population, and her warehouses never rivalled those of Alexandria. The little port of Ostia was always big enough for her needs. Rome was a political and financial capital, and in the latter respect, at least, she was a new sort of city. She imported profits and tribute, and very little went out from her in return. The wharves of Ostia were chiefly busy unloading corn from Sicily and Africa and loot from all the world.

After the fall of Carthage the Roman imagination went wild with hitherto unknown possibilities of finance. Money, like most other inventions, had 'happened' to mankind, and men had still to develop – to-day they have still to perfect – the science and morality of money. One sees the thing 'catching on' in the recorded life and writings of Cato the Censor. In his early days he was bitterly virtuous against usury; in his later he was devising ingenious schemes for safe usury.

In this curiously interesting century [first century B.C.] of Roman history we find man after man asking, 'What has happened to Rome?' Various answers are made – a decline in religion, a decline from the virtues of the Roman forefathers, 'Greek intellectual poison,' and the like. We, who can look at the problem with a large perspective, can see that what had happened to Rome was 'money' – the new freedoms and chances and opportunities that money opened out. Money floated the Romans off the firm ground; everyone was getting hold of money, the majority by the simple expedient of running into debt; the eastward expansion of the empire was very largely a hunt for treasure in strong-rooms and temples to keep pace with the hunger of the new need. The Equestrian order, in particular, became the money power. Everyone was developing property. Farmers were giving up corn and cattle, borrowing money, buying slaves, and starting the more intensive cultivation of oil and wine.

Money was young in human experience and wild; nobody had it under control. It fluctuated greatly. It was now abundant and now scarce. Men made sly and crude schemes to corner it, to hoard it, to send up prices by releasing hoarded metals. A small body of very shrewd men was growing immensely rich. Many patricians were growing poor and irritated and unscrupulous. Among the middling sort of people there was much hope, much adventure, and much more disappointment. The growing mass of the expropriated was permeated with that vague, baffled, and hopeless sense of being inexplicably bested, which is a preparatory condition for all great revolutionary movements. [49]

Nation states are not necessarily required for greed to cause wars. Mexico's drug wars are motivated by the desire of a large group of people to profit from selling drugs, regardless of the damage done to the people who abuse them. This group of thugs is willing to defend its ill-gotten gains with as much brutality as any empire.

So, to summarize, acquisitive desire beyond reason is a contributing cause to wars.

Poverty and Overpopulation

Poverty

The predominate cause of the French Revolution, that began in 1789, was the poverty of the large lower economic class, which was in obvious contrast to the opulent lifestyle of the upper class in a country "consuming beyond its powers of production". [1]   H. G. Wells describes conditions in France prior to the revolution:

> There was the social and political system going on with an effect of invincible persistence, the French king hunting and mending his clocks, the Court and the world of fashion pursuing their pleasures, the financiers conceiving continually more enterprising extensions of credit, business blundering clumsily along its ancient routes, much incommoded by taxes and imposts, the peasants worrying, toiling and suffering, full of a hopeless hatred of the nobleman's chateau." [2]

France was bankrupt, the final over-expenditure having been support of the American Revolution. [3] The French Revolution, which began with violence in France and went on to trigger two decades of war in Europe, seems to be an exceptionally pure case of poverty and wealth disparity causing violence.

Scholars disagree among themselves regarding the degree to which poverty causes wars. Jonathan Goodhand of the Chronic Poverty Research Centre makes the point that a "a disproportionate number of conflicts take place in poor countries" and provides a good summary of the issue:

> …Chronic poverty by itself is unlikely to lead to conflict – the chronically poor often lack political voice and organization. However, horizontal inequalities and social exclusion, particularly when they coincide with identity or regional boundaries may increase a society's predisposition towards violent conflict. Such background conditions can be exploited by political entrepreneurs. Chronic poverty may also be a significant factor in sustaining wars as violent crime and predation become the only viable livelihood strategy for the chronically poor…

> …rebels generate a loud discourse of grievance to hide their real economic issues…

> …Broadly, it is argued that uneven development processes lead to inequality, exclusion and poverty. This contributes to growing grievances particularly when poverty coincides with ethnic, religious, language or regional boundaries. These underlying grievances may explode into open conflict when triggered by external shocks (such as a sudden change in terms of trade) or mobilized by conflict entrepreneurs. Although few argue that poverty, per se, causes conflict, research points to the importance of extreme horizontal inequalities as a source of grievance which is used by leaders to mobilize followers and to legitimate violent actions (Stewart and FitzGerald, 2000) …

…Violence may be attractive because it offers the opportunity to restore a sense of power and status. It can affect a dramatic and immediate reversal of power relationships, something that may have an immediate attraction to young men with a deep-seated resentment towards the established order…

Recent research by Paul Collier of the World Bank questions the view that conflicts are driven by grievance…According to Collier, a country with more than 25% dependence on primary commodity exports is more than 5 times more likely to engage in conflict. Therefore, the curse of resource wealth rather than poverty induced grievance is more likely to cause violent conflict…In other words, rebels generate group grievance by manufacturing both the grievance and the group… [4]

In summary, poverty may not always be an immediate cause of wars and conflicts, but it provides a fertile ground for them to sprout and grow. War and poverty feed on each other – the economic waste and destruction of war exacerbate poverty and poverty encourages war. Greed and poverty are interrelated. Not having material goods stimulates acquisitive desire beyond reason for the goods of others. Goodhand's work also touches upon tribalism and machismo as causes of war.

Poverty and despair in this life can lead to an excessive fixation on the next life, which in turn can lead to religious extremism, another cause of conflict and war. H.G. Wells philosophizes on the effects of excessive wealth and excessive poverty on human actions: "When men and women are unlimited and unrestrained, the evidence of history shows clearly that they are likely to become monsters of self-indulgence; when, on the other hand, they are driven and unhappy, then their impulse is toward immoderate tragical resorts, towards wild revolts or towards the austerities and intensities of religion." [5]

Overpopulation

According to the United Nations, 980 million people were in the world in 1800. In 2017, the world population was 7,550 million.

6, 7
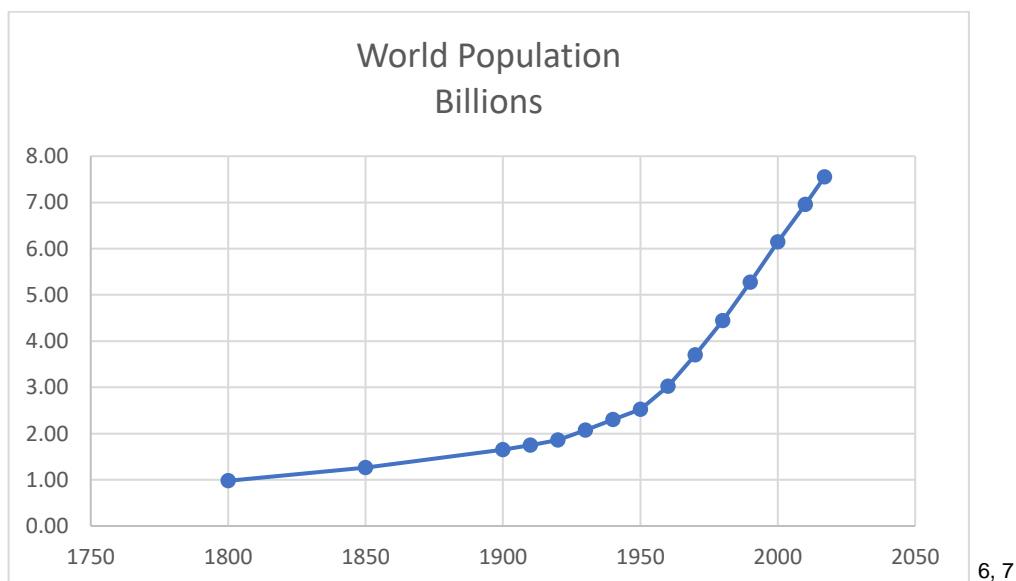
Overpopulation is a contributor to world poverty and must, therefore, be counted as a cause of war, if only indirectly. As the population increases, the pie of world resources is cut into more but smaller pieces. Eventually those pieces become so small that the recipients are compelled to violence to obtain a living. Excessive population and consumption also lead to environmental degradation that reinforces an increase in poverty.

History does provide examples illustrating that overpopulation causes wars and violence.

In the first pages of *De Bello Gallico*, dealing with events in 58 B.C., Julius Caesar attributes the cause of his first war in Gaul to overpopulation in the lands of the Helvetii, which is now northern Switzerland. Lust for power entered into the equation, but more land was the stated motive. To quote Julius Caesar:

> Among the Helvetii at this time much the richest and most distinguished man was a certain Orgetorix. This man aimed at making himself king over his tribe and, during the consulship of Marcus Messalla and Marcus Piso, organized a conspiracy among the nobility and persuaded the people to migrate from their territory in full force; it would be perfectly easy, he said, since they were the bravest of the Gauls, for them to conquer the whole country. His arguments were all the more persuasive because the Helvetii were in fact shut in on every side by natural geographical boundaries…In these conditions their range of movement was restricted and it was not easy for them to fight campaigns against their neighbors. This they greatly resented, since they were naturally fond of war. And they considered that their territory (measuring 227 by 170 miles) was too small for a people like themselves, so populous and with so lofty a military reputation.
>
> These considerations and the great influence of Orgetorix made the Helvetii decide to prepare all the necessary arrangements for a mass migration. [8]

When the Helvetii were ready, they attacked into Gaul, were defeated by the Romans, and were sent back to the lands where they started. [9]

Jared Diamond gives another example in the Vikings: "After millennia of their remaining in Scandinavia and leaving the rest of Europe alone, why did their expansion build up so quickly to a peak after 793, and then grind to a complete halt less than three centuries later? With any historical expansion, one can ask whether it was triggered by 'push' (population pressure and lack of opportunities at home), 'pull' (good opportunities and empty areas to colonize overseas), or both. Many expansion waves have been driven by a combination of push and pull, and that was true also of the Vikings: they were pushed by population growth and consolidation of royal power at home, and pulled by uninhabited new lands to settle and inhabited but defenceless rich lands to plunder overseas. Similarly, European immigration to North America reached its peak in the 1800s and early 1900s through a combination of push and pull: population growth, famines, and political oppression in Europe pushed immigrants from their homelands, while the availability of almost unlimited

fertile farmland and economic opportunity in the United States and Canada pulled them." [10]

Mr. Diamond provides additional information regarding both the Vikings technology for leaving Scandinavia and their motivation for doing so: "Sailboat technology from the Mediterranean finally reached Scandinavia around A.D. 600, at a time when climatic warming and the arrival of improved plows happened to be stimulating food production and a human population explosion in Scandinavia. Because most of Norway is steep and mountainous, only 3% of its land area can be used for agriculture, and that arable land was coming under increasing population pressure by A.D. 700, especially in western Norway." [11]

With his discussion of the genocide in Rwanda and Burundi, written in 2005, Jared Diamond provides a modern example of genocide largely caused by overpopulation and by hostility between tribes. Eight hundred thousand people were killed in the civil war in Rwanda from April through July 1994. Three hundred thousand more were killed in neighbouring Burundi in the civil war that lasted from 1993 to 2005. [12] To quote Mr. Diamond:

> …rates of population growth in East Africa …are among the highest in the world…[I]t has been exploding recently for many reasons: the adoption of crops native to the New World (especially corn, beans, sweet potatoes, and manioc, alias cassava), broadening the agricultural base and increasing food production beyond that previously possible with native African crops alone; improved hygiene, preventive medicine, vaccinations of mothers and children, antibiotics, and some control of malaria and other endemic African diseases; and national unification and the fixing of national boundaries, thereby opening to settlement some areas that were formerly no-man's lands fought over by adjacent smaller polities…
>
> The notion, still widespread today, that we can promote human happiness merely by increasing food production, without a simultaneous reining-in of population growth, is doomed to end in frustration – or so said [Thomas] Malthus [in An Essay on the Principle of Population, 1798] …
>
> …modern Rwanda illustrates a case where Malthus's worst-case scenario does seem to have been right. More generally, both Malthus's supporters and his detractors could agree that population and environmental problems created by non-sustainable resource use will ultimately get solved in one way or another: if not by pleasant means of our own choice, then by unpleasant and unchosen means, such as the ones that Malthus initially envisioned…
>
> In recent decades, Rwanda and neighboring Burundi have become synonymous in our minds with two things: high population, and genocide… They are the two most densely populated countries in Africa, and among the most densely populated in the world: Rwanda's average population density is triple even that of Africa's third most densely populated (Nigeria), and 10 times that of neighboring Tanzania… [13]

In Rwanda and Burundi, the majority Hutus and the minority (about 15 per cent) Tutsis have had a long-standing ethnic hostility that is frequently very violent. From 1897, the German colonial government used Tutsis as their agents. When the Belgians took over in 1916, they continued to govern through the Tutsis. This colonial practice exacerbated the ethnic tensions, which continued and periodically became violent after independence of both countries in 1962. Against this background, Burundi's civil war began in October 1993 when the president, who was Hutu, was murdered by extremist Tutsi army officers. Rwanda's civil war began on 6 April 1994, when a plane carrying the president of Rwanda and the provisional president of Burundi was shot down coming in to land at the capital of Rwanda. [14]

Mr. Diamond recognizes ethnic animosity as accounting in a large degree for the wars in Rwanda and Burundi, but also raises excessive population density as a major contributor. He describes the Kanama area, a place of fertile soil, high population density, and only one Tutsi resident among a population of Hutus. In that exclusively Hutu area, the genocide death rate in 1994 was 5.4 per cent, about half of the 11 per cent death rate in the country as a whole but still representing the death of about one person in every twenty. In that area the 1993 population density was 2,040 people per square mile, about 2.7 times the 1990 population density of Rwanda as a whole. The people lived mostly by subsistence agriculture, using inefficient traditional agricultural methods on very small farms. A one-hectare farm was considered large. On the average in 1993, each person was supported by the production from a tract of land 24 metres on a side. The environment was degrading because too much land had been cleared and erosion control practices were poor. No resources were available for young people to start new farms to support new families, which created intrafamily discord and social stress. Wealth disparity (or poverty disparity) was increasing, with "large" farms getting larger at the expense of smaller farms that were sold off to raise cash for immediate requirements. Land disputes were frequent. [15]

> After the explosion of 1994, [Catherine] Andre tried to track down the fates of Kanama's inhabitants…
>
> All but one of the known victims at Kanama fell into one of six categories. First, the single Tutsi at Kanama, a widowed woman, was killed. Whether that had much to do with her being Tutsi is unclear, because she furnished so many other motives for killing: she had inherited much land, she had been involved in many land disputes, she was the widow of a polygamous Hutu husband (hence viewed as a competitor of his other wives and their families), and her deceased husband had already been forced off his land by his half-brothers.
>
> Two more categories of victims consisted of Hutu who were large landowners. The majority of them were men over the age of 50, hence at a prime age for father / son disputes over land. The minority were younger people who had aroused jealousy by being able to earn much off-farm income and using it to buy land.
>
> The next category of victims consisted of "troublemakers" known for being involved in all sorts of land disputes and other conflicts.

Still another category was young men and children, particularly ones from impoverished backgrounds, who were driven by desperation to enlist in the warring militias and proceeded to kill each other. This category is especially likely to have been underestimated, because it was dangerous for Andre to ask too many questions about who had belonged to what militia.

Finally, the largest number of victims were especially malnourished people, or especially poor people with no or very little land and without off-farm income. They evidently died because of starvation, being too weak, or not having money to buy food or to pay the bribes required to buy their survival at roadblocks.

Thus, as Andre and [Jean-Philippe] Platteau note, "The 1994 events provided a unique opportunity to settle scores, or to reshuffle land properties, even among Hutu villagers...It is not rare, even today, to hear Rwandans argue that a war is necessary to wipe out an excess of population and to bring numbers into line with the available land resources." …

As Gerard Prunier, a French scholar of East Africa, puts it, "The decision to kill was of course made by politicians, for political reasons. But at least part of the reason why it was carried out so thoroughly by the ordinary rank-and-file peasants in their ingo [= family compound] was feeling that there were too many people on too little land, and that with a reduction in their numbers, there would be more for the survivors."

…I conclude that population pressure was one of the important factors behind the Rwandan genocide, that Malthus's worst-case scenario may sometimes be realized, and that Rwanda may be a distressing model of that scenario in operation. Severe problems of overpopulation, environmental impact, and climate change cannot persist indefinitely: sooner or later they are likely to resolve themselves, whether in the manner of Rwanda or in some other manner not of our devising, if we don't succeed in solving them by our own actions. [16]

Overpopulation as a cause of war is likely to be with us for a long time, because reducing population growth is difficult in any case, and is constrained by cultural and religious issues.

Many cultures place high social value on large families, probably as a hold-over from agricultural societies where many hands were needed in the fields. In many developing nations, this motive for many children is still in operation. The strength of this cultural imperative was driven home to me in 2006 in Lagos, Nigeria, during a lunch time conversation with a Nigerian co-worker. This man was upper middle class, a forty-year-old engineer employed by a major oil company who had worked for a while in the United States and who was obviously reasonably well connected to have this job. He was bragging to me that he had four children because he could afford them, in contrast, according to him, to most Nigerians who could only afford two. If this attitude is wide spread in the developing world, rational population control is a difficult undertaking. Between 1960, when it gained independence from Britain,

and 2016, Nigeria's population grew from 45.1 million to 186.0 million, more than quadrupling in fifty-six years. [17]

My perception of the African cultural bias is confirmed by a BBC article dated 15 July 2018 and datelined Nairobi, Kenya. The basis of the article is an interview with a thirty-four-year-old father of three who has told no one but his wife about his recent vasectomy. BBC quotes the man as saying, "I would be very angry if anyone was to find out. There's so much stigma and I don't want people to judge me or get into my personal life." His wife is quoted as saying, "Where we come from people say men must have as many children as possible." A 2013 United Nations report stated that as few as 0.1% of African men have had vasectomies. In the same year, the UN reported that the percentage of women in relationships who relied on a vasectomy for birth control was 22% in Canada, 21% in the United Kingdom and 19.5% in New Zealand. Birth control is important to Africa, since 2017 United Nations projections indicate that the continent's population will double by 2050. Some African governments are encouraging vasectomies; but their efforts are not meeting great success. [18]

In many cases, religious doctrines and attitudes are an impediment to population control. Because of the variations of personal beliefs within any religion, over-generalization is dangerous. But, here is a broad-brush overview of the contraceptive doctrines of several of the major religions:

The Roman Catholic Church is adamantly opposed to all forms of contraception, which is defined as "any action which, either in anticipation of the conjugal act [sexual intercourse], or in its accomplishment, or in the development of its natural consequences, proposes, whether as an end or as a means, to render procreation impossible" (Humanae Vitae 14). This includes sterilization, condoms and other barrier methods, spermicides, coitus interruptus (withdrawal method), the Pill, and all other such methods. [19] Most other Christian denominations are generally tolerant of contraception.

Contraception is permitted by eight of the nine classic schools of Islamic law. More conservative Islamic leaders are opposed to birth control methods and make family planning ineffective in many countries. [20] The Ahlul Bayt Digital Islamic Library Program presents a section titled "Enquiries from the Religious Authorities in Regards to Birth Control". One question is interesting with respect to population limitation:

> **Question 13:** Is the religion of Islam in agreement with the (population) growth of the society?

> **Answer 13:** Islam is in agreement with the growth of the society since with the growth in the number of Muslims, this is proof of the greatness and strength of them (the Muslims). However, in some specific circumstances, (Islam) is not in favour of a (population) growth within the society. – Ayatullah Fadhil Lankarani, Medical Issues [21]

Judaism allows contraception methods that do not damage the sperm or stop it from reaching its intended destination. These methods are the contraceptive pill and the

intrauterine device. Judaism allows a couple to avoid having more children after they have a family of reasonable size. [22]

Buddhism considers contraception acceptable if the method does not violate the concept that it is wrong to kill for any reason. From this logic, methods that prevent conception are approved and methods that kill the fertilized egg are wrong. Having children is not regarded as a religious duty. [23]

Birth control is not banned by Hinduism. Because of the large population in India, much of the birth control discussion is related to overpopulation rather than personal ethics. [24]

So, in mournful conclusion, poverty and overpopulation contribute to wars, overpopulation is one cause of poverty, and, for religious and cultural reasons, population control is difficult in many places.

Lust for Power

Most wars are at least partially motivated by the desire of highly placed persons and of significant portions of many populations for power and 'glory'.

The desire for power is a sibling of greed in some cases. Having military or economic or cultural power can lead directly to the acquisition of wealth. The desire for power can also be derived from personal or national ego issues: either an inflated ego that demands power as a right or a wounded ego that protects itself by exercising power over others.

The conquests of Alexander the Great seem to have been driven mostly by a desire for power and self-aggrandizement. His aspirations to grandeur were instilled by his parents, Philip and Olympias, who filled his childish head with tales of his glorious ancestors. His mother claimed descent from Achilles, hero of the *Iliad*. Heracles, and through him the god Zeus, were reputed to be in Philip's family tree. Philip himself was a successful king and general. According to Plutarch, when Alexander was departing to conquer Persia, Olympias privately told him that Zeus himself was really his father. After he conquered Egypt, the priests of Zeus-Ammon at Siwa confirmed to Alexander that Zeus was his sire. Puffed up with a desire to equal the 'glory' of his reputed ancestors and emulate their power, Alexander spread war from the Bosporus to the Punjab. [1]

An Irish tale from about fourteen centuries ago, *The Cattle Raid of Cooley*, describes a brief but bloody war caused by a desire for power and status intermixed with ego and greed. To briefly summarize the story, Queen Maeve of Connaught argues with her husband, Ailill, about who of them is the richest. An inventory of their possessions reveals that Ailill's wealth exceeds Maeve's by one prime bull. If Maeve had the brown bull of Cooley from Ulster, she would be wealthier than her husband. So, Maeve and the Connacht army attack Ulster and steal the brown bull, even though they lose the war to the Ulster army championed by Cu Chulainn. [2] Thus we have an unspecified number of people killed so Queen Maeve can bring her status up to equal her husband's, modifying the balance of power in Connaught. When I was working in Belfast in 1999, graffiti on at least one public housing estate in a protestant area featured a labelled drawing of Cu Chulainn, a continuing hero in the conflict between Ulster and the rest of Ireland.

Shakespeare's Macbeth gives another literary example of a civil war caused by desire for power and, presumably, the wealth that goes with it. Macbeth was doing well as Thane of Glamis, and even better when King Duncan made him Thane of Cawdor, but to feed his ego, and his wife's ego, he was compelled to kill and supplant the king. His abuses to maintain his power sparked the civil war that killed him.

As George Orwell's *1984* [3] so aptly describes, wars and external threats are used to manipulate populations to enhance the power and egos of the elites. The War on Terror is a manifestation of this principle. In addition to causing thousands of deaths, the War on Terror has been used to make Americans and Europeans accept many

things that are not good for them, such as excessive invasions of privacy, destructive levels of debt, and the creation of many enemies that could have been neutral or friends.

A significant cause of World War I was the desire for power and respect felt by Kaiser Wilhelm II and by many Germans. Barbara Tuchman describes this desire:

> "All the long years of my reign," he [the Kaiser] told the King of Italy, "my colleagues, the Monarchs of Europe, have paid no attention to what I have to say. Soon, with my great Navy to endorse my words, they will be more respectful." The same sentiments ran through his whole nation, which suffered, like their emperor, from a terrible need for recognition. Pulsing with energy and ambition, conscious of strength, fed upon Nietzsche and Treitschke, they felt entitled to rule, and cheated that the world did not acknowledge their title. "We must," wrote Friedrich von Bernhardi, the spokesman of militarism, "secure to German nationality and German spirit throughout the globe that high esteem which is due them." He frankly allowed only one method of attaining the goal; lesser Bernhardis from the Kaiser down sought to secure the esteem they craved by threats and show of power. They shook the "mailed fist," demanded their "place in the sun," and proclaimed the virtues of the sword in paeans to "blood and iron" and "shining armor." [4]

More description of Kaiser Wilhelm's desire for power and respect is provided by Brigadier General U.S. Army Reserve (Retired) S.L.A. Marshall:

> Wilhelm was shrewd, treacherous – and hysterical. He was a chronic bully, and his habitual style of discourse was a neurotic bluster that masked the painful inner uncertainty of a small man who had had the bad luck in life to be called upon to stomp about in a giant's boots. Wilhelm II lived all his life in the shadow of "the Great Emperor," his grandfather Wilhelm I, who had made the United Germany with the help of his brilliant chancellor, Prince Bismarck… But Wilhelm's desire, though it seemed the same as Bismarck's, was not at all the same. It was not so much politics as a search for the cure of an intolerable inner itch – an unfulfilled childhood longing for strength, brilliance, and love." [5]

Brigadier General Marshall also presents the ironic fact that the assassins who triggered it all by murdering Archduke Francis Ferdinand, heir to the Austro-Hungarian throne, killed him because they wanted a bigger place in the sun for Serbia. [6]

In *Collapse*, Jared Diamond states: "The usual accounts of the genocides in Rwanda and Burundi portray them as the result of pre-existing ethnic hatreds fanned by cynical politicians for their own ends…This genocide resulted from the deliberate choice of a modern elite to foster hatred and fear to keep itself in power…The evidence is overwhelming that this view is correct and accounts in large degree for Rwanda's tragedy." [7]

One of the anti-Viet Nam War slogans of the 1960's was, "What if they gave a war and nobody came?" Part of the reason people are willing to participate in wars, in

my opinion, is that each participant's ego gets its pro rata share of the power and ego boost of the whole national military establishment. The unholy pleasure of conquest lurks in all of us. In a moment of reverie in Cambodia, I found myself relishing the fact that we were on that piece of ground only by right of superior force of arms, of superior power. The communists did not want us there, but we were too strong for them to do anything about it that day. And, in my own small way, I loved the power.

Fear

Pre-emptive wars, wars of policy, often result from fear of aggression by "others" who are motivated by greed or by "others" who are driven to aggression by their own fear. President Eisenhower was quite clear about what he thought of this type of war: "When people speak to you about a preventive war, you tell them to go and fight it. After my experience, I have come to hate war. War settles nothing." [1] But, we humans still do it.

In *Shattered Peace*, Daniel Yergin gives us an important generalization about fear between nations. "In a system of independent states, all nations live rather dangerously. Therefore, the reduction of dangers becomes a nation's objective in international politics. A country will take actions and pursue policies that it considers defensive, but which appear ominous, if not threatening to rivals. And so a dialectic of confrontation develops." [2]

In addition to the imperial motive of greed, an inherited fear of Rome being destroyed seems to have been a strong motive for expansion of the Roman Empire. That fear was apparently kindled by the Celts sacking Rome in 390 B.C. [3] No matter how far the imperial border was pushed away from the City of Rome, just beyond that new border was a new neighbour that could threaten the Empire, and therefore needed to be conquered.

Because of a history of catastrophic invasions from the west, both Russia and China are obsessed with the need to control the territories to their west to allow for a defence-in-depth. The current conflict in Ukraine seems to me to be largely motivated by this strong Russian need for depth, and for a naval base on the Black Sea to have warm water access to the ocean. Western insensitivity to this need has contributed to the urgency of the Ukrainian problem. The Russian fears were undoubtedly exacerbated by American anti-ballistic missiles being stationed in Poland soon after the collapse of the Soviet Union. Their concerns were further confirmed by US participation in the 2014 coup that overthrew the pro-Russian president of Ukraine, Viktor Yanukovych. Former US Congressman Ron Paul has commented on this coup: "How do we know the US was behind the 2014 coup? For one, we have the intercepted telephone call between US Assistant Secretary of State Victoria Nuland and US Ambassador to Ukraine, Geoffrey Pyatt. In the recording, the two US officials are plotting to remove the elected government and discussing which US puppet they will put in place." [4] To me, this represents both American fear and American arrogance, and has to contribute to Russian fears.

George Friedman's *The Next 100 Years* discusses the effect of fear on American policy:

> War is central to the American experience, and its frequency is constantly increasing. It is built into American culture and deeply rooted in American geopolitics. Its purpose must be clearly understood.

> America was born out of war and has continued to fight to this day at an ever increasing pace. Norway's grand strategy might be more about economics

than warfare, but U.S. strategic goals, and U.S. grand strategy, *originate in fear.* [Italics are mine.] …

The United States has five geopolitical goals that drive its grand strategy.

1. The complete domination of North America by the United States Army
2. The elimination of any threat to the United States by any power in the Western Hemisphere
3. Complete control of the maritime approaches to the United States by the Navy in order to preclude any possibility of invasion
4. Complete domination of the world's oceans to further secure U.S. physical safety and guarantee control over the international trading system
5. The prevention of any other nation from challenging U.S. global naval power [5]

The above thoughts on fear provoke a need to analyse the causes of the Cold War. However, I doubt that we will ever know with scientific perfection what those causes were. The assumption that I grew up with in Texas was that intrinsic to Communist ideology was the tenet that Communism would have to take over the world to protect itself from subversion from non-Communist nations. Given this 'fact', defeat of Communism was required to protect non-Communist economic systems. This is a fear-based motivation. That fear might have some basis in truth, given the closing paragraphs of the *Communist Manifesto*:

> In short, the Communists everywhere support every revolutionary movement against the existing social and political order of things.
>
> In all these movements they bring, to the front, as the leading question in each, the property question, no matter what its degree of development at the time.
>
> Finally, they labor everywhere for the union and agreement of the democratic parties of all countries.
>
> The Communists disdain to conceal their views and aims. They openly declare that their ends can be attained only by the forcible overthrow of all existing social conditions. Let the ruling classes tremble at a Communistic revolution. The proletarians have nothing to lose but their chains. They have a world to win.
>
> Workingmen of all countries unite! [6]

The words above can be interpreted as reasonable basis for a fear of Communism, and therefore fear of ideologically driven aggression on the part of the Soviet Union. H. G. Wells gives confirmation of this innate Communist aggressiveness, at least during the early days of their rule in Russia:

> At first the ideas of the Bolshevik leaders went far beyond Russia. The world, they realized, was becoming one system, in which it would be impossible to

have more than one social and economic order. They called on the workers everywhere to unite, overthrow the capitalist system, and so bring about the planless, shapeless, Marxist millennium. But this procedure naturally brought them into conflict with all other existing governments. It added to their task of establishing communism in Russia the task of maintaining her against a series of counter-attacks to which this denunciation of foreign governments exposed her. [7]

During World War II, American thinking changed from seeing international affairs from a stand point of defense, a static concept relying on American geographic isolation, to analysing international events as they related to "national security". [8] According to Daniel Yergin:

> We must remember that "national security" was not a given, not a fact, but a perception, a state of mind.
>
> And what characterizes the concept of national security? It postulates the interrelatedness of so many different political, economic, and military factors that developments halfway around the globe are seen to have automatic and direct impact on America's core interests. Virtually every development in the world is perceived to be potentially crucial. An adverse turn of events anywhere endangers the United States. Problems in foreign relations are viewed as urgent and immediate threats. Thus, desirable foreign policy goals are translated into issues of national survival, and the range of threats becomes limitless. The doctrine is characterized by expansiveness, a tendency to push the subjective boundaries of security outward to more and more areas, to encompass more and more geography and more and more problems. It demands that the country assume a posture of military preparedness; the nation must be on permanent alert. There was a new emphasis on technology and armed force. Consequent institutional changes occurred. All of this leads to a paradox: the growth of American power did not lead to a greater sense of assuredness, but rather to an enlargement of the range of perceived threats that must be urgently confronted. [9]

The short words for "an enlargement of the range of perceived threats that must be urgently confronted" are "increased fear".

The Soviet occupation of Eastern Europe, demands on Turkey and sloth in leaving northern Iran after World War II, as well as Mao Tse Tung's Communist take-over of China in 1949 could be viewed as validation of fears of Communist expansionism.

An August 1946 Soviet note to Turkey, with copies to the U.S. and Britain, bluntly called for vesting control of the Dardanelles solely in the Black Sea powers and for the Soviet Union and Turkey to share joint fortifications on the Straits. The U.S. strongly rejected the note and sent a naval taskforce to the eastern Mediterranean. The Russians did very little in response. However, the internal discussions within the U.S. government helped solidify a policy of containment and began development of the domino theory. [10] *Shattered Peace* tells the effect of the Turkish episode on American thinking:

Notwithstanding [the lack of Russian action], the Turkish episode did lead to the expression of the anticommunist consensus among American policy makers. The image of the Soviet Union had, we might say, "closed". The official American view of Russia was no longer ambiguous. Excluded now were assessments keyed to the nature of a particular problem or suggesting that the Russians were confused or crudely reactive. Interpretations and assessments from this point on derived from the axiomatic construct that the Soviet Union was not a Great Power operating within the international system but rather a world revolutionary state bent on overturning that system. These axioms and the doctrine of national security coalesced to create a permanent crisis mentality among the Americans. Here, operating for the first time, was an interpretive framework that would govern American policy well into the 1970's. [11]

The West's Communist-plot interpretation of Soviet activities after World War II may have been exaggerated. The Russians may have just been playing the classic Great Power game in China, Europe and Iran.

Chinese Communists did not owe their victory to the Soviets. During the war with Germany, the Soviets were too busy to provide material help to Mao, and recognized Chiang Kai-shek's government as the government of China until it fled the mainland in defeat. The Soviet Union declared war on Japan on 8 August 1945, and occupied Manchuria with little resistance. Stalin did not want a confrontation with the U.S. and signed a Treaty of Friendship and Alliance with Chiang on 14 August 1945. The war between the Communists under Mao and the Nationalists under Chiang began in 1946. Early in 1949, wanting to avoid involvement in a potential clash between the Communists and the U.S., Stalin advised Mao to accept mediation with Chiang, but Mao refused. By the end of that year, Chiang had evacuated to Taiwan and the People's Republic of China controlled the main land. Since these events were contemporaneous with Soviet domination of Eastern Europe, the Greek civil war, and the Berlin Blockade, Americans saw the establishment of Communism in China as being "directed from Moscow…in some kind of communist 'plot'." [12]

The long Soviet domination of the countries it occupied during and after World War II was probably motivated more by the Russian craving for defense in depth rather than by ideology. Conclusions reached about the meaning of an event are frequently skewed by the fears and biases of the interpreter. To quote Daniel Yergin again:

Such was certainly becoming the new [American] conventional wisdom – domestic Soviet totalitarianism inevitably meant a totalitarian foreign policy – that is, a foreign policy motivated primarily by ideology and geared to unlimited expansion and the complete domination of the international system. A basic argument of this history [Shattered Peace] is that the connection was not inevitable – indeed that caution, rather than insatiable appetite, was probably a better characterization of Stalin's postwar foreign policy. [13]

Another aspect of the emerging national security state was the development of military assistance programs – to Turkey, Iran, and then to Latin America. Of special note was the October 1946 proposal by the Joint Chiefs to institute

a program of military assistance to Iran. The stated reasons were to establish a presence, to create "a feeling of good will toward the United States," and to help the central government to maintain internal order, and to encourage it to wipe out the last vestiges of Azerbaijanian separatism. [As an ironic side note, when I was working in Baku in 2003, there were reports that the U.S. was working to encourage Azeri separatism in Iran.] The real reasons, of course, were Iranian oil, protection of approaches to Saudi Arabian oil, and provision for bases and staging areas near the Soviet Union. "As to counterdefensive operations," explained one document, "the proximity of important Soviet industries makes the importance of holding the Eastern Mediterranean- Middle East area obvious. This is one of the few favourable areas for counteroffensive action." This last was exactly what Stalin's preclusive sphere in Eastern Europe was intended to prevent (and now did so) elsewhere on the Russian rim. [14]

But the bottom line remains, the Cold War occurred largely because of fear – Western fear of Communism and Communist fear of the West.

An offshoot of the Cold War and the domino theory was the American war in Viet Nam. *Shattered Peace* gives us a summary of how U.S. involvement in Viet Nam began at the end of World War II:

Roosevelt had made unmistakably clear that he held, as Secretary of State Stettinius put it on January 3, 1945, "some very definite political views on this subject [American policy in Indochina]." FDR opposed the return of French rule, favoring instead some sort of international trusteeship until Indochina achieved independence. Roosevelt's plans had suffered setbacks by this time [3 January 1945], particularly because they depended on a Chinese Policeman in Asia – which was obviously already a chimera by the end of 1944. In addition, the British joined Charles de Gaulle in opposing the strategy…

After FDR's death [12 April 1945], U.S. leaders began the steps, without realizing their significance, that led initially to U.S. support for France in the first Indochina war and then to America's deep involvement in the second Indochina war. The State Department officials who initiated the change viewed Indochina within the framework of a perceived world communist threat. Thus, they opposed a nationalist movement with a strong communist element, and at the same time wanted to solidify relations with France – in part so France would be a European bulwark against Soviet influence on that continent. Expressing the view of the Office of European Affairs, James Dunn assured Harriman on 21 April, "The Department is making every effort to improve relations with France… The main point of difficulty is Indo-China, a problem now being studied." The Office of European Affairs proposed "a return to the *status quo ante* without any commitments from France." In Dunn's view, it was "necessary to propitiate France." [15]

[Between 1946 and 1948] U.S. officials did not conceal their belief that the French were trying to hold on to an outmoded and unworkable colonial system…By 1949, the impending victory of the Communists in China had led

to a hardening of policy on Vietnam – a conviction that developments in Indochina should be judged not by the requirements of European politics but by the need to halt what was seen as a Moscow-directed advance of communism in Asia. This concern became more and more dominant as Washington watched Mao Tse-tung's forces move toward victory…

By 1954, the United States would have provided almost three billion dollars in military assistance for Indochina

The decision on Vietnam reflected the firm belief among American leaders that they were engaged in a worldwide struggle with Soviet-directed communism. [16]

And after 1954, another twenty-one years of war ensued, millions of people died, the land and infrastructure of both Viet Nams was terribly poisoned and damaged, the U.S. was forced off the gold standard, and the North Vietnamese reunified the country for reasons more nationalistic than ideological. Since Saigon fell in 1975, Southeast Asia has not gone Communist, the West has not failed, and Viet Nam has become a pretty good tourist destination. I must conclude from this that the fear-based domino theory was wrong and that belief in that false theory led to a terrible tragedy. On a personal note, since I believed in the domino theory in the Sixties and Seventies and spent most of 1970 in Viet Nam, I must concede that I was mistaken, that my friends who died really did not need to do so, and that the Vietnamese I helped to kill really should not have had that happen to them. All of this was because of fear and misunderstanding.

George Friedman's *Next 100 Years* forecasts major geopolitical developments over the next century. A remarkable number of the projected events are pre-emptive actions motivated by fears of aggression by a neighbour. [17] We seem to be on the same old road, still.

Unfortunately, not all fears are baseless. Therefore, the topic of fear is a proper place to express my personal opinion that participation in a purely and clearly defensive war is appropriate and even obligatory, given the state of the world.

Culture

Culture is "the sum total of ways of living built up by a group of human beings, which is transmitted from one generation to another." [1] The nature of each human group is built upon the nature of the humans that belong to it, whether the group be a small clan, a nation or humanity as a whole. Thus, in considering the cultural flaws that contribute to war, we must begin our consideration with the nature of individual humans. From that foundation, we can then look at other bellicose cultural traits: the character of some nations, common incidents of militarism in our lives, a generally accepted double standard regarding killing and theft when applying the standards to governments rather than individuals, warlike aspects of many religions, and glorification of war in literature.

Basic Human Nature

Humans seem to have begun as wandering omnivores who killed animals for food, needed to enjoy the chase and the kill, and periodically had to defend their territory against other groups. This environment was a selective breeding program for soldierly traits.

We have a strong competitive instinct. We enjoy physically competitive sports, which are just wars in miniature. The adrenaline rush from combat is the same adrenaline rush we get from sport competition. Combat is a tremendous natural high. The adrenaline induced joy of battle is real, if sick. I felt it myself on a couple of occasions in Viet Nam in 1970. Those feelings in Viet Nam were essentially the same as the way I felt the first time I rode out to play polo. The feeling can be addictive and can be used to recruit a young person to go to war.

The popularity of ridiculously violent movies and computer games is an indicator of a dark streak in us. In my opinion, these movies and games have the very pernicious effect of desensitizing the audience or players to violence and suffering.

Team sports are sublimations of war and can help defuse the urge to real war by providing a wholesome outlet for our innate aggression. They also teach valuable lessons about getting along with a group. Some sports, such as boxing, smack more of cock fights than sport, and are, in my opinion, unhealthy.

"Machismo" is a good word to describe this set of feelings and attitudes. The Cambridge Dictionary gives two definitions of the term. The United Kingdom definition is, "male behaviour that is strong and forceful and shows very traditional ideas about how men and women should behave." Their American definition is, "strong pride in behaving in a way that is thought to be typically male, esp. by showing strength and power." [2] Machismo is alive and well in the world today.

Machismo can be a cover-up for a poor self-image. When this manifests in the playground bully, it is bad. When it characterizes a major political leader, it is disastrous. As described above in "Lust for Power", poor Kaiser Wilhelm II is a prime example for a blustering façade hiding a fearful child. I find myself wondering if Donald Trump today has the same problem.

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Lyndon Johnson's self-image problems were a factor in his leading the United States into its deep involvement in the Viet Nam War. In *Vietnam at War*, Philip B. Davidson lists the factors that drove Johnson in early 1965, when U.S. involvement in Vietnam greatly increased: "Finally, there was the essence of Johnson himself. He was one of the last products of the American frontier, a subculture which prized boldness and courage. Lyndon Johnson told [Doris] Kearns [his biographer to whom he was speaking in 1970] that if he lost Vietnam people would say 'that I was a coward. An unmanly man. A man without spine.' To this complicated and insecure man, Vietnam had become a test of his very manhood, and he had to meet it." [3]

Most people have a strong allegiance to their family. Such allegiance is grounded in sincere, pure, wholesome emotion and in millennia of cultural conditioning in support of hunter-gatherer groups, family farmers, family traders, etc. This is good and normal. This love of family expands into love of tribe, patriotism, nationalism, intolerance of difference, prejudice, and xenophobia – a spectrum that moves from the constructive to the destructive, from peace to war. Family feeling underlies our desire to be part of a group or team, whether it be a charitable organization, an army, or a drug gang. Speaking personally, family feeling is probably the primary motivation for my volunteering for service in the Viet Nam War. I believed the domino theory and felt an urge to defend my home. I also felt a strong need to prove myself equal to my father, who had a strong record as an officer in the 112th Cavalry regiment in the Pacific Theatre of World War II. Maybe this second motive contains a taint of machismo.

Prejudice and xenophobia fostering hatred between nations and groups does produce war. General Carl von Clausewitz discusses this:

> Two motives lead men to war: instinctive hostility and hostile intention. In our definition of war, we have chosen as its characteristic the latter of these elements, because it is the most general. It is impossible to conceive the passion of hatred of the wildest description, bordering on mere instinct, without combining with it the idea of a hostile intention. On the other hand, hostile intentions may often exist without being accompanied by any, or at all events by any extreme, hostility of feeling. Amongst savages views emanating from the feelings, amongst civilized nations those emanating from the understanding, have the predominance; but this difference arises from attendant circumstances, existing institutions, &c., and, therefore, is not to be found necessarily in all cases, although it prevails in the majority. In short, even the most civilized nations may burn with passionate hatred of each other. [4]

Many examples are available for wars caused by tribalism / excessive nationalism, but here are a few.

Broadly speaking, the start of World War I could be described as a clash between two very large tribes, the Slavic and the Germanic, that drew in another large tribe, the Celtic. On 28 June 1914, Archduke Franz Ferdinand of Austria, a German, was assassinated by Gavrilo Princip, a Slav. Through a tragic combination of arrogance and poor judgement, Russia and Germany began a war that changed the political nature of the world.

Fanatical ideas of racial superiority were a major cause of World War II in Europe. To quote a man who was in Germany during Adolph Hitler's rise to power: "Hitler's obsession with race leads to his advocacy of the 'folkish' state…'Thus,' Hitler declares a little farther on [in *Mein Kampf*], 'the highest purpose of a folkish state is concern for the preservation of those original racial elements which bestow culture and create the beauty and dignity of a higher mankind.'…Since a folkish state must be based on race, 'the German Reich must embrace all Germans' – this is a key point in his argument, and one he did not forget nor fail to act upon when he came to power. [5] And, those actions were very bloody.

The Nigerian Civil War, from 30 May 1967 to 13 January 1970, began when the Republic of Biafra, the south eastern, oil producing portion of the country, declared its independence and ended when Biafra surrendered to the Nigerian army. The Igbo tribe formed sixty to seventy per cent of the population of Biafra. The motive for Biafra's secession was ethnic and cultural differences and grievances between the Igbo and the rest of the country. During the two and a half years of war, there were one hundred thousand military casualties. Between five hundred thousand and two million civilians starved. Total deaths, mostly from starvation and disease, are estimated to be three million. [6]

The Troubles in Northern Ireland from 1968 to 1998 were a bloody squabble between tribes that used Catholicism and Protestantism as badges to mark their identities, just as they might use different coloured uniforms. Broadly speaking, the Catholics are the descendants of the pre-Elizabethan natives of Ireland while the Protestants are mostly the Ulster Scots, descendants of James I's plantation to tighten his grip on Ireland, and subsequent immigrants from Great Britain. Leaders of both groups have worked hard to keep the dissention going for the past four centuries, motivated, I suspect, by a desire to enhance their personal status. I should confess that one of my ancestors was an Ulster Scot who was in Cromwell's army at Drogheda. Hopefully, after three hundred and sixty-nine years, we have lived that down.

As mentioned above in the discussion of lust for power, ethnic hatred was the foundation upon which self-seeking individuals built the genocides in Rwanda and Burundi. A similar situation seems to have created the wars, massacres and ethnic cleansings that occurred in the former territory of Yugoslavia between 1991 and 1999. To quote *Der Spiegel* on the subject:

> Throughout the course of history, there had been often bloody clashes between the different ethnic groups in the Balkans. Even in Tito's socialist republic, nationalism bubbled below the surface.
>
> Nonetheless, a 1990 poll showed that a majority of Yugoslavia's inhabitants viewed themselves as Yugoslav first and European second. Only in the third place did they identify with the republic or region where they lived. Moreover, there were 800,000 mixed marriages in the country; in Sarajevo almost one in three marriages was mixed. Religion did not play a big role.

It can very plausibly be argued that ethnic tensions were not the cause, but the consequence of Yugoslavia's unravelling. It was in no way a natural and unavoidable development that those tensions should result in war. Instead, it was political leaders drove violent nationalists to stir up fear and hatred, thus paving the path to war. [7]

In Viet Nam in 1970, a conversation with one of my fellow lieutenants gave me background information to help me partially understand today's ongoing conflict between Ukraine and Russia. He grew up in the New York area, but had been born in Germany in 1944 to Ukrainian parents. In 1941, when the German army advanced through the Ukraine on the way to Stalingrad, my friend's father, like many Ukrainians, regarded the Germans as liberators and joined the German army to fight the Russians. My friend said that, on one memorable day, his father "wore out a good German machine gun killing Russians." With sentiments like that in the background, today's hostility between ethnic Russians and ethnic Ukrainians north of the Black Sea is easy to understand.

From 1991 to the present, Somalia has experienced "interclan and inter-factional fighting" that has killed between three hundred fifty thousand and one million Somalis. Since 2007, al-Shabab, "Africa's deadliest Islamic extremist group," has contributed to the violence. [8]

The current war in Yemen is to a large extent a proxy war between two ancient tribal enemies, Iran and Saudi Arabia, which are separated by race and by sectarianism.

Tribalism often makes war easier for the participants because killing a slightly sub-human non-countryman is easier to live with than killing an equal. Regarding the opposition as fellow human beings makes killing them much more difficult.

Herd mentality is another trait that, if not a cause of war, at least sustains war. Most people will go with the flow and support the war presented to them by their leaders, both because they are afraid to make waves and because they are too apathetic to find out what is really going on.

Conversely, leaders can be pressured into unwise action by the fears and demands of their constituents. For example, in 2001 after the World Trade Centre was attacked, great wisdom and strength would have been required in a U.S. President for him to do something subtle and smart rather than grandiose and ill-advised.

National Character

Some nations seem to have a tendency toward war deeply engrained in their national character.

From the mid-nineteenth century to the mid-twentieth century, the samurai tradition in Japan predisposed the country to excessive military influence on its foreign policy. That tendency has been massively reduced since Japan's suffering in World War II.

Europeans have been fighting wars for millennia. German success in the Napoleonic Wars and unification by the Franco-Prussian War seem to have

produced a glorification of and belief in war that was broken down by the experiences of World War II. In describing the conditions leading up to World War I, *The Guns of August* gives some insight into this attitude toward war by describing the work of General Friedrich von Bernhardi, author of *Germany and the Next War*, published in 1910:

> As a twenty-one-year-old cavalry officer in 1870, Bernhardi had been the first German to ride through the Arc de Triomphe when the Germans entered Paris. Since then flags and glory interested him less than the theory, philosophy, and science of war as applied to "Germany's Historic Mission," another of his chapter titles. He had served as chief of the Military History section of the General Staff, was one of the intellectual elite of that hard-thinking, hard-working body, and author of a classic on cavalry before he assembled a life-time's studies of Clausewitz, Treitschke, and Darwin, and poured them into the book that was to make his name a synonym for Mars.
>
> War, he stated, "is a biological necessity"; it is the carrying out among humankind of "the natural law, upon which all the laws of Nature rest, the law of the struggle for existence." Nations, he said must progress or decay; "there can be no standing still," and Germany must choose "world power or downfall." Among the nations, Germany "is in social-political respects at the head of all progress in culture" but is "compressed into narrow, unnatural limits." She cannot attain her "great moral ends" without increased political power, an enlarged sphere of influence, and new territory. This increase in power, "befitting our importance," and "which we are entitled to claim," is a "political necessity" and "the first and foremost duty of the State." In his own italics Bernhardi announced, "What we now wish to attain must be *fought for*," and from here he galloped home to the finish line: "Conquest thus becomes a law of necessity." [9]

In describing the logic behind German adoption of the Schlieffen plan, the attack of the German right wing through neutral Belgium that brought Britain into the war as a guarantor of Belgian neutrality, *The Guns of August* gives more information regarding German martial philosophy at the highest levels:

> Whether it [the Schlieffen plan] was advisable, whether it was even expedient in view of the probable effect on world opinion, especially on neutral opinion, was irrelevant. That it seemed necessary to the triumph of German arms was the only criterion. Germans had imbibed from 1870 the lesson that arms and war were the sole source of German greatness. They had been taught by Field Marshall von der Goltz, in his book *The Nation in Arms*, that "We have won our position through the sharpness of our sword, not through the sharpness of our mind." The decision to violate Belgian neutrality followed easily.
>
> Character is fate, the Greeks believed. A hundred years of German philosophy went into the making of this decision in which the seed of self-destruction lay imbedded, waiting for its hour. The voice was Schlieffen's, but the hand was the hand of Fichte who saw the German people chosen by Providence to occupy the supreme place in the history of the universe, of

Hegel who saw them leading the world to a glorious destiny of compulsory *Kultur*, of Nietzsche who told them that Supermen were above ordinary controls, of Treitschke who set the increase of power as the highest moral duty of the state, of the whole German people, who called their temporal ruler the "All-Highest." What made the Schlieffen plan was not Clausewitz and the Battle of Cannae, but the body of accumulated egoism which suckled the German people and created a nation fed on "the desperate delusion of the will that deems itself absolute." [10]

The Guns of August describes the reactions to the war of some persons outside of government:

The war was to be, wrote Thomas Mann, "a purification, a liberation, an enormous hope. The victory of Germany will be a victory of soul over numbers. The German soul," he explained, "is opposed to the pacifist ideal of civilization for is not peace an element of civil corruption?" This concept, a mirror image of the essential German militarist theory that war is ennobling, was not very far from the raptures of Rupert Brooke [see below in the comments regarding Britain] and was widely held at the time by numbers of respectable people, among them, Theodore Roosevelt. In 1914, except for the Balkan wars on the fringe, there had been no war on the European continent for more than a generation, and in the opinion of one observer the welcoming attitude toward war owed something to the "unconscious boredom of peace." [11]

Britain, the architect of the empire on which the sun never set, has a component of militarism in its national culture. *The Guns of August* describes the reactions of some Britons to World War I:

…some, like Rupert Brooke, welcomed it [the war]. "Now God be thanked who has matched us with His hour," wrote Brooke, conscious of no blasphemy, in his poem "1914." To him it seemed a time

To turn, as swimmers into cleanness leaping
Glad from a world grown old and cold and weary…

Honour has come back…
And Nobleness walks into our ways again,
And we have come into our heritage. [12]

As an interesting side-note, Rupert Brooke was a junior officer in the Royal Naval Division who died of "blood poisoning brought on by sunstroke" on 23 April 1915, two days before his division was to participate in the attack at Gallipoli. He was buried in an olive grove on the Greek island of Skyros. [13]

"Rule Britannia!" is a great song that makes my hair stand on end (even after an American upbringing), but it is a bit militaristic and imperial. The same adjectives apply to the humility and piety expressed in Rudyard Kipling's "Recessional":

God of our fathers, known of old –

<div align="center">
Lord of our far-flung battle line –
Beneath Whose awful hand we hold
Dominion over palm and pine - … [14]
</div>

A nation of pacifists will never build an empire. Even though the Empire has faded, Britain continues to engage in the wars of our time, at least partially, because of the special relationship with America.

America has a streak of militarism which seems to be growing stronger. Being of the Baby Boom generation, my playmates and I were always playing "army" and blowing each other away with plastic weapons. Almost all of our fathers, and many of our mothers, had been participated in World War II, and were heavily hero worshiped by their sons. My grandfather was very displeased with the way I 'always studied war," and expressed his disapproval to my father. Even before World War II, there was a strong American military mystique: the Revolution, the Alamo, the Civil War and the conquest of the West were heady stuff that movie companies exploited. The Viet Nam War dimmed this ardour; but the 2001 World Trade Centre attack and the War on Terror have boosted the American war-like streak.

On 6 Aug 2018, Al Jazeera News ran a television segment about a major rock concert in Russia that included fly-overs by fighter jets and displays of armoured fighting vehicles.   An army major with the vehicles said that the display was popular and was to stimulate love of the Fatherland, especially among boys. The concert was described as "Russia's Woodstock". This blatant piece of recruiting propaganda is probably also a reflection of a resurgence in Russian national pride after the difficulty and feelings of humiliation following the fall of the Soviet Union.

Militarism

Propaganda supporting militarism and glorifying war is so common in our routine experiences that we hardly notice it.

Most national calendars include holidays memorializing the dead of past wars, and of national successes therein. On or about 11 November, the date of the armistice ending World War I, we have a holiday or holidays: Armistice Day and Remembrance Day in the United Kingdom and New Zealand, Remembrance Day in Australia, Veteran's Day in the United States, Armistice Day in France and Belgium, and National Day of Mourning in Germany. The German version seems most appropriate. Australians and New Zealanders also have ANZAC Day on 25 April, commemorating the landing of the Australia - New Zealand Army Corps at Gallipoli, a remarkably poorly planned and disastrous undertaking that General Sir William Robertson summed up as "A wonderful example of gallantry and endurance by men and a calamitous display of mismanagement by authority." [15] In the U.S., on the last Monday in May, Memorial Day commemorates men and women who died in the military. Russia has Victory Day on 9 May to commemorate the end of World War II in Europe.

Many towns around the world have memorials to the country's war dead. Here is a description of the war memorial in the lovely town of Cambridge, New Zealand:

A white marble image stands perpetually on the lawn before the town hall. Actually, the statue crumples rather than stands, portraying the moment of a soldier's death in a place far from home. The image looks north, toward the sun that the soldier will not see again. The dying man's back is turned away from the cannon that is set on the lawn to the south of him, laid to defend the town hall. He turns his back on the howitzer, as he is finished with war. A homeware store to his east might symbolize the home and family he believes he is defending. A crisp orange row of Iceland poppies does a "Left flank, March!" to the soldier's west, toward the always direction to the Summer Lands. He wears only his boots and a pair of shorts. Does his dearth of clothing signify the frailty of flesh pierced by hot metal, or that he is not quite ready to go out from home?

The stone honours those who died in wars large and small: the Boer War, World War I and World War II, actions in Korea, Malaya, Borneo, South Viet Nam, Timor and Afghanistan. A statue located eighty degrees of longitude further east could also remember the Civil War, the Spanish-American War, action in Cambodia, Desert Storm and its continuing sequels. Whether the war is large or small, a corpse is a corpse and stinks unless dealt with promptly. The smallest of wars must seem very large to a person killed in it. A distant land is certainly the best place for a soldier to die. 'Home field advantage' does not apply in war. Just ask the Somalis, the Afghans, the Iraqis, the Syrians, the Yemenis or the Libyans.

At least three interpretations can be applied to the memorial: appropriate thanks for and remembrance of sincere sacrifice in defence of home and community, a blind eye turned to the culpability of the leadership that produced the wars, or subtle propaganda to prepare the cannon fodder for the next war. One interpretation will not work: no piece of stone can assuage the grief of the dead soldiers' families.

In many ways, honouring of the war dead is a very appropriate remembrance of the sincere sacrifice of the millions of people who have been fed to the meat grinder, and to whom, in many cases, we do owe the freedoms we enjoy today. However, those remembrance ceremonies ignore the profound evil of war and ignore the either clownish ineptitude or manifest evil of those leaders who got the wars started in the first place. Healthy patriotism and love of community can be twisted into narrow nationalism and xenophobia. Remembrance of past suffering should not conjure up dreams of noble sacrifice and glory, but should dampen enthusiasm for future wars.

National anthems span a wide spectrum of warriorism. The words of *Advance Australia Fair* make no military allusion. *God Defend New Zealand* prays for peace and only asks for military success in the event of attack on the homeland. The Russian national anthem mostly praises national pride. *God Save the Queen* is perhaps slightly militaristic when it asks that she be victorious and that her enemies be scattered, but not blatantly so. *The Star-Spangled Banner* commemorates an event, a non-defeat, in the War of 1812. *La Marseillaise* is purely a war song, ending with the statement, "Let the impure blood water our furrows!"

Much of the pageantry staged by governments has an eye-catching military component, such as the honour guards in the background when heads of state meet. Such activities are pretty to watch, probably help recruitment, and often bring in a few tourist dollars or pounds or euros. Royal weddings and funerals are another enjoyable example of this genre of background militarism. The Edinburgh Military Tattoo is a great show that makes the blood tingle, but it is pure militarism and has to be great recruiting material.

Double Standard on Killing and Theft

Governments and very large institutions are not held to the same standards of conduct as individuals. The sixth and eighth of the Ten Commandments are not applied to governments. In many circumstances, they can kill and steal without opprobrium.

This conundrum is implanted by society in the mind of a young man: murder is abhorrent but prowess in war is glorious, noble, and honourable. As a boy I sat in church and pondered this conundrum but did not resolve it.

Imperial adventures now and in times past amount to theft. That theft must be rationalized and accepted (or carefully not considered) by each person who participates in the imperial adventure.

Below the level of physical violence, currency debasement and assumption of unpayable levels of public debt are forms of theft that can lead to war on the level of physical violence. This is another moral choice that must be made or overlooked by the participants.

Religion

Generally speaking, religion serves some useful purposes. In many societies, religion provides common agreement on ethical standards, provides a basis for cohesion in the community, and truly facilitates the spiritual development of many people. All of the major religions teach against killing humans and against stealing. Yet religious differences often become part of the motivation for wars and religious authority often condones war. Unfortunately, many people ignore Frederick the Great's wise sentiment that every person must get to heaven in his own way.

Looking at today's map of the world, most of the modern wars involve nations where one or more of the three Abrahamic religions are embraced by much of the population. Therefore, Judaism, Christianity and Islam deserve some consideration. The scriptures of all three are ambivalent on the subject of killing and war.

The Hebrew Bible provides the central teaching of Judaism. Deuteronomy 5:17 commands, "You shall not murder." Two pages later, Deuteronomy 7:1-2 commands, "When the Lord your God brings you into the land you are entering to possess and drives out before you many nations – the Hittites, Girgashites, Amorites, Canaanites, Perizzites, Hivites and Jebusites, seven nations larger and stronger than you – and when the Lord your God has delivered them over to you and you have defeated them, then you must destroy them totally. Make no treaty with

them, and show them no mercy." [16] These last two verses leave the door wide open for aggressive war. In today's world, what is being ordered would be called genocide. Obviously, there must be a difference between murder and killing in war.

Christianity accepts the Hebrew Bible and adds to it the New Testament. Jesus' teachings contain many admonitions to peace, love and harmony, but they also include Matthew 10:34, where Jesus states, "Do not suppose that I have come to bring peace to the earth. I did not come to bring peace, but a sword. For I have come to turn 'a man against his father, a daughter against her mother, a daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law – a man's enemies will be members of his own household.'" In the latter part of the verse, Jesus is quoting from Micah 7:6 in the Hebrew Bible. In contrast to verse 10:34, in Matthew 26:52 Jesus tells Peter, "'Put your sword back in its place,' Jesus said to him, 'for all who draw the sword will die by the sword.'" [17] Once again, the message is mixed on war and killing.

The Koran accepts the Jewish Torah and the Christian Gospel, stating in The 'Imrans 3:1, "Alif *lam mim*. God! There is no god but Him, the Living, the Ever-existent One. He has revealed to you the Book with the Truth, confirming the scriptures which preceded it; for He has already revealed the Torah and the Gospel for the guidance of mankind, and the distinction between right and wrong." [18] In Cattle 6:151, the Prophet is instructed, "Say, 'Come, I will tell you what your Lord has made binding on you:… that you shall not kill – for that is forbidden by God – except for a just cause…'" [19] The Spoils 8:12 reads "… I shall cast terror into the hearts of the infidels. Strike off their heads, strike off the very tips of their fingers!" [20] In reading the Koran, I counted fifteen exhortations to holy war similar to 8:12. Not counted in those fifteen is Pilgrimage 22:39, which deals with defensive war: "Permission to take up arms is hereby given to those who are attacked, because they have been wronged. God has power to grant them victory: to those who have been unjustly driven from their homes, only because they said: 'Our Lord is God.'" [21]

From the above, we can see that the scriptures of all three religions are broadly accepting of war, and sometimes command it. This may be a required survival mechanism in a war-filled world. The scriptural background introduces at least a tolerance to warfare into many of the moderate, main-stream versions of the faiths. For example, Westminster Abbey contains the bones of many warriors, as well as the bones of many saints. This cultural background subtly affects the thinking of many, even those who do not actively practice their inherited religion. Religion may not be the only reason for a war, but it can be used to amplify the motives of greed, poverty, lust for power, racial hatred, etc. Religion can be used to exhort the gullible to arms.

Little effort is required to produce a list of wars through the ages that have had a significant religious motivation. The 7th century Islamic conquest of the Middle East and North Africa was at least partially fed by religious zeal. The Crusades from 1095 to 1291 were nominally responses to the Islamic success, as was the *Reconquista* in Spain, which ended in 1492. The European religious wars of the 16th and 17th centuries were nominally sectarian conflicts between Catholics and Protestants, although they undoubtedly had significant sub-motives. The modern turmoil in the Middle East and Africa has many religious aspects, such as Muslim – Christian, Jewish - Muslim and Sunni – Shia. The ejection of Muslim Rohingya from Buddhist

Myanmar seems to have a significant religious aspect, if only to provide a label for those to be dispossessed.

Since 1948, the implanting of the State of Israel into Palestinian territory has been a source of almost continual conflict, frequently punctuated by wars. One of the long-term motivators for creation of the State of Israel was British and American Evangelical Christianity. *Bible and Sword* tells of Zionism in Victorian England:

On August 17 [1840] the *Times* published a leader on a plan "to plant the Jewish people in the land of their fathers," which, it said, was now under "serious political consideration." It commended the efforts of Lord Ashley (later Lord Shaftesbury), author of the plan, as "practical and statesmanlike" …

[T]he *Times* had been led to it [the article], pushed, persuaded, wheedled, and argued into it, by Anthony Ashley Cooper, seventh Earl of Shaftesbury, the most influential nonpolitical figure, excepting Darwin, of the Victorian age. His motives were religious…The time was 1840; Syria, at once Holy Land and geographical crux of rival pathways of empire, was the place. Here Shaftesbury envisaged an Anglican Israel restored by Protestant England, at one stroke confounding popery, fulfilling prophecy, and redeeming mankind…

Yet this impeccable peer was in reality a compassionate, deeply religious man who based his life on literal acceptance of the Bible. The Bible, he said, "is 'God's word written' from the very first syllable down to the very last and from the last back to the first…Nothing but Scripture can interpret Scripture. I should reject it if announced to me by man. I accept it, believe it, bless it, as announced in Holy Writ…and like the Israelites, I bow the head and worship." …

What has all this to do with Palestine? The point is that Lord Shaftesbury's zeal for "God's ancient people," as he always styled the Jews, was the outcome of this same entire acceptance of the Bible that had made him a philanthropist. But, despite all his zeal on the Jews' behalf, it is doubtful if Lord Shaftesbury ever thought of them as a people with their own language and traditions, their own Torah and law and spiritual guides honored through a hundred generations. To him, as to all the Israel-for-prophesy's-sake school, the Jews were simply the instrument through which Biblical prophecy could be fulfilled…

And whenever Christians returned to the authority of the Old Testament they found it prophesying the return of its people to Jerusalem and felt themselves duty-bound to assist the prophecy… [22]

He [Lord Lindsay, author of a Victorian tour guide for Palestine] believes that it is the will of the Almighty that the "modern occupants should never be so numerous" as to prevent the return of the rightful "heirs". [23]

A … pamphlet entitled *A Tract for the Times, being a Plea for the Jews* was published in 1844 by the Reverend Samuel A. Bradshaw, proposing that

Parliament should grant four million pounds, provided the churches should collect another million, for the restoration of Israel. In the same year a committee was convened in London for the purpose of forming a "British and Foreign Society for Promoting the Restoration of the Jewish Nation to Palestine." Although it was apparently stillborn, it is interesting to note that the opening address by the chairman, a reverend with the delightful name of T. Tully Crybbace, urged that England secure from Turkey the surrender of the whole of Palestine "from the Euphrates to the Nile, and from the Mediterranean to the Desert." What generous ideas Englishmen had in those days, when Palestine belonged to someone else, of the area that should be returned to its ancient proprietors! [24]

From the above, religion was laying a foundation for creation of the State of Israel by Britain a century before the opportunity provided by the British Mandate in Palestine intersected the motive for Jewish settlement, the aftermath of the Nazi Holocaust. When the time came, American Evangelical belief in the inerrancy of the Scriptures also gave support to creation of the new nation at the expense of its established occupants.

At least from the Iranian side, the Iran – Iraq war had a significant religious aspect. The war began on 22 September 1980, when Iraq under the secular Ba'athist Saddam Hussein attacked theocratic Iran under the Shia cleric Ayatollah Khomeini. As well as religion, the motives included five thousand years of racial animosity and a desire to control petroleum resources. As described by Daniel Yergin, the Iranian defense strategy had heavy religious over tones:

> The Iraqis were unprepared for the "human wave' assaults they encountered on the battlefield. Hundreds of thousands of young people, drawn by the Shiite vision of martyrdom, and with little thought for their own lives, advanced on Iraqi positions in front of regular Iranian troops. Some of the young people arrived at the front carrying their own coffins, exhorted as they had been by Khomeini that "the purest joy in Islam is to kill and be killed for God." They were given plastic keys to heaven to wear around their necks. Children were even used to clear minefields for the far more valuable and much rarer tanks, and thousands of them died. [25]

Extreme, fundamentalist, inerrant religion produces the strongest bellicose effects. Although there are wealthy fanatics, such as Osama Bin Laden, these dangerous forms of religion tend to thrive in impoverished environments where the present life is so unpleasant that any hope of a radiant next life is overwhelmingly appealing. In Matthew 19:23 - 24, Jesus obliquely touched on the fact that, generally speaking, fanatical religion has greater appeal to the poor than to the rich. In those verses he said, "I tell you the truth, it is hard for a rich man to enter the kingdom of heaven. Again I tell you, it is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for a rich man to enter the kingdom of God." [26] If entering the kingdom of God requires a zealous religious practice, the price of such entry is more appealing to those whose life is unpleasant.

Feelings of victimization from cultural domination also contribute to extremist religion. Religious extremism is not the sole motive for any war, but it often feeds the fervour of the troops and is used by those in power to foster their objectives.

Literature

Much of our Western literature glorifies war and machismo. Going back to the beginning, *The Iliad* is mostly praise to glorious individual combat and gore. The first piece of English literature, *Beowulf,* also glorifies martial prowess. Alfred Tennyson's *The Charge of the Light Brigade*, which I liked to read as a boy, praises courage under fire and killing the enemy:

> …Into the valley of Death
> Rode the six hundred.
> "Forward, the Light Brigade!"
> Was there a man dismay' d?
> Not tho' the soldier knew
> Someone had blunder' d:
> Theirs not to make reply,
> Theirs not to reason why,
> Theirs but to do and die:
> Into the valley of Death
> Rode the six hundred.
>
> …Flash' d all their sabers bare,
> Flash' d as they turn' d in air
> Sabring the gunners there,
> Charging an army, while
> All the world wonder' d:
> Plung' d in the battery-smoke
> Right thro' the line they broke;
> Cossack and Russian
> Reel 'd from the saber-stroke
> Shatter' d and sunder' d.
> Then they rode back, but not,
> Not the six hundred.
>
> …When can their glory fade?
> O the wild charge they made!
> All the world wonder' d.
> Honor the charge they made!
> Honor the Light Brigade,
> Noble six hundred! [27]

Tennyson's work is good recruiting propaganda, inspiring young men to go out and get killed while slicing up a few of the opposition. Those who died in the Crimean War, which the poem is about, officially died in a 'holy' cause. The war was triggered by a demand by Czar Nicholas I that the Sultan of Turkey confirm Nicholas and the Greek Orthodox clergy as protector of the Holy Places in Jerusalem, a role granted to France and the Latin clergy in 1535 by Sultan Suleiman the Magnificent. Who

would not be thrilled to die to resolve such an important question? The real reasons were a competition for status between Nicholas I and Napoleon III, a Russian desire to gain territory in the Balkans from Turkey, and a British desire to keep the Russians from having access to the Mediterranean. [28]

Pickett's Charge was only a few years after the Charge of the Light Brigade. *The High Tide at Gettysburg* glorifies that ill-advised attack:

> …"Once more in Glory's van with me!"
> Virginia cried to Tennessee:
> "We two together, come what may,
> Shall stand upon these works today!"
> The reddest day in history….
>
> In vain the Tennesseean set
> His breast against the bayonet;
> In vain Virginia charged and raged,
> A tigress in her wrath uncaged,
> Till all the hill was red and wet!... [29]

As a personal note on the poem above, my great-great-grandfather had been killed attacking Little Round Top on the day before Major General Pickett lost most of his division. About a mile and a half south of the site of the action [30] in the poem, Sergeant Joshua Howell was probably already starting to bloat in the summer sun when the events of the poem were occurring. His death at the age of twenty-seven caused great hardship to his widow and their children; however, their difficulties were doubtless a small price to pay in return for the privilege of dying "in Glory's van" with Virginia. (Technically, since he was in Hood's Division, Joshua, an Alabama boy, died in Glory's van with Texas rather than Virginia.) In the same attack on Little Round Top, Captain John H. Roberts, my wife's great-great-great uncle, survived being shot through both legs. He was in the Texas Brigade of Hood's Division.

Any bookstore stocks vast numbers of war novels, from old favourites to new releases. Television and the movies with war themes abound. And, many video games abound with blood-and-guts make-believe wars, training and desensitizing the troops of tomorrow.

False Assumptions and Misinformation

Humans are in charge of making war and making peace; and, humans being human, some of the decisions of war or peace are made based on either false assumptions or incorrect information, or a combination of both.

The Cold War

For the first four decades of my life, the Cold War was the central sun around which all other geopolitical events revolved. Fortunately, the war remained mostly cold, with the Korean War and the Viet Nam War being the major instances of heat. However, those two wars produced the fifth and fourth largest numbers of military deaths of all the wars fought by the United States. Other participants in those wars suffered many more deaths than did the U.S. In addition to military and civilian deaths and destruction of wealth, the Cold War and its adjuncts caused vast amounts of wealth to be squandered in unconstructive activity. A cruise missile costs when it is built and costs when it is used, and at no time adds to the physical wealth of humanity.

The accepted gospel in the United States in the 1950's and '60's was that Communism was driven by Marxist doctrine to take over the world to protect itself from external reaction. If that gospel is believed, then non-Communist states who wanted to preserve their freedom and economic system were compelled to resist Communist aggression at every opportunity. We will probably never absolutely know whether the leadership of Communist countries were sincerely implementing Marxism when they initiated their aggressions or were merely protecting and expanding their home turf. If conquering the world for Marxism is really the motive, a stronger non-Communist response is probably required than if the aggression in question is classic empire building or is building a geographic buffer for defense in depth. The Cold War and its two hot wars provide specimens to study in considering the roles of false assumptions and misinformation in causing wars.

Nazi aggression in World War II forced the U.S., U.K. and U.S.S.R. into an unnatural alliance to win the war. When the war was over, the subsequent relations between the former allies were shaped by how each interpreted the actions and motivations of the other. Was the Soviet occupation of Eastern Europe primarily a move to expand Communism or was it mostly intended to provide a buffer shown necessary by three invasions from the West in one hundred twenty-eight years? Was British and American activity in post-war Iran caused by a desire to protect the oil fields, or by a desire for a base for a flank attack on the Soviet Union? Was the conquest of China by Communists part of the drive for world Marxism, or the result of coincidence? How did the Korean War come to occur? Were the wars in Viet Nam a localized nationalist war that became a civil war, or was it a doctrinal war? How these questions are answered has a direct bearing on how much blood and wealth the West should be willing to expend in the fight. The thinking and interpretations of the Communist side will probably never be known; but, we do have some clues about what was going on in the West.

Both the United States and Britain had leadership changes during the initial period of the Cold War. Franklin Roosevelt died on 12 April 1945, less than a month before

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the end of World War II in Europe and four months before the Japanese surrender. President Roosevelt had extensive experience in international relations. His successor, Harry Truman, had essentially none, having only been Vice President for about three months. During the last summer of the war, Winston Churchill was replaced as Prime Minister of Great Britain by Clement Attlee, who had once been a social worker in London's East End. Thus, of the leaders of the three principals of the Cold War, only Joseph Stalin had significant experience in foreign affairs. [1] Confusion at the top of American international relations seems to have persisted throughout the formative period of the Cold War. Five years after Roosevelt's death, in the year the Korean War began, George Kennan, a major architect of the Western "containment policy" toward the Soviet Union,[2] wrote:

> Never before has there been such utter confusion in the public mind with respect to U.S. foreign policy. The President doesn't understand it; the Congress doesn't understand it; nor does the public, nor does the press. They all wander around in a labyrinth of ignorance and error and conjecture, in which the truth is intermingled with fiction at a hundred points, in which unjustified assumptions have attained the validity of premises, and in which there is no recognized and authoritative theory to hold on to. Only the diplomatic historian, working from the leisure and detachment of a later day, will be able to unravel this incredible tangle and to reveal the true aspect of the various factors and issues involved.
>
> - George Kennan
>   Diary entry, 1950 [3]

Whether or not Mr. Kennan's version of the "facts" was objectively true, these comments from a policy setting insider do show that an abundance of false assumptions or incorrect information was floating around Washington in the late 1940's.

The two dominant ideas of American postwar foreign policy were anti-communism and national security. [4] The term "anti-communism" explains itself. "National security" is discussed in the section above on fear.

In *Shattered Peace, the Origins of the Cold War*, Daniel Yergin describes the perceptions of the participants at the end of World War II:

> The U.S.A. and the USSR had little in the way of common traditions, no common political vocabulary, precious few links. They looked upon themselves as rival models for the rest of mankind. They shared little except distrust. [5]
>
> The Soviet outlook was not the only significant ideological factor involved in the development of the global antagonism. There was also the American ideology – the ideas and outlook that U.S. leaders brought to international affairs, their *world set*…[T]hree key elements of their world set [are] Wilsonianism, an interpretation of Soviet objectives, and the new doctrine of national security…

…Wilsonianism was truly seeking to abolish the very substance of world politics – balance of power, spheres of influence, power politics…

The Soviet leaders, on the other hand, shared none of the Wilsonian values. Though they spoke in the language of Marxism-Leninism, they were primarily concerned with power as traditionally conceived in the international system. They were carving out a sphere of influence, a glacis, out of bordering countries. As they did so, a great debate developed within the American policy elite over how to evaluate Soviet intentions and capabilities. Was that sphere all Russia wanted, or was it only a first step on a road to world revolution?

Underlying the debate were two related questions that have always confronted those in the West who have to shape policies toward the Soviet Union. They are the same two questions we face today [1977].

The first was raised by the October 1917 Revolution itself. What is the connection between Marxist-Leninist ideology and Soviet foreign policy? The ideology proclaims that communism will inevitably inherit the entire world from capitalism, and calls upon Marxist-Leninists to be the conscious agents of the revolution. But the men who have ruled the Soviet Union were not and are not merely ideologues with many idle hours to dream about tomorrow's utopia. For the most part, they must concern themselves with today, with governing a powerful state that has pressing interests to protect, dangers to avoid, tasks to accomplish, and problems to solve. "There is no revolutionary movement in the West," said Stalin during the debates over the Brest-Litovsk treaty in 1918. "There are no facts; there is only a possibility, and with possibilities we cannot reckon."

The second question was brutally posed by the horrors of Stalinism, in particular by collectivization and the Great Terror of the 1930's. Does a totalitarian practice at home necessarily produce a foreign policy that is totalitarian in intent, committed to overturning the international system and to endless expansion in pursuit of world dominance? The policies of Adolf Hitler seemed to confirm that a powerful relationship did exist between such domestic practice and international behavior.

The changes wrought by the Second World War gave urgent and highest priority to these questions. What was the American response to be? Within the ensuing debate, there were two sets of generalizations, two interpretations that competed for hegemony in the American policy elite in the middle 1940's. At the heart of the first set was an image of the Soviet Union as a world revolutionary state, denying the possibilities of coexistence, committed to unrelenting ideological warfare, powered by messianic drive for world mastery. The second set downplayed the role of ideology and the foreign policy consequences of authoritarian domestic practices, and instead saw the Soviet Union behaving like a traditional Great Power within the international system, rather than trying to overthrow it. The first set I [Daniel Yergin] call, for shorthand, the Riga axioms; the second the Yalta axioms.

The Riga axioms triumphed in American policy circles in the postwar years and provided a foundation for the anticommunist consensus…

With a view of this sort, the effort to make a diplomatic settlement became irrelevant, even dangerous, for the Cold War confrontation was thought to be almost genetically preordained in the revolutionary, messianic, predatory character of the Soviet Union…

The Riga axioms help form the outlook of the Cold War. The Yalta axioms underlie détente.

Neither set of axioms has a monopoly on the truth…

Stalin's politics were not those of a single-minded world revolutionist. The truth is that the Soviet Union's foreign policy was clumsy and brutal, sometimes confused, but usually cautious and pragmatic. The USSR behaved as a traditional Great Power, intent upon aggrandizing itself along the lines of historic Russian goals, favoring spheres of influence, secret treaties, Great Power consortiums, and the other methods and mores from the "old diplomacy." …

American leaders who accepted the Riga axioms misinterpreted both the range and degree of the Soviet challenge and the character of Soviet objectives and so downplayed the possibilities for diplomacy and accommodation…

The doctrine of national security also permitted America's postwar leaders … to be democratic idealists and pragmatic realists at the same time. So emboldened, American leaders pursued a global, often crusading, foreign policy, convinced that it was made urgent by something more earthy than the missionary impulse of Woodrow Wilson…

This work was researched and executed during the latter years of the Vietnam war, and the period of what might be called tentative détente…

Détente has called up a different question. Was not some form of détente – some reduction in tensions, some explicit ground rules – possible earlier, much earlier? [6]

Thus, in the early days of the Cold War, we have an American bias to interpret Soviet actions in the light of revolutionary fervour, a more dangerous motive from the American perspective than the probable actual motivation, to carve out a protective sphere of influence.

Shattered Peace gives a Yugoslavian example of how this American bias was reinforced:

In 1945, Southeast Asia was still of secondary interest, on the distant periphery of world affairs. Europe was the cauldron of international politics, and it was there that a more obvious effect of this new attitude [a perceived

world communist threat], as well as the most important instance of [Undersecretary of State Joseph] Grew's influence, became apparent. [Grew retained an implacable hatred of the Soviet Union and communism.] This was in the United States government's stand during the Trieste crisis in May, when fighting between the United States and Britain on one side, and Yugoslavia on the other, seemed imminent – at times only hours away. The crisis was a contest between Anglo-American forces and the well-organized Yugoslavian partisans for occupation rights and control of Trieste and the Venezia Giuilia hinterland, an area of mixed Italian and Slav populations that was a target of nationalist agitation from both sides. What was of crucial importance, though not known by U.S. policymakers, was that the Soviet Union opposed Yugoslavian actions as dangerous and provocative adventurism. The situation, although tense, was a primarily *local* problem.

Once the dispute broke out, the State Department quickly adopted two premises: the Yugoslavian occupation of a substantial part of the region was a case of totalitarian aggression; and the Yugoslavs were acting as agents of the Russians. Underlying these premises were the Riga axioms…The situation, as reported, simply confirmed what Grew and other officials believed about the Soviet Union. [7]

Thus, we see incomplete information reinforcing assumptions that are probably not completely true. None of the above diminishes the fact that Stalin's political system in Russia was profoundly evil and blood-thirsty. The question is, could the West have understood it better and dealt with it in a way that caused less war. The Western objective never was regime change in the Soviet Union, it was only protection of the West from the Soviet Union.

The Korean War

The Korean War was the first of the two major shooting wars that occurred within the Cold War envelope. To briefly set the scene for that conflict, Korea was a colony of Japan from 22 August 1910 to 15 August 1945. [8] Upon Japan's defeat, Soviet troops occupied Korea north of the 38th parallel and disarmed Japanese troops in that area. American troops did the same south of that line. The demarcation line was proposed by the Americans and accepted by the Soviets. Both occupying powers agreed that joint control by the Allies would be extended throughout Korea. [9] However, rather than the two occupations merging into a single independent country, Korea was divided into a Communist north and a non-Communist south. Dr Andrew C. Nahm describes how the two states coalesced from what was intended to be one:

The Moscow Agreement [Signed 24 December 1945 setting up a U.S. / Soviet joint commission to facilitate creation of an independent Korean state [10]] and its aftermath constituted a key and tragic juncture in Korea's recent history. It marked the growth of a sharp division between the parties on the right and those on the left. Prior to January 1946, most of the parties were still in an embryonic stage as the desire to create a united and independent government overshadowed all other considerations. However, the Moscow Agreement gave a strong impetus to the parties on both sides of the line to consolidate their positions and sharpen their ideologies. National interest

became secondary to their own political ambitions as political polarization fostered the possible perpetual division of Korea, and Korea became a victim of the rapidly growing power struggle between the United States and the Soviet Union. [11]

The last sentence of the above paragraph brings to mind the previously discussed Lust for Power motive for wars.

The immediate cause of the Korean War was the desire of the Communist leadership of North Korea to unify the peninsula under their control. [12] However, the start of the war provides some interesting examples of the role of false assumptions and incorrect information in the beginning of war. Dr Nahm continues:

> The inherent weakness of South Korea, particularly its military weakness, coupled with certain steps taken by the United States government, encouraged North Korea to launch the war. In the first place, the United States, because of President Truman's demilitarization program, withdrew U.S. troops from South Korea in 1949 without adequately preparing South Korean troops to defend their national territory. The United States regarded South Korea strategically less important than Greece, Italy, and Iran in dealing with Soviet expansionism. Secondly, President Truman did not believe that the Soviet Union would permit a North Korean invasion for military conquest of the entire peninsula. He believed that the Soviets would continue their efforts through infiltration and underground activities. Above all, the United States government, specifically Secretary of State, Dean Acheson, wanted to make Korea a testing ground for the policy of containment of the United States, and therefore misled the North Koreans into believing that the United States had abandoned South Korea.

> Some suspect, and there is some evidence supporting the suspicion, that Secretary of State Acheson deliberately omitted South Korea from the United States defense perimeter between the Aleutian and the Ryukyu islands when he spoke at the Press Club in Washington, D.C. on January 11, 1950, about American defense in Asia. His intention was said to have been to test the will of the Soviets…

> [I]t was between 1947 and 1950 that the internationalism of President Roosevelt was discarded or suspended by the Truman administration which pursued instead a containment policy in the context of the Cold War. There was, however, no consensus among the policy makers behind the containment policy as of early 1950. If North Korea started a war, then the containment policy would be justified and it would create a consensus supporting the policy. Whatever Acheson's motives may have been, many argue that he deliberately misled Kim Il-sung and lured the North Korean Communists into launching a war against South Korea. Some believe that Acheson, "wishing to shape defense {in Asia}, created a situation in which the offense would blunder."

> That Kim Il-sung wished to launch a war against South Korea to unify the divided country, and that he received Stalin's approval for his invasion plan is

a widely accepted view…Be that as it may, it was widely acknowledged that the Korean War came because the United States never made a conclusive decision to hold Korea, and failed to make a credible military threat to the Soviet Union to prevent the North Korean invasion of the south. Whichever the case may be, it is now known that, discounting fear of U.S. reprisal, Kim Il-sung convinced both Stalin and Mao that there would be a quick victory, and persuaded them to support his plan to invade South Korea. Kim was assured by his foreign minister, Pak Hon-yong, that when North Korean troops entered Seoul, the South Korean government would surrender and some 500,000 pro-North Korean inhabitants in the south would rise and overthrow their government, creating a situation favorable for "peaceful reunification of the divided fatherland." The original war plan, approved by Moscow, appears to have called for a one-week conflict: seizure of Seoul within three days and all of South Korea within seven days…

The North Korean Communists had made three major miscalculations when they launched the war. The first of these was that the U.S. would not intervene, let alone the U.N. The second was that if they took over Seoul the South Korean government would surrender and the war would be over. The third was that when they launched a war against South Korea, some "500,000" underground members of the South Korean Workers' Party would bring about the insurrection of the people all over the country and overthrow the South Korean government in collaboration with the invading troops. It is now clear that the third miscalculation was the basis for the proposal to invade the south made by Pak Hon-yong, former head of the South Korean Workers' Party who fled to the north in 1947 and became deputy-premier and foreign minister in September 1948. For such misinformation given to Kim Il-sung, Pak himself and his supporters were later executed. [13]

So, the fifth bloodiest war in American history was initiated by three errors made in Pyongyang that were based to some degree on a successful campaign of deception by the U.S. State Department.

The Viet Nam War

The fourth bloodiest American War, Viet Nam, seems to have been at least partially caused by errors made beside the Potomac.

As already discussed, the French Indochina War was instigated by greed for the benefits of a colonial empire. But the American involvement in that war, which led to the Viet Nam War, was based on the containment doctrine and its associated domino theory. To whatever extent the containment doctrine was based on erroneous assumptions, American involvement in Viet Nam was also erroneous. The fact that Viet Nam ultimately went Communist but the rest of Southeast Asia did not is a serious refutation of the whole edifice of the domino theory and containment.

Let us return to *Shattered Peace* for a brief look at America's involvement in Indochina:

In assessing a situation, [from the late 1940's into the 1970's] the global antagonism was always to be given priority over the nature of the local conflict and the appeal of nationalism. [14]

The communist victory in China energized the Republican right wing, which charged that the "loss of China" resulted not from the character of the two sides in the civil war, but from the fact that the Administration had abandoned Chiang Kai-shek and handed the country over to Mao… [In 1950 Senator Joseph McCarthy's witch hunt for communists in the U.S. government began.] Thus the [Truman] administration found itself attacked more and more from the right, accused of being "soft" on communism. [15]

For the United States, the War in Vietnam proved to be a decisive turn. The American commitment to Vietnam resulted in part from the postwar world set of U.S. leaders. The Riga axioms and the doctrine of national security made Indochina appear a crucial arena in what was perceived as a struggle to frustrate the "fundamental design" of communism. The consequences of that intervention led to the conclusion that "fundamental designs" may sometimes be illusionary and the global implications, secondary to local issues. The Vietnam experience created new checks on both intervention and the imperial presidency, and also reshaped worldviews. [16]

In light of the War on Terror and Donald Trump, unfortunately Mr Yergin may be overly optimistic with his last sentence above. However, other sources agree with his conclusion that the post-World War II mind set of U.S. leaders was a significant factor causing the American adventure in Viet Nam, which greatly exacerbated the suffering and destruction in what could have been a small civil war.

In *Vietnam: A Political History,* Joseph Buttinger paints a similar picture of how the U.S. war in Viet Nam came to be:

Not only [In 1948,] did the United States subscribe to the view that since Communism had to be defeated there must be no negotiations with Ho Chi Minh, but it also accepted the French contention that this required a military victory over the Vietminh, and that if France lacked the means to achieve this victory she had a right to ask the "free world" for aid. This meant that military aid would soon be extended for the fight against Vietnamese Communism, as the entire anti-French resistance movement came to be called, and that this aid was given not to an independent anti-Communist government, which did not exist, but to the French. It also meant that Washington embraced the Bao Dai [the puppet emperor installed by the French] solution and accepted "independence within the French Union" as the answer to the problem of Vietnamese nationalism. However, overt U.S. support was still slow in coming. It became official policy only after the victory of Communism in China.

Now the Indochina War ceased to be regarded as a colonial war. It had become a war between Communism and the "free world," and the independence of the Associated States was said to be approaching realization. At least that is what Secretary Dulles stated in July, 1953, six

months after General Eisenhower became President. Dulles went even beyond the claims of French propaganda by comparing the French Union with the British Commonwealth, asserting that it "offers a possibility of free association of wholly independent and sovereign nations."

An informed and articulate minority of Americans, including legislators, political analysts, and military leaders, were opposed to aiding France as long as the Associated States were denied full independence, but no serious pressure to bring about a change in French policy was ever applied. The failure to do so had a deep and consequential reason, one that could not be publicly admitted, for it had not yet become a fully conscious motive of U.S. foreign policy. The great question facing Washington was whether France would continue the war if, as seemed likely, she lost control over Vietnam, Cambodia, and Laos, even if American aid were to enable the Expeditionary Corps to defeat the Vietminh. The answer, unacceptable to the United States, was that France would not. The French, no matter what they publicly stated, would continue the war only so long as there was hope that the French "presence" in Indochina could be maintained. But Washington's interest in Indochina was to contain Communism, not to preserve a modified form of French rule. However, for the sake of staving off another Communist victory in Asia, Washington decided that continued French domination of Indochina was the lesser of two evils. Thus the Vietnamese, though French-ruled, were promoted to the status of a "free people" resisting "subversion by armed minorities or by outside pressure." Indeed, all of the clichés that ten years later would be used to justify U.S. policy in Vietnam, including the famous domino theory, were already coined when Washington decided to extend political and military support to the French in their war. Ignoring the fact that Communist strength in Vietnam was a unique and isolated phenomenon, this theory assumed that a refusal to defend French Indochina would necessarily lead to the triumph of Communist aggression throughout Southeast Asia. The wish to contain Communism was infinitely stronger than the desire to see colonialism end, and as early as February, 1950, it produced the most dubious and yet most enduring of propaganda claims – namely that the war was "fostered from the outside."

…The idea of "compromising with Communism" was abhorrent to the Republican Administration. [17]

By July 1965, when Lyndon Johnson and his senior advisors were making the decision to greatly increase U.S. troop strength in Vietnam, the containment doctrine was deeply ingrained in their thinking, as evidenced by a memo Secretary of State Dean Rusk sent to the President stating that if the U.S. lost Vietnam, the risk of World War III would be increased. Robert S. McNamara, who was Secretary of Defense during the escalation of the Vietnam War, offers his comment on this memo's dire prediction:

The reader may find it incomprehensible that Dean foresaw such dire consequences from the fall of South Vietnam, but I cannot overstate the impact our generation's experiences had on him (and, more or less, on all of us). We had lived through appeasement at Munich; years of military service

during World War II fighting aggression in Europe and Asia; the Soviet takeover of Eastern Europe; repeated threats to Berlin, including that of August 1961; the Cuban Missile Crisis of 1962; and, most recently, Communist Chinese statements that the South Vietnam conflict typified "wars of liberation," which they saw spreading across the globe… [18]

The United States was not the only actor in Viet Nam that made incorrect interpretations of the data before them. Lieutenant General (Retired) Philip B. Davidson describes the reasoning behind the Communist decision in 1964 to send North Vietnamese Army (NVA) units into South Viet Nam, a decision which he believes was a mistake on their part:

> On or about 15 August 1964, then, Ho, Giap, and the others analysed the various factors which, in the end, caused them to commit North Vietnamese Army Main Force units into South Vietnam. First, there was the estimate of the situation in South Vietnam. Diem, the glue which had held that fragmented South together – however tenuously – was gone. His successors by coup and countercoup were worse. The military situation for South Vietnam was desperate, and one hard push would topple the South Vietnamese generals and their rootless government… To the North Vietnamese Politburo, the extra push which the North Vietnamese Main Force units could furnish would bring about a "general uprising" and victory.
>
> But in August and September 1964, the situation in South Vietnam was secondary in the calculations of Ho and Giap. It was the United States that held the key to Hanoi's move. As the men of the Politburo pondered and debated America's probable reaction to the entry of North Vietnamese Main Force units into the conflict, they focused – for want of other evidence – on two clues. The first clue was the recent actions of the United States in Southeast Asia. What Hanoi saw encouraged boldness. The United States had accepted a series of attacks on its installations and servicemen, retaliating only for the Tonkin Gulf attacks. Even then, the United States had stressed that its reprisal was "surgical," and had publicly proclaimed the limited and unique nature of that retaliation. The second clue was President Johnson's presidential campaign speeches of 1964. These political bromides completed the Politburo's misunderstanding of United States resolve and intent. Hanoi could draw no other conclusion than that the United States would not enlarge the war. When President Johnson said (as he did on 12 and 29 August 1964) that he would not expand the war by either bombing the North or by "committing a good many American boys to fighting a war that I think ought to be fought by the boys of Asia…", he fooled Ho Chi Minh and his compatriots with American election year politics and polemics. Communists seldom understand that American campaign speeches bear no relation to the postelection actions of the victorious candidate. As a result, every indication of American intent available to the North Vietnamese in August-September 1964 showed that the United States would not intervene in force in Vietnam if the North Vietnamese Main Force units invaded South Vietnam…
>
> So, in August or September, the North Vietnamese Politburo saw the situation – confidently albeit erroneously – this way: 1. South Vietnam could be

conquered if the North Vietnamese Army was thrown onto the Communist side of the scales; and 2. the United States would accept this invasion without retaliation by air against North Vietnam and without sending its own ground forces into a ground war in Asia. It was a tragic miscalculation, and was to cost the lives of hundreds of thousands of men, mostly Vietnamese, from both sides of the 17th Parallel. [19]

General Davidson also describes how the North Vietnamese leadership misunderstood the Johnson administrations' philosophy of gradualism in escalating American actions:

Thus, the fundamental dispute about ROLLING THUNDER [the U.S. bombing campaign against North Vietnam] between the civilians and the military turned around the aims and philosophy of that program. The civilians…espoused a program of *gradually* applied pressure through air power on North Vietnam, beginning with carefully selected and generally unremunerative targets. In essence, this philosophy maintained that Hanoi would "get the signal" that the United States was serious about the war in Vietnam, and they would cease supporting the Viet Cong. Its restrained inauguration and philosophy offered President Johnson maximum flexibility, in that the pressure could be increased. Its initial restraint would probably not panic the Soviets or Chinese into entering the war. Unfortunately, from this policy of gradualism Hanoi received almost precisely the opposite signal from the one the United States wanted to transmit. The signal Hanoi got was that the United States was *not* serious about fighting or ending the war in Vietnam…

In the final analysis, gradualism forced the United States into a lengthy, indecisive air war of attrition – the very kind which best suited Ho and Giap. [20]

General Davidson attributes this miscommunication between Lyndon Johnson and Ho Chi Minh to Johnson's fundamental nature, and gives a one-sentence summary of the results of that miscommunication:

Johnson, unfamiliar with war, saw the bombing in terms of domestic American politics, in which he was an expert. The aircraft, the bombs, the destruction itself were only bargaining tools, and he believed in his politician's heart that Ho Chi Minh would bargain. [21]

[1965] was a watershed year: both North Vietnam and the United States had – almost by accident and certainly by miscalculation – plunged into a war which neither really wanted. [22]

In summary, wrong information and wrong assumptions cause wars and prolong them.

Needed Changes

We must change the nature of our world, of ourselves, so that war is not only unnecessary, but is personally and socially unacceptable. We have to deal with greed, poverty, over population, lust for power, fear, our culture, false assumptions and miscommunication.

Change must come from bottom up, because it is not likely to come from the top down. The elites benefit too much from the current system to be willing to change it. We must come to the condition described in Jeremiah 31:33-34, "…I will put my law in their minds and write it on their hearts…No longer will a man teach his neighbour, or a man his brother, saying, 'Know the Lord,' because they will all know me…" [1] In my interpretation, "Know the Lord" means "Know what is right and do it." We must abandon our willingness to accept institutionalized killing and theft, which is the *sine qua non* for wars.

If everyone strictly followed the Golden Rule, and its inverse formulation: "Do not do unto others that which you would not have done to yourself", conflict would become very rare. To bring such a situation into existence, many things must happen. Ignorance must be eliminated by independent, fact based, and propaganda-free universal education.

Wealth inequality must be reduced. Our economies cannot continue to be based on a paradigm that requires constant "growth" in Gross National Product or in population to be successful. Trees do not grow to the sky. A financial system that requires constant expansion of the numbers to service its debt is not sustainable. In *Confessions of an Economic Hit Man*, John Perkins points out the deceptiveness of Gross National Product as a measure of the condition of a country. [2] However, GNP is a principal metric used by central banks and governments to determine economic policy. GNP is just a money number that does not measure true wealth. Both inflation and wasteful spending will make GNP go up, even though no gain in wealth has occurred. All weapons are nothing but destroyers of wealth, both in their manufacture and in their use; but, building them increases GNP. Money is not wealth.

Population levels must come into balance with what can be sustainably supported by the Earth. *Individuals need an internalized, voluntary ethic of small families, and a spirit of integration with rather than domination of nature.* Some religious denominations desperately need to change their doctrine on birth control, but should do so because of their own recognition of error, not because of external coercion. Developing cultures must cease to consider large families as indicators of wealth and virility. Ignorance about birth control and about the detrimental effects of overpopulation must be eliminated.

Religious tolerance is essential. Each person has a right to follow their own path of spiritual development as long as their actions do not encroach upon the rights of another. All religions have good and evil in their doctrines and in their application of doctrine.

In summary, here is a partial list of the principles that I believe would bring about peace if scrupulously followed, especially by governments:

- Do not kill
- Do not steal
- Do not lie
- Honour your word
- Fulfil your valid responsibilities
- Avoid causing distress to others (including: "Don't pollute!")
- Support yourself and your family as well as you are able
- Be as productive as you can be for the good of all
- Share wisely and compassionately
- Do not take unfair advantage
- Be honest (especially to ourselves) about our biases and fair in judgement and action
- Be kind to all, respecting each person as a spirit clothed in flesh and trying to function under difficult circumstances
- Seek wisdom from the natural world

I do not believe that any culture or religion on earth would disagree with any of these principles. To me, the existence of a commonly agreed right and wrong is one proof that life has a spiritual foundation; we, and our world, are not just the product of chemistry and physics. To be able to routinely implement these principles, as a species we must become much more compassionate.

Proactive, self-righteous governments that seem to feel compelled to right every international wrong would do well to consider King Solomon's wise advice in Proverbs 26:17 – "Like one who seizes a dog by the ears is a passer-by who meddles in a quarrel not his own." [3]

Unfortunately, I do not believe we are sophisticated enough or wise enough to voluntarily make the changes in ourselves required to bring about peace. Therefore, the world is likely to be in for much more war, famine, disease and death. Hopefully we will learn something in the end. Our current world system seems to be as H.G. Wells said of the Roman Empire, "It had to break down, it had to be removed before anything better could replace it." [4] I strongly suspect that our world system will destroy itself – no Visigoths will be required. (But, they may drop in anyway.) Life has many cycles, from the daily cycles of day and night to the cycle of the equinox's precession, which takes nearly twenty-six millennia. I hope we are near the end of the cycle of human warfare.

What a shame it is that we humans cannot change our behaviour to quit killing people like my friend the Squad Leader and my could-have-been friend the North Vietnamese Lieutenant.

Until we do, sane nations will require reasonable military forces for purely <u>defensive</u> wars. Of course, if all wars were purely defensive, they would not happen because there would be no aggressors. No pre-emptive wars, please.

In summary, we could end the misery and destruction of war if everyone followed the Golden Rule and its inverse formulation: Do unto others as you would have them do unto you, and do not do to others what you would have them do to you.

We began this discussion with words from Patrick Henry. Let us conclude with thoughts from George Washington's Farewell Address:

> [A]void the necessity of those overgrown military establishments which, under any form of government, are inauspicious to liberty, and which are to be regarded as particularly hostile to republican liberty…
>
> Observe good faith and justice towards all nations; cultivate peace and harmony with all…
>
> [S]teer clear of permanent alliances with any portion of the foreign world…
>
> [H]onesty is the best policy…
>
> Taking care always to keep ourselves by suitable establishments on a respectable defensive posture, we may safely trust to temporary alliances for extraordinary emergencies…
>
> But even our commercial policy should hold an equal and impartial hand; neither seeking nor granting exclusive favors or preferences; consulting the natural course of things; diffusing and diversifying by gentle means the streams of commerce, but forcing nothing; …
>
> There can be no greater error than to expect or calculate upon real favors from nation to nation…
>
> Geo. Washington
> 19 September 1796 [5]

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