

THE FUTURE OF WAR AND SOLUTIONS TO WAR

I. TESTING THEORIES OF THE CAUSES OF WAR WITH THE CASES COVERED IN THIS COURSE

- A. Which theories of war perform best when tested against history? To test them, evaluate their cross-time, cross-space, and within-case predictions. Looking back on cases covered in this class, do you think the case method helps us understand the causes of war?
- B. Are there missing theories that should be added to our tool kit?

II. THE FUTURE OF WAR

- A. The current picture: inter-state wars are few, civil wars are many. Today's 20-40 wars (which kill several hundred thousand people each year) are mostly civil.
- B. The short term future:
1. Some important causes of 20th century wars have abated.
 - a. Insecurity borne of fear of being attacked and conquered by conventional arms has sharply abated with the nuclear revolution.
 - b. Militarism has largely faded worldwide, with one major exception: Pakistan.
 - c. Historical mythmaking has sharply abated among industrialized democracies but not disappeared. It continues to flourish in the Mideast, East Asia, and among extremist religion-driven groups like al-Qaeda.
 - d. Democracy has spread, and with it the democratic peace. Wars stemming from the absence of democracy have faded.
 2. Western Europe looks deeply peaceful--an amazing change from conditions before 1945. Those seeking peace should consider how this deep peace in Europe was created, and how it might be replicated elsewhere.
 3. Possible future interstate conflicts include:
 - a. Wars of WMD counter-proliferation and counterterror. These wars would reprise the U.S. wars against Iraq (2003-2011) and in Afghanistan (2001-). Possibilities: U.S. wars against North Korea, or Iran if the Iran nuclear deal unravels, or military action to seize Pakistan's nuclear weapons if they seem insecure, or more war against al Qaeda and its affiliates in Pakistan and elsewhere, or more war against ISIS if it resurges. In such wars the U.S. would seek to de-fang rising WMD states and destroy movements that aspire to WMD terror before they unleash great horrors on the world. New developments that raise this specter:
 - i. The rise of terrorists with ambitions to use WMD. Before 1990 scholars of terror argued that "terrorists want a lot a people watching, not a lot of people dead." Aum Shinrikyo, Al Qaeda and ISIS want a lot of people dead. The rise of millenarian religious thinking around the world raises the danger that more groups

in the world. In recent times we've seen horrific religion-fueled civil wars in Sudan (1983-2005) and in Algeria (1991-2002). The 1980-88 Iran-Iraq war, the 1991-1995 Serb-Croat-Bosniak war, and the current civil wars in Iraq, Syria and Yemen have large religious dimensions. The India-Pakistan conflict has a large religious dimension. The Israel-Palestinian conflict has a growing religious dimension. Al Qaeda and ISIS are religion-based terror movements.

What conflicts will the future see? Some possibilities.

- i. Religion-based Wars of Civilization, as Samuel Huntington fears. The biggest current fear: a conflict between the West and the Islamic world. Bin Laden wanted to trigger such a war. Will the West be so foolish as to help al-Qaeda start it?
 - ii. More Israel-Arab and India-Pakistan conflict.
 - iii. Sunni-Shi'a wars in the Mideast, e.g., as in Iraq, Syria, Yemen.
 - iv. Muslim-Christian conflict in Egypt?
- d. Wars of geopolitics and security.
- i. China vs. U.S. cold war or hot war: the world's top two states again clash for global power. Perhaps sparked by conflict over Taiwan, or the South China Sea, or control of North Korea.
 - ii. China vs. India, Russia, and Japan as China rises and they move to contain it.
- C. The long term future:
1. Kaysen vs. "Factor 'X'." Material reasons for war are declining but war itself may not be. Why is this?
 2. Will WMD technology continue to proliferate? The march of technology seems to make this inevitable. In one view bioweapons are becoming much more lethal than before. Defenses against bioweapons are also advancing, but more slowly, so the forces of destruction are outrunning impediments to them. Where will this end?
Is science inventing a version of Kurt Vonnegut's "ice nine"--a very destructive technology for which we are politically, socially and morally unready? **Crispr-cas9, anyone?** If so, will this ice nine someday be acquired by nihilistic groups or individuals and used against civilization? And will our fear of an ice nine and our efforts to contain it spawn wars of counter-proliferation?
 3. Resource wars and wars of environmental calamity? Under some scenarios climate change could make hundreds of millions of people homeless and destroy whole countries. Will these refugees use force to compel compensation or gain vengeance? Food supplies will shrink as agricultural yields diminish. Will this unleash global conflict to control food supplies?
An obvious response: let's halt climate change. But can it be stopped? Coal and oil can be replaced by new green energy technologies at modest cost--less than 1 percent of gross world product per year--by instituting a global carbon tax. But these problems make it unlikely that governments will act:
(1) Climate change pits a concentrated special interest--the oil and coal

industries--against the general interest of the global public. Concentrated interests usually win such fights.

(2) Solutions to climate change require international cooperation. Implementing a carbon tax would require cooperation among the world's major states. But governments are bad at cooperation, and bad at solving problems that require cooperation with others.

(3) The destructive impact of greenhouse gas emissions on the climate is delayed until long after the emissions occur. But Americans widely resist spending public money to solve problems that do not yet hurt. The rule is: "We will act when we feel pain." Problem: by the time we feel pain it will be too late.

(4) Western ethical traditions do not emphasize moral duties to future generations. (Contrast with the Iroquois, whose General Law requires that we consider the effects of our actions down to the seventh generation). Instead our ethics assume that each generation must solve its own problems. Hence we see little duty to sacrifice to preserve the world for future generations. Watch out grandchildren! We live for ourselves, not for you!

(5) The climate change danger has no direct analogies in human history. Humans often think analogically; so, seeing no analogies to the danger, people dismiss it. (Usefully discussing close analogies is Jared Diamond, Collapse).

(6) The climate change danger does not have a primordial signature. It presents no big teeth, big eyes, gushing blood, fire, or roaring large-animal noises. Humans over-respond to dangers with such primordial signatures, but under-respond to slow-rising dangers that lack them, like climate change.

(7) The climate science community does not understand how to use/does not like to use public relations techniques to make its findings known to publics. But such techniques are necessary to reach global publics.

Bottom line: climate change has a clear solution but the human race is probably incapable of implementing that solution. Oh dear!

III. SOLUTIONS TO WAR

- A. Hegemonic America. The USA polices the world, preventing or stopping wars, promoting democracy (which in turn promotes peace), and enforcing non-proliferation of WMD. Pax Americana. Good idea?
1. Would it work? Would the USA prevent more wars than it caused?
 - a. Does the U.S. have the needed power? Some say U.S. hegemony is infeasible.
 - b. Does the U.S. have the needed wisdom? Some say the U.S. will cause more trouble than it cures by imposing its will on the world. It will spiral with others. The threat of U.S. power will provoke others to acquire WMD, instead of deterring them from acquiring WMD. (Some argue this is happening now with North Korea and Iran.)
 2. Would such policing serve U.S. interests? Some say faraway wars don't do much injury to the U.S. Others note that wars tend to spread engulf others, including the USA; and spark dangerous WMD proliferation and nurture terror networks. So the U.S. would serve itself well by imposing peace.

3. Would U.S. nuclear superiority (a first-strike capability) against all other states promote peace or war? A U.S. first-strike capability is quietly favored as a solution to war by proponents of U.S. hegemony. Is it a solution to war? ("It will deter rogue states from starting wars and discourage rogues from seeking nuclear weapons.") Or a cause of war? ("It will provoke an arms race and a cold war, perhaps even a hot war, between the U.S. and Russia and the U.S. and China.")

A closely related question: would U.S. national missile defense (NMD) cause peace or war? NMD would contribute to a U.S. first-strike capability, so its effects should likely be judged by the effects that a first-strike capability would have.
- B. Build International Institutes to enforce peace.
 1. World Government. An old-time favorite solution.
 2. Collective Security. Another popular solution. Skeptics note that it's already been tried with the League of Nations 1919–1939. Why did it fail?
 3. A Concert System, similar to the 1815 Concert of Europe. It worked in 1815, but failed when tried again in 1945 with the UN.
- C. Disarmament. A popular solution with serious shortcomings. (We've talked about them--see our early classes on arms and war.)
- D. Arms control--specifically, tighter controls on the spread of weapons of mass destruction. Can this prevent wars of counter-proliferation? Can the world be persuaded to accept a WMD monopoly by the current WMD powers? If so how?
- E. National perceptual engineering; and/or Values engineering.
 - > "Amnesia International." Create institutions that track and oppose historical mythmaking, especially myths of the more poisonous kind. Replicate globally the work of the Eckert Institute (a.k.a. the Brunswick Schoolbook Institute).

Much human hate stems from historical myths, especially myths of victimhood. Can we dampen hatred by dampening these myths?
 - > Create institutions that track and oppose other war-causing ideas, and "name and shame" those who purvey these ideas. For example these institutions might expose and oppose cults of the offensive, "war is fun" concepts, and exaggerations of others' hostility. They might expose aggressive states and movements and warn others against appeasing them. They might raise consciousness about global warming. Is this worth considering?
 - > An included idea: expose the pervasiveness and destructiveness of ingroup-outgroup thinking in human affairs. If people understand it better they will do it less. Perhaps wider awareness of the problem would create a self-denying prophecy.
 - > Create institutions that name and shame those who use religious authority for hate. Such conduct strikes many as perverse but it persists. Is there a way to delegitimize such conduct?
 - > Create a non-governmental organization (NGO), "Religious Hate Watch," to "name and shame" those who use religious authority for hate.

- > Persuade organized religions to create truth commissions that would record the wrongs committed by the religion in the past, express contrition for these wrongs, and create institutions [religious rituals] to purvey and sustain memory of the wrong among the flock.
 - > Should religions be asked to temper or abandon teachings that they are the only way to God? Christian gospels teach that "those who do not believe will be condemned" (Jesus in Mark 16:16) and that "I am the way; ... no one comes to the Father except by me" (Jesus in John 14:6). Muslim scripture teaches that "the basest creatures in the sight of God are the faithless who will not believe" (God in The Koran, 8:55). Such claims lead those who make them to view people who believe differently with contempt and to claim superior rights above them. This causes conflict and violence between religious communities and toward unbelievers-- conflicts that bring religion itself into disrepute.¹ Perhaps this situation requires a movement of religious reinterpretation.
- F. Global values engineering. Can war someday be delegitimated, perhaps by the work of religious institutions, much as child sacrifice, slavery and duelling have now been delegitimated worldwide? Can we all learn to be better people?
- G. Be evaluative units yourselves! You can be part of the answer.

¹ Maureen Dowd reports that after the 9/11/01 al-Qaeda attacks a wall graffiti appeared in Washington, DC that expressed such thinking: "Dear God, please save us from the people who believe in you."

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