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The Anarchical Society

A Study of Order in World Politics

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8

War and International Order

It may be argued that it is perverse to treat war as an institution of the society of states, but in the sense that it is a settled pattern of behaviour, shaped towards the promotion of common goals, there cannot be any doubt that it has been in the past such an institution, and remains one. In this chapter I propose to consider:

(i) What is war?

(ii) What functions has it fulfilled in relation to international order in the historical modern states system?

(iii) What, if any, are the functions of war in international politics at the present time?

War

War is organised violence carried on by political units against each other. Violence is not war unless it is carried out in the name of a political unit; what distinguishes killing in war from murder is its vicarious and official character, the symbolic responsibility of the unit whose agent the killer is. Equally, violence carried out in the name of a political unit is not war unless it is directed against another political unit; the violence employed by the state in the execution of criminals or the suppression of pirates does not qualify because it is directed against individuals.

We should distinguish between war in the loose sense of organised violence which may be carried out by any political unit (a tribe, an ancient empire, a feudal principality, a modern civil faction) and war in the strict sense of international or interstate war, organised violence waged by sovereign states. Within the modern states system only war in the strict sense, international war, has been legitimate; sovereign states have sought to preserve

for themselves a monopoly of the legitimate use of violence. This came about in two stages: first, the forging of the distinction between public war, or war waged on the authority of a public body, and private war, or war waged without any such authority, and the curtailment of the latter; and second, the emergence of the idea that the state was the only public body competent to confer such authority. The development of the modern concept of war as organised violence among sovereign states was the outcome of a process of limitation or confinement of violence. We are accustomed, in the modern world, to contrast war between states with peace between states; but the historical alternative to war between states was more ubiquitous violence.

We need also to distinguish between war in the material sense, that is actual hostilities, and war in the legal or normative sense, a notional state of affairs brought into being by the satisfaction of certain legal or normative criteria, for example that it be recognised or declared by competent authorities. Wars in the material sense often take place that are not wars in the legal sense: most of the wars that have taken place since 1945 have been described, by those engaged in them, by some other name. On the other hand, war in the legal sense may be held to exist at times when no actual hostilities are taking place, for example in the interval between the cessation of hostilities at the end of a war and the conclusion of a peace treaty. If we are speaking of war in the legal sense, the distinction between war and peace is absolute: thus Grotius's doctrine *inter bellum et pacem nihil est medium*. War in the material sense, on the other hand, is sometimes hard to distinguish from peace. Between the two states of affairs there are gradations: when does a blockade become an act of violence? When does a rebel band take on the character of a political unit?

But while we may distinguish actual war from notional war, it would be mistaken to suppose that the former exists entirely apart from the latter. In any actual hostilities to which we can give the name 'war', norms or rules, whether legal or otherwise, invariably play a part. The persons conducting these hostilities are activated by the notion that they are engaged in an activity called 'war', that this is a different state of affairs from peace, that certain kinds of behaviour are appropriate to it, for example that they are acting as agents of a political group, and that certain other individuals must be viewed as the agents of an enemy group. Rules or norms,

although they may be considered in abstraction, are also part of the material reality of war, the consideration of which requires attention to behaviour that is a response to accepted rules.

Finally, we should distinguish war as a rational, intelligent or purposive activity, from war which is blind, impulsive or habitual. Clausewitz's definition of war as 'an act intended to compel our opponent to fulfil our will' expresses the conception of war that was dominant in Europe under the sway of the doctrine of reason of state. Even when applied to the experience of modern Europe up till the post-Napoleonic period, out of which Clausewitz's analysis grew, it was a recommendation as to how wars should be conducted, not an accurate description of how wars were actually fought. War is very often not the servant of rational or intelligent purposes; it has been fought by primitive tribes as a form of ritual, by Christian and Saracen Knights in fulfilment of a chivalric code, by modern nations to test their cohesion and sense of identity, and throughout history from sheer lust for blood and conquest.

War in the Modern States System

The functions of war in the historical modern states system may be considered from three perspectives: that of the individual state, that of the system of states and that of the society of states.

From the point of view of the individual state, war has appeared as an instrument of policy, one of the means by which the state's objectives may be attained. It is true that when a state embarks upon a war, this does not always reflect a deliberate or calculated attempt to relate war as a means to some desired end; states have sometimes stumbled into war by accident or miscalculation, or have been swept into it by gusts of royal anger or public feeling. It is true also that when, as in August-September 1914, states do embark upon war as a deliberately chosen means of attaining some concrete and specific end, the war's own momentum sometimes so transforms the belligerent states and the objectives they set for themselves that the original ends for which the war was begun are lost to sight. Nevertheless, the idea that war can serve as an effective instrument of policy has been borne out throughout the history of the states system. Whether we look to Richelieu's

embarking on war to curb the Habsburg power, to Frederick II's wars to make Prussia a great power, to England's wars to wrest empire from France, to Bismarck's wars to unify Germany and establish its hegemony in Europe, or the war fought by the United Nations to crush the Axis, there is no lack of examples showing that wars embarked upon may sometimes produce the intended results.

From the point of view of the international system, the single mechanism or field of forces which states constitute together by virtue of their interaction with one another, war appears as a basic determinant of the shape the system assumes at any one time. It is war and the threat of war that help to determine whether particular states survive or are eliminated, whether they rise or decline, whether their frontiers remain the same or are changed, whether their peoples are ruled by one government or another, whether disputes are settled or drag on, and which way they are settled, whether there is a balance of power in the international system or one state becomes preponderant. War and the threat of war are not the only determinants of the shape of the international system; but they are so basic that even the terms we use to describe the system – great powers and small powers, alliances and spheres of influence, balances of power and hegemony – are scarcely intelligible except in relation to war and the threat of war.

From the point of view of international society, that is from the point of view of the common values, rules and institutions accepted by the system of states as a whole, war has a dual aspect. On the one hand, war is a manifestation of disorder in international society, bringing with it the threat of breakdown of international society itself into a state of pure enmity or war of all against all. The society of states, accordingly, is concerned to limit and contain war, to keep it within the bounds of rules laid down by international society itself. On the other hand, war – as an instrument of state policy and a basic determinant of the shape of the international system – is a means which international society itself feels a need to exploit so as to achieve its own purposes. Specifically, in the perspective of international society, war is a means of enforcing international law, of preserving the balance of power, and, arguably, of promoting changes in the law generally regarded as just. The rules and institutions which international society has evolved reflect the tension between the perception of war as a threat

to international society which must be contained, and the perception of it as an instrumentality which international society can exploit to achieve its purposes.

International society is impelled to restrict the right of states to go to war. To assert the right of a state to make war against other states for any reason whatever and without limitation of any kind, is to deny that states are bound by common rules and institutions. International society has sought to restrict the right to make war in four ways. First, as was noted above, it confines the right to wage war to sovereign states. Second, it seeks to impose restrictions on the way in which war is conducted – as, for example, through the traditional rules of war. Third, it has sought to restrict the geographical spread of wars that have broken out through laws of neutrality, laying down the rights and duties of neutrals and belligerents in relation to each other. Fourth, it has sought to restrict the reasons or causes for which a state can legitimately resort to war – from the beginnings of the states system through the influence of the doctrine that war should be begun only for a just cause, and in this century also through legal instruments such as the League Covenant, the Kellogg-Briand Pact and the United Nations Charter.

But while international society has been impelled to restrict and contain war, it has also sought to assign to some kinds of war a positive role in the maintenance of international order. First, it has seen war as a possible means of enforcement of international law. Given the absence of a central authority or world government, international law can be enforced only by particular states able and willing to take up arms on its behalf. At its minimum this conception of war as law enforcement relates only to the case of war waged in self-defence by a state whose rights of territorial sovereignty have been violated by an attacker. At its maximum the conception extends also to war waged on behalf of the victim by third states whose own rights have not been infringed, and to war waged in defence not simply of territorial integrity but of a wide range of legal rights.

Second, international society, at least from the beginning of the eighteenth century, has seen in war a means of preserving the balance of power, that is the situation in which no one state is preponderant and can lay down the law to others. The preservation of a general balance of power has been perceived as essential to the survival of the states system, and war directed to this end as carrying out a positive function.

Third, and more doubtfully, it is possible to argue that international society at large has sometimes regarded war as fulfilling a positive function when it is fought not on behalf of the international legal order or the balance of power, but in order to bring about just change. The international order is notoriously lacking in mechanisms of peaceful change, notoriously dependent on war as the agent of just change. The society of states, always divided about the rules and institutions necessary to sustain order, is more divided still about the requirements of justice. But there have sometimes been occasions when the acquiescence of international society in a change brought about by force reflects, among other things, a widespread feeling that the use or threat of force has been a just one.

War at the Present Time

The view that war no longer fulfils the functions outlined above rests principally on the idea that, given the existence of nuclear weapons, force has become politically unusable as between states. Thus it is commonly said that, from the point of view of individual states, war is no longer the continuation of policy by other means but represents the breakdown of policy. It is said that force and the threat of force are no longer basic determinants of the character or shape of the international system, or at all events that they will cease to be such when nuclear weapons have become available to all states. It is argued also that international society can no longer regard war as an instrument of purposes such as the enforcement of international law. 'In former times', Professor B. V. A. Röling has written, 'the threat and possibility of war were factors in the maintenance of law. War can no longer serve this purpose, however, for humanity can also be annihilated by a just war.'[1] It is true and obvious that war fought without restraint or limitation by states equipped with nuclear weapons and other advanced military technology cannot serve as an instrument of foreign policy, at least in the sense in which that phrase has been understood in modern European experience. Such a war must lead to the

breakdown, if not the annihilation, not merely of the enemy society but also of the society initiating the war. But it does not follow from this that war and the threat of war are deprived of all political utility.

In the first place, most international conflicts do not directly involve the nuclear powers. While there are about 140 states only six of them have so far conducted nuclear explosions. In the case of conflicts between non-nuclear states, war and the threat of war continue to play a political role, as has been demonstrated in the wars between Israel and her neighbours in 1948, 1956, 1967 and 1973, in the Indo-Pakistani wars of 1947–8, 1965 and 1971, and many others.

In wars such as these the course of events is much affected by the background presence of nuclear weapons. Whenever armed conflict breaks out between sovereign states, there does register throughout the world a sense of alarm that derives from the fear of nuclear war and is expressed in attempts, for example through the United Nations or regional international organisations, to bring the fighting quickly to a halt. The effect of this background presence of nuclear weapons, however, is not to deprive states of the possibility of exploiting the military force at their command, only to alter the setting in which they do so – to pose for them such problems as how best to make or threaten war with these risks in mind, how to avoid or postpone intervention by the great powers, how to catch them unawares, present them with a *fait accompli,* ensure that they will be divided, or make do in the event that they cut off supplies of arms.

In the second place, where a nuclear power is directly involved in an international conflict, its opponent is sometimes non-nuclear. The use of nuclear weapons by the United States against Japan, and the threat of their use by the United States against the Soviet Union before August 1949 and China before October 1964, took place in these circumstances. In a conflict between a nuclear and a non-nuclear power the use of nuclear weapons will often be judged to involve a political and moral cost out of proportion to the end in view; it seems unlikely that any nuclear power could decide to use nuclear weapons in such a situation without facing great and adverse repercussions in world opinion which may out-weigh the military gains to be expected. To the extent that this is appreciated also in the country subject to nuclear threats, such threats will not

carry conviction. In the Anglo-Indonesian conflict of 1963–5 over President Sukarno's 'confrontation' of Malaysia, for example, the British government could not conceivably have regarded the use of nuclear weapons as a politically viable option, nor does it seem likely that the Indonesian government would have found British threats credible, had they been made. But where a nuclear power's stake in employing the force at its disposal is large, such threats may appear credible. When the United States confronted a non-nuclear Soviet Union, what was at stake was, in the American view, the continued independence of Western Europe; the threat of the United States to use the force at its disposal, in a situation in which it was in no danger of suffering nuclear attack itself, must have seemed convincing. It is an historical accident that each of the five present nuclear powers views its nuclear forces as directed at one or more of the others. There are, however, a number of potential nuclear powers – including Israel, South Africa and Australia – in which it is sometimes argued that the chief role of nuclear forces would be to provide defence against, or deterrence of, an attack by non-nuclear powers superior in numbers.

In the third place, even where nuclear weapons are available to both parties in an international conflict and the prospect of mutual destruction is immediately present, the possibilities of the political exploitation of force are considerable. This is the crucial point, for it means that the persisting utility of force in the nuclear age is not merely a feature of the present imperfect distribution of nuclear weapons among the nations of the world, but could be expected to obtain also were these weapons to become generally available.

Nuclear powers that are engaged in a conflict with one another are not necessarily in a situation of mutual deterrence or stalemate. For this to obtain a number of conditions must be satisfied, among which the possession of nuclear weapons on both sides is only one. Each party must have a nuclear force that is capable of surviving a first blow by the opponent, and penetrating to its targets with sufficient destructive effect. Each side must believe that the other has both the capacity and the will to produce damage, and it must judge this damage to be unacceptable.

Nuclear powers have in the past confronted one another without being in any such situation of stalemate. Between 1949 and 1954 the Soviet Union did not possess a means of delivering nuclear weapons on the United States. China, from the time of her first nuclear test

in 1964 until the time of writing, has been a nuclear power without the means of delivering nuclear weapons on the United States; and even after China acquires a force of Intercontinental Ballistic Missiles, experts are likely to debate whether this force would be capable of surviving a first blow from the United States and penetrating that country's anti-missile defences. The ability of British nuclear forces since 1952 and French since 1960 to provide a credible deterrent in relation to the Soviet Union has been the subject of constant disagreement among experts. It is in fact only in the case of relations between the United States and the Soviet Union in the period since the mid-1950s that there would be any general agreement among students of strategic matters about the existence of a nuclear stalemate. Moreover, where a nuclear stalemate exists, it is not necessarily stable, but is subject to being undermined by technological developments that would make possible an effective defence of cities and population, or a disarming strike against retaliatory forces. A nuclear stalemate can also be rendered unstable by changes of a political and psychological nature – in the will of one side to use its retaliatory forces, or the belief of one side in the other's will or capacity.

Where, as between the United States and the Soviet Union now, there is a relationship of mutual deterrence, and this is basically stable (despite complicating elements in the calculus of deterrence such as the Anti-Ballistic Missile and the multiple and individually targeted warhead), the exploitation of force for purposes of foreign policy will be closely circumscribed. But there exist in principle two outlets.

The first of these is the limited use of force. The prospect of suffering unacceptable damage at the hands of the opponent may deter the nuclear powers confronting one another from any use of force against each other at all, or it might deter them only from an unlimited or unrestrained conflict. In the late 1950s it was widely believed in the Western world that the very stability of mutual deterrence of unrestrained strategic nuclear warfare would create the conditions in which limited war between the super powers could be conducted with maximum confidence that the limitations would be preserved. The Soviet-American nuclear stalemate that grew up at that time provided the impetus for a whole range of studies of, and preparations for, possible limited wars and possible ways of keeping them limited: various forms of limited strategic nuclear

exchange; nuclear war restricted to battlefield or military targets; conventional war; sub-conventional or guerrilla war.

The position so far has been that the United States and the Soviet Union have avoided becoming directly involved in battle at all; the fear of expansion of a conflict to the level of unrestrained nuclear war has in fact deterred them from putting the theory of limited war to the test of a direct encounter. Only if we treat the Korean War, the French Indochina War or the Vietnam War as wars fought 'by proxy' between the super powers could we say that they have had experience of fighting a limited war with each other, and such a treatment would be quite artificial. Nevertheless, we cannot assume on the basis of the Soviet-American stalemate so far that these or other nuclear powers will not be prepared to risk direct military conflict with each other, including limited nuclear war.

The other outlet available to contending nuclear powers locked in a position of stalemate, but seeking a means of the political exploitation of force, is the threat of its use. While each of the contestants may possess force sufficient to produce damage the other would regard as unacceptable, they may be unequal in demonstrating resolve to use the force at their disposal. Superior technique in 'brinkmanship' or 'crisis management' may establish the greater willingness of one side to go to war rather than back down, and so bring a diplomatic victory in its train, as demonstrated by the United States in the Cuban missile crisis of 1962.

Thus war is not robbed of its historic political functions merely because of the existence of nuclear weapons and other advanced military technology; nor could these political functions be expected to disappear as a consequence of the spread of nuclear weapons. What is the case, however, is that in international politics at the present time the role of war, at least in the strict sense of interstate or international war, appears more closely circumscribed than before the end of the Second World War. The range of political objects war can serve has become narrower, the costs of resorting to it greater.

From the vantage-point of the individual state, war remains an instrument of policy, but one that can be used only at greater cost and in relation to a narrower range of purposes than before 1945. Where nuclear weapons are involved, the costs may include the destruction of the society resorting to war, should limitations break down. Even without nuclear weapons war for an advanced state can

involve such physical destruction, and such political, economic and social dislocation as to make war almost unthinkable as an instrument of policy unless it be a strictly limited war fought well beyond the territory of the state itself. It is in fact only wars of this latter sort that have been fought by the economically advanced states since the Second World War, and even these (one thinks, for example, of the impact of the Suez War on Britain, of the Indochinese and Algerian Wars on France, and of the Korean and Vietnam Wars on the United States) have in some cases brought severe domestic repercussions.

Apart from the destruction and dislocation caused by the war itself to the state which initiates it, there must be measured the cost to the state's standing in world politics. The legal obstacles placed by the United Nations Charter in the way of resort to war for any purpose other than individual or collective self-defence are not in themselves formidable, but they express a collective fear of war which if it is mobilised against the state resorting to war can provide a significant deterrent.

While the costs of resort to war have expanded, the range of foreign policy purposes which war can effectively promote appears to have contracted. Historically, states have gone to war for one or more of three kinds of objective. First, wars have been fought for economic gain, measured in terms of bullion, or trade monopolies or access to markets, raw materials and investment opportunities; the classic examples were perhaps the trading and colonial wars fought by the European powers in the age of mercantilism. Second, wars have been fought for reasons of security, to resist or remove some external threat to the state's integrity or independence; classical examples are the great preventive wars – such as the Peloponnesian War, the War of the Spanish Succession, and perhaps the First World War. If a great war between the United States and the Soviet Union had broken out in our time, its underlying motive would have been security in this sense. Third, wars have been fought to promote ideological objectives, to advance a religious or political faith; the wars of Islamic expansion, the Crusades, the wars of the French Revolution and Napoleon were for ideological objectives, at least in part.

It is now widely doubted whether war can effectively promote economic gain, at all events through the conquest of territory. Even

as recently as the Second World War Germany in Eastern Europe and Japan in South-east Asia sought to conquer territory at least partly so as to control markets and sources of raw materials. In the post-1945 period it seems unlikely that any state has contemplated territorial conquest for such a reason. It has been demonstrated, not least by Germany and Japan, that economic growth does not require the political control of foreign territory, while the countries which at the end of the Second World War possessed colonial territories have now all concluded that the costs of attempting to control them outweigh the gains.

Wars are still fought to advance ideological objectives, and in the post-1945 period have been fought to advance communism and to liberate peoples from colonial rule. It is difficult, however, to find examples of a state going to war to spread a faith by the sword among a foreign people, except in circumstances where that people is already divided within itself by an ideological conflict. Resort to war to spread an ideology has typically taken the form of intervention in a civil conflict. The Soviet Union, China, Cuba, the United Arab Republic and Algeria, in promoting revolutionary doctrines abroad, have sought to aid and abet revolutionary movements with local roots in foreign nations, not to impose such doctrines through open invasion.

It would be rash to conclude that the military conquest of foreign territory can no longer bring economic gain or promote ideologies, or to predict that these functions of war will not reappear in any form. Indeed, there are signs that resource scarcity, or the belief in resource scarcity, may lead to a revival of interest in the use of force to gain or to preserve access to raw materials. But states now are reluctant to embark upon war except to achieve objectives of security. Security, of course, may include the making secure of economic assets enjoyed – such an objective, for example, has provided part of the rationale of Britain's willingness to use her forces in Malaysia and Singapore in the post-Second World War period. Security may also include the making safe of governments abroad with congenial ideologies – this objective has underlain the American use of force in Vietnam and Santo Domingo in 1965 and the Soviet use of force in Hungary in 1956 and Czechoslovakia in 1968. At present, however, it would seem that only considerations of security can cause the government

of an advanced industrial state to conclude that war is worth the cost.

From the point of view of the international system, war remains a basic determinant of the shape of the system. But among the great nuclear powers it is the threat of war rather than war itself that determines the relationships. Mutual deterrence as between the great powers rules out unlimited war as a means of resolving disputes between them, and this affects the place of war in the system as a whole. Three changes from the pre-1945 international system, in particular, are notable.

First, where the armed forces of the United States and the Soviet Union directly confront one another, as for more than three decades they have done in Central Europe, actual war has not come into play to resolve the conflict. Unlimited war cannot serve as an instrument of policy for either side; limited war has been regarded by both sides as carrying too high a risk; the attempts to change the *status quo*, and to defend it, as in the Berlin crisis of 1958–61, have taken the form of elaborate threats. War itself not being available, and the main issues having so far proved unamenable to diplomatic solution, the result has been no change, what Raymond Aron once called 'the slowing down of history'.[2]

Second, while war outside the area of direct relations between the great nuclear powers plays much the same part in international history that it has done in the past, this is subject to the proviso that if the nuclear great powers are supporting opposite sides in a local conflict, they will try to control it in such a way that the ground rules of their own relationships are respected. The restraint imposed by the Soviet Union on China and the United States on Taiwan during the Far East conflicts of the 1950s, and that imposed by the United States on Israel and the Soviet Union on Egypt since 1967, illustrate this pattern. War could assume its 'normal' historical function of bringing these conflicts to an end in favour of one party or the other only if one or both of the super powers were to disengage.

Third, the obstacles standing in the way of resort to war between sovereign states have encouraged the tendencies making for war or violence within them. International war, as a determinant of the shape of the international system, has declined in relation to civil war. The principal territorial changes of the last quarter century –

the break-up of European empires – have been brought about by civil violence or the possibility of it, rather than by interstate violence. The territorial integrity of many states, new and old, is now more threatened by separatist violence within their frontiers than by violence from outside. The ideological struggles between communist and anti-communist, neo-colonialist and radical nationalist, can take a violent form more readily in a domestic than in an interstate context.

The civil violence now so prominent in many countries does not exist apart from the international system. Civil wars are internationalised by virtue of the intervention of outside states in them. There is a contagion of civil violence between one country and another – brought about by common inspiration, common organisation or emulation. Some revolutionary groups, committed to violence in a particular country, have become violent actors in world politics in their own right; in kidnapping diplomats or seizing civil aircraft of foreign countries, they are challenging the sovereign state's monopoly of international violence. The reasons underlying the expanding international role of civil war are many and complex, but among them is the now circumscribed political role of war in the strict sense, interstate war.

From the perspective of international society, war retains its dual aspect: on the one hand, a threat to be limited and contained; on the other hand, an instrumentality to be harnessed to international society's purposes. But it is the perception of war as a threat to international society that is now dominant; the perception of war as a means of enforcing the law, preserving the balance of power and effecting just change, is now qualified by a sense of the overriding need to contain war within tolerable bounds.

International society is now reluctant to view war as law enforcement except in cases where it is resorted to for reasons of self-defence. Grotius, in his celebrated account of the just causes of war, mentioned three: self-defence, the recovery of property and the infliction of punishment. Until recently, states have been able often enough to find support in international society for the view that in going to war to recover property or protect their nationals abroad, as European states frequently did in the last century, they have been enforcing the law. States have also in the past been able to gain international support, as the victors did in the two World Wars this century, for the view that war aims could legitimately include not

only the restoration of rights but also punishment of the transgressor.

The balance of power remains a condition of the continued existence of the system of states, and limited wars that affect the distribution of power among the great powers contribute to it. But a central part of the general balance of power is now the relationship of mutual nuclear deterrence between the United States and the Soviet Union, now in process of becoming a triangular relationship including China. In this relationship of mutual deterrence, unlimited war can have no positive role but can only represent the collapse of the system.

At a time when two of the three main groups of states in the world contend that war may justly be fought to liberate colonial territories from metropolitan powers, or on behalf of the rights of black Africans in Southern Africa to self-determination, it cannot be said that international society has ceased to recognise in war a means of effecting just change. The acquiescence of international society in India's seizure of Goa in 1961, and Indonesia's infiltration of West Irian in 1962, and in 1971 India's war against Pakistan on behalf of Bangladesh, was facilitated in each case by a widespread though not universal feeling that resort to war to accomplish the change in question was just.

But the positive role still assigned by international society to wars that sustain its own purposes is now overridden by a sense of the need to limit the conduct of war. In the post-1945 period international society has had a certain success in confining interstate war within limits consistent with the survival of the states system – less through any respect paid to the laws of war than through tacit rules of the game improvised under the discipline of the fear of war. But as this has happened, war waged by political units other than states has expanded in scope. Civil factions have emerged as violent world actors, challenging the monopoly of international violence which sovereign states have long claimed for themselves, and escaping the restraints and rules by which sovereign states are bound. The freedom of the revolutionary group from international constraints, by contrast with the subjection of the sovereign state, was dramatised by the United Nations Security Council in 1968, when it condemned Israel for carrying out a retaliatory raid against Lebanon in response to acts of violence committed by Lebanon-based Palestinian guerrillas against El Al

aircraft in Athens, but failed to do anything to constrain the Palestinian guerrillas themselves. International society will not be able to afford to allow these new forms of war to lie permanently beyond the compass of its rules.