II

War in International Relations

*Cry "Havoc", and let slip the dogs of war*
Shakespeare, *Julius Caesar*, III,1

War may be comprehended, through the study of international relations, at two distinct levels. The study may start with the assumption that, since individual states resort to war, wars may be studied by the analysis of state's behaviour and actions, their decision-making processes and various influences on those decisions, the beliefs about national interests and their foreign policy goals. The study of wars, on the other hand, may take into account the international environment, the balance of power among alliances, the influences and power projections between states, the effectiveness of international organizations and the interdependence of states. But, to a greater degree, any comprehensive study of war has to be concerned with states and with societies of states. As Dina Zinnes believes (1), the primary interest of students of international relations is the hostile behaviour of states, and the study of war is a part of the study of international relations. When Carl Friedrich said (2) that "it is not usually recognized by people who discourse upon war and peace that any general theory of war implies a general view of history,...(and) nor have they always been aware of the fact that you cannot usually discuss the problems of how to maintain peace if you have no theory of war", he was echoing what Liddell-Hart had declared forty years earlier that if you want peace, understand war. But, unfortunately, it has been assumed, over the ages, that war is a disagreeable phenomenon to be studied in order
to be avoided. Actually, it is much more easier to avoid it if one was prepared for it.

It was the lack of a proper relationship between political leadership and the military that caused the German defeat in the Second World War. The political leadership was trying to achieve unlimited goals by limited means. It imposed its will on the military leadership, and believed that military success would solve political problems. There have been analyses that separate war activities and peace activities and they have arrived at some unrealistic conclusions. For instance, Midlarsky says “We cannot understand war as a failure of normal power (political) relations, such that force (coercion) in the form of political violence, results. War is then not a ‘continuation of political relations’ but their termination in the onset of extreme coercion. Rather than a continuous political process, there occurs a discrete change from power to force” (3). When violence is a conspicuous element in the structure of politics, it is questionable to separate the two.

War is indispensable as an instrument among inter-state relations. It is one of the means for resolving differences between states. And since it operates in an international context, the stakes of war may be the life and death of states.

**Nature and Functions of War:**

There is a functional and a phenomenological approach to the concept of warfare. The functional approach focuses on the social function of war as an armed conflict between two states, or two alliances of states, to achieve some political objectives. The phenomenological approach focuses on the conduct of warfare and its results. In Clausewitzian terms, this approach focuses on armed violence pushed to utmost bounds. War is the extension of power, basically an armed struggle for political aims. Since power provides an advantage in the struggle for self-preservation, warfare would involve the imposition of one’s will on the others and the enhancement in one’s own power; and this is the main motive of collective behaviour of men and states. For Clausewitz, politics meant the activity of state in general and state was the representative of all interests of the entire society against the interests of another state. The armed struggle for the maintenance and enhancement of these interests is war. For a proper study of the nature of war, the phenomenological approach should be
supplemented by functional approach in which war is treated as a political act. War is not an isolated act but is subordinate to a determined policy, and is, what Clausewitz had believed, Chameleon-like in character.

War is an organized armed struggle, waged by armed units, for political aims, and is a continuation of the policies of states through military violence. To qualify as war, an armed conflict must be a social action pursued for political aims, mainly by means of armed violence. The concept of war includes the socio-political nature of the various conceivable types of war, their causation, the conditions in which they occur and the way they start, the strategies used in them, their military character including the weapons used or not used and their socio-political-military consequences. War is composed of violence, chance, play of probabilities and political aims. The defining characteristics of war are its political aims, the nature of participants, the weapons used, the character of their use, geographical scope and size of military operations, intensity and duration. An extension of the range of political actions that are covered by the concept of war would include military actions of states against one another and would include civil wars, interventions by big powers in other states, and other military actions that are part of the global rivalry of antagonistic blocs and alliances.

On the Clausewitzian lines, Nieberg believes that “war breaks out when, instead of threatening violence, which is a conspicuous instrument of national policy, the states take risk of using it. War is, therefore, a continuation of national policy” (4). A similar definition is provided by Sokol, that “War, or the application of armed force in international relations, is a part of the measures or instruments which a nation can use in the pursuit of its policies and for achievement of its objectives... Only national objectives of paramount importance can excuse the unleashing of violence and the sacrifices of national assets which any war creates” (5). For another scholar, “War may be strictly defined as organized fighting between at least two politically independent nations in pursuit of goals... It is the nation that contends for world goals (security, autonomy, territory, prestige, allies and ideology) not individuals or races or continents or sub-units of a nation. War is made and unmade by the nation, and only the nation has this prerogative” (6). War is an extension of national policy in other forms and through different means and is undertaken when no alternative course of action is available, and it permits the achievement of a desired goal. It is a political act by which states, unable
to adjust a dispute regarding their obligations, rights or interests, resort to armed force to decide which is the stronger and may therefore impose its will on the other. H.M.Kaplan gives a political explanation of war: “If war may be defined as an armed contest between two or more sovereign institutions employing organized military force in the pursuit of specific ends, the significant term in the definition is organized. ...This organization of the contending armed forces extends back behind the battle lines and tends in modern wars to embrace all civilian activities, such as the industrial, productive, and commercial, and also the social interests and individual attitudes” (7). Quincy Wright describes war as a legal condition which equally permits two or more hostile groups to carry on a conflict by armed force (8). However, the Encyclopaedia Americana offers a better explanation of war: “War is the last resort in the settlement of disputes, the employment of physical force to do what diplomacy, threats etc have failed to do. Its result is either the subjugation of one side to the dictates of the other, their destruction, or a compromise. It is waged either to take something from the enemy, to prevent their doing or gaining something, to disrupt or maintain a balance of power or the status quo, as a means of protection, or for revenge for an injury, real or supposed” (9). Among the sociological explanations, the most comprehensive is provided by Quincy Wright, who regards war “from the standpoint of each belligerent as an extreme intensification of military activity, psychological tension, legal power, and social integration... From the standpoint of all belligerents as a simultaneous conflict of armed forces, popular feelings, judicial dogmas, and national cultures so nearly equal as to lead to an extreme intensification of each” (10). In this synthetic explanation, psychological and cultural aspects are added to the political-legal, but the economic aspects are still missing.

The definition of war as ‘a method or means of settling international disputes’ may be a way of justifying war as a legal institution, but it has certain logical defects. War no longer adequately serves this judicial function. Also, war, as now organized and carried out, destroys the object in conflict instead of awarding it to one or the other of the contestants and may also destroy one or both parties to the dispute. It certainly renders both less capable of enjoying the ‘reward’. The international environment itself is dynamic and, over the years, the ideas, conventions, influences, norms of conduct, the alliance structures, institutions etc of one age are replaced by those of the other age, and they may be radically different from each other. And these changes and transformations affect the nature, character, and
probability of wars and the issues over which wars may be fought, their
inspiring objectives and the perceptions about their usefulness and
legitimacy, in the new age. Change in the nature of war is the result not
only of political and social change but obviously of technological and
economic movements also, and of the interaction between all of these.
Physical developments are, however, the most obvious and perhaps
the most important factors in making wars differ from each other
historically. Thus, the nature of war in different ages has not remained
the same and it is not possible to offer any one explanation about the
nature of war or to the reason why states have gone to war, over the
ages. A proper study of war can be made only through the study of the
dynamic international environment of the period when the war
occurs.

Several factors, after the Second World War, affected the nature
and scope of war strategy. The development of alliance systems,
dominated by the superpowers, led to the evolution of strategies of
alliances in peace time aiming not only to deter war but also, in case of
a war, to engage in coalition wars. Since such an inter-systemic war,
with nuclear weapons, was not much likely, strategy developed to
peacetime conditions and its main function became to prevent wars.
This period also witnessed several national liberation struggles and
this caused the emergence of strategies of revolutionary wars of
different aims and characteristics. It was realized that the use of non-
military means, involving the use of all the means of state power, was
necessary for national security. On the one hand, this broadened the
scope of strategy but, on the other hand, it narrowed the scope of
military strategy. Once the strategy was no longer related only to armed
struggle it became concerned with the conduct of war as a whole.
Consequently, war became a combination of military and political
actions—diplomatic, economic, ideological, technical and scientific
activities connected with the military actions for the political aims of
war; and strategy came to mean an internal combination of political,
economic, propagandist and military actions (11).

Clausewitz and Jomini had believed that strategy included
statesmanship or war politics, that is, the conduct of war, both by
military and non-military means. One set of such an strategy would
concern an overall strategy that integrates political, techno-scientific,
economic, psychological, and military elements; and the other would
concern military strategy as a method of using armed methods, or war.
The broader concept of strategy involves the overall management of a
war on all fronts and by all means and methods; and the narrower
concept means the direction of armed forces. The former involves state strategy and the latter involves military strategy as part of the state strategy. This phenomenon is understandable in view of the fact that now in war not only particular objects but entire geographical regions would become targets. Political and military strategy are of the same order and are components of overall strategy. Strategy would thus mean the use of all the resources and potentialities of a state on the basis of the global situation and waged for the attainment of political aims, at the proper time and place. This broadening of the concept of strategy affected the nature of the concept of war itself. War was no longer inevitable for the achievement of political objectives. A successful strategy, by the use of other means, may achieve the objectives better than direct fighting. After the Second World War, strategy has been used more to prevent a direct confrontation between armed forces and its aim has become to deter war and, in case of the failure of deterrence, to damage/destroy the enemy’s war potential—again, so as to remove the necessity of fighting by military means.

From the beginning of the twentieth century, one motive for states for resorting to war has been nationalism. Not only people started struggling to achieve national independence, but the people who were dispersed in several states or were subject to different alien rulers demanded unification. Such aspirations of the people were supported by some other states. With the increase in national feelings, competition among states was intensified, and nationalism led to an intense competition among states for status and influence in the international community. This desire for status and influence encouraged arms race and intensified resentment among the dissatisfied. It is interesting to note that this desire to have and maintain a status in the international community was shared by the big powers who had fought the First World War. Austria believed that her status as a big power would be adversely affected if she failed to take punitive action against Serbia. Russia believed if she abandoned her mission of protecting the Slav people (of Serbia), she would have to take a secondary position in the international society. Britain believed that if she allowed herself to be treated as if she were of no account, it would be a humiliation intolerable for a great country. And Germany wanted a Weltmacht, an influence in world affairs, which she believed was due to her. This desire for status remained a major factor in stimulating the Italian, German and Japanese search for power before the Second World War.
Discussing the modern nationalism, in this context, Michael Howard believes that it was invariably characterized by militarism: "Self-identification as a Nation implies almost by definition alienation from other communities, and the most memorable incidents in the group-memory consisted in conflict with and triumph over other communities. France was Marengo, Austerlitz and Jena: military triumph set the seal on the new-found national consciousness. Britain was Trafalgar—but it had been a nation for four hundred years, since those earlier battles Crecy and Agincourt. Russia was the triumph of 1812. Germany was Gravelotte and Sedan. Italy was Garibaldi and the Thousand.... Could a Nation, in any true sense of the word, really be born without war?" (12).

The modern war is actually unconventional in means and ends as compared with the traditional concept of war. Julian Lider has discussed the arguments which assert that the nature of modern war is radically different from the traditional war's: "If a thermonuclear war were to break out, it would be quite unlike any traditionally conceived war not only because of its uselessness as a political instrument, but also because it would be a process of mutual destruction without any combat. ...Paradoxically enough, in the other extreme, a revolutionary war, its main military variant being protracted war, the main aim is to undermine the opponent's military economic and political potential, not to destroy his armed forces..... In spite of these apparent differences, both are similar in the sense that they de facto aim at unlimited aims. In the old paradigm, war was fought by clearly defined national military forces in a number of battles in order to destroy enemy's armed forces and thereby to settle a dispute over a specific political issue" (13). Technological modernization has always affected the form of warfare but not anything else in the nature of warfare. The development of the destructive power of weapons has not affected the occurrence of war itself, but just the way in which wars have been fought. For instance, the development, and even use, of nuclear weapons in 1945, has not prevented subsequent waging of war, even against the nuclear weapon states. It means that weapons are actually used appropriate to the purposes of the war. Far from invalidating the Clausewitzian assertion that war is a continuation and instrument of policy, the unlikelihood of full-scale nuclear war, in fact, confirms it, because such a war is unlikely for the precise reason that it could not serve any political purpose. Since nothing would be achieved by a total destruction of the total war, to initiate a nuclear war would not constitute any rational action. Because the armed struggle has now
become a process of technical destruction, a dilution has resulted in the role of military strategy. The fate of war is no longer completely dependent on the direct destruction of the enemy's forces. The aim of a war is to destroy the enemy's entire military potential, including his armed forces, and the human and material substance of the enemy. This potential includes the heavy industry, trans-shipping ports, military logistical bases, military bases in the rear, communication centers etc. The essence of war is the destruction of material values so as to directly undercut the vital roots of the enemy. According to Krumpelt, "The driving forces in classical war are quite different from those in thermonuclear war. In the former, main elements are talents of strategies and the commanding abilities of lower commanders, the military virtues of soldiers—particularly military ethics, courage, steadfastness and sacrifice—as well as the military abilities of officers and men. These psychological and moral factors play no role in thermonuclear war. The machine is subordinated to laws of technology but human character and spiritual values are not" (14).

In the beginning of the nuclear age it was believed that the future wars will not be decided over a long period but will be of very short duration, perhaps of hours. It was believed that there will be no time to wait until one phase is over before starting the next phase. However, now it is believed that there may be prolonged military operations because the strategic nuclear forces are not that vulnerable as they were earlier supposed to be. Since both the sides would fear retaliation, they would be reluctant to use their entire nuclear potential. This would make a future nuclear war a protracted one.

What has changed about war is the way in which the military aim of warfare(---victory)may be achieved. This does not mean that the aim of war as such has changed, which continues to be the imposition of one's will on another, achieving it by every possible means, including the military means. It may not involve just the armed forces of one state against the other, because the destruction of enemy's war potential is now more important than the destruction of his armed forces. The modern developed military technology is dependent on the feedback which comes from the rear of the battlefield and the destruction of this feedback would mean the neutralization of military and strategic forces. Whereas all attempts are required to mobilize all political, economic, psychological resources of one's own under the political authority, it is imperative to plan, in peace time, how to destroy the normal functioning of the social life in the enemy society, in case of a war. A well-planned peacetime strategy is a pre-
requisite for a successful war-time strategy. Also, the aim of military action against enemy forces has undergone a change. Whereas earlier it was needed to felicitate the advance towards, and occupation of, enemy territory, now it is required to destroy the enemy capacity to recover, retaliate or to continue the war. This has resulted in a shift of focus from tactical maneuvers to strategic operations. Further, political objectives may be attained by an unorthodox use of military force. This would involve the threat of nuclear destruction tendered to the enemy, thereby achieving his capitulation without an open use of the military force. It means it is possible to impose one’s will on the other, and achieve aims of the war, without destroying the other’s war potential, what to say about occupying his territory, and without even defeating his armed forces. This means compelling the adversary to make concessions without actually fighting. This signifies a change in the method of using armed forces for the achievement of political aims in the inter-state relations. In spite of this change in the method of its use, there is no change in the function of warfare which constitutes as an instrument for the pursuit of political aims.

A war may not proceed as expected and many developments, not foreseen, may happen. During the course of war the political objectives themselves may change and, then, for the attainment of these goals, the available military means may no longer be sufficient. Even if the military means are sufficient, the political objectives may appear unrealistic in the sense that when they are attained the state may not be in a better position than it was before the war and the losses may appear to be disproportionate to the goals; and, for that reason, the state may decide to change the objectives. Or, for that matter, the military means for achieving the political objectives may themselves prove ineffective.

Why nations go to war actually is determined by their level of satisfaction with the status quo. For instance, before the Second World War, the Allied powers were satisfied with the status quo and were anxious to avoid war through any appeasement; and the axis powers were dissatisfied with the status quo and were willing to take the steps they knew would lead to war. No two states will react in identical ways to similar events or threats. It is erroneous to attempt such generalisations that “states’ go to war to change the international system through territorial, political and economic expansion, or to win economic control of the regions. States have diverse motives, characteristics, national interest perceptions, foreign policy goals, which are all dynamic. If it is wrong to believe that men are aggressive, or
peace-loving, by nature, it is equally wrong to believe that states are aggressive or peace-loving. There is part of truth in each of the following statements, made from time to time, but none of them singly explains why states go to war:

1-If the government of a state is controlled by the military, that state is likely to be more aggressive as a reaction to perceived threats (But the military government under Ziaul Haq was not that aggressive as the military government under Ayub Khan, in Pakistan !)
2-States controlled by a single person who exercises absolute power (like Bismarck,Hitler,Stalin) resort more to war
3-States who have tasted victory once in a war, go to war again and again.
4-Conversely also, states who have suffered defeat and humiliation want to make good their losses, through war.
5-States born out of violence or states with revolutionary governments are more inclined to war.

Competition and conflict among states is determined by the aspirations, perceptions and conceptions of states and the probability of success in altering the status quo to one’s satisfaction. The character and objectives of war are actually determined by these perceptions in each state; and these characters and objectives make war an unacceptable, and even a necessary, course of action.

To explain a war, the level and intensity of the use of weapons is to be examined in terms of the purposes the war was intended to achieve and the options/alternatives that were considered before the war. It is particularly crucial to evaluate what alternative courses of action existed in an adversarial situation among states. Since the political objective of war has to dominate the military objective, i.e., winning the war, it is important to win under certain particular conditions and achieving certain particular kind of peace that best suits own interests. If war is treated as an instrument for some ends, then it can be explained in the context of both ends and means, that is, political goals and military methods adopted to achieve them and how far and how effectively were they successful. Howsoever total a war may appear, it assumes some minimal form of order to be restored or modified after the violence is over; and this makes the war a political contest. A war is irrational only if this political objective is lost sight of,
or is, or cannot be, achieved. Then war becomes merely senseless violence.

**A Deliberate and Planned Act:**

Whatever the motives and causes of war, its initiation is a deliberate and planned act, and its conduct is always controlled. There is never any 'accidental' war. One may be surprised by the nature or result or intensity or ferocity or duration of a war, but no war is ever begun by mistake or without any political purpose. When war breaks out, there is always a deliberate intention of at least one party that war should take place. A state may miscalculate the consequences or the outcome, but when it goes to war it knows where it is going. When the decision is taken, it is deliberate and intentional, intended to promote particular interests and objectives. States regard war as a means to use in their interests or to promote and defend their interests. In the face of varied options, they make a deliberate decision that war is the best or the only available means by which the interests can be secured. This deliberate and conscious choice means that states have accepted that, whatever the risks and costs, the overall benefits expected to be achieved are of such nature and importance that these risks are worth incurring.

Wars do not break out just because of some sentimental reasons or irrational motives but are based on rational and deliberate decisions. Jessie Bernard believes that wars are "highly rational, purposive, deliberate, used coldly, even without hatred, a calculated choice based on policy or strategy." The decision to go to war has usually been made, as history shows, upon careful deliberation of the usefulness of war as an instrument and can largely be understood as such. Wars are preceded by long preparations and started after carefully calculated decisions. For example, as Michael Howard observes, the Second World War developed out of the whole process of socio-political internal developments that preceded the war: "The societies were educated in the nationalist spirit and in social Darwinian ideas, the upper classes sought in army and war profits and prestige, the liquidation of the sharpened armed struggle; armed forces rearmed, and trained for war, were expecting it impatiently. At the same time, political events preceding war might be considered as fortuitous, and the search of great nations for revision of the balance of power could be settled without war."
Thus, war is a deliberately continued conflict and is amenable to historical explanation. War is the continuation of the long-term policy of a state and is the instrument by which the long-term goals of the state are pursued. Non-military means may not also suffice to achieve vital political goals and, therefore, use of armed violence is consciously well-planned much ahead. Various political activities, diplomatic-economic-propagandist etc., are undertaken as preparations for a war. The decision to go to war is taken much later on and largely depends on the actual resources that have been mobilized and are available, and on the analysis of the risks-costs and benefits of different alternatives available. In this way, war follows from the political events that precede the outbreak of war. States, as a matter of policy, increase their military potential and are ready to resort to war if the prospects for a better situation are there, and there is always an ever present risk that war will break out. Since a war is fought to obtain political goals, the choice of goals influences the course of war and political considerations determine the content of military strategy to be applied. Political aims determine the general or limited nature of war, protracted or short duration of war, the decision to opt for offensive or defensive tactics and even the choices for decisive strikes and blows. The nuclear dimension of war has only enhanced the political preponderance of strategy because military goals in peacetime and wartime are now integral parts of overall political goals, and military strategy is only a part of a coordinated political activity.

The intention to wage war is not accidental though the interaction of forces or the outcome and effects of war may be miscalculated. Under certain circumstances, normal military preparations in themselves increase the probability of war, as had happened at the time of Indian military exercises, Brasstacks. Such misperceptions may easily lead to a situation in which the outbreak of war appears to be unavoidable. The unpremediated events may produce the belief that one is in immediate danger and that the only safety lies in immediate action through war.

Causes, Motives and Issues:

Causes of war can be studied by analyzing whether or not certain patterns in social behaviour regularly recur and what conclusions can be drawn from such recurrence, and whether there is a causal relationship.
The concept of the causes of war includes the roots, sources and conditions of war. The roots of war are there in social conditions which make war a social phenomenon endemic in human conflict. Sources of war vary from age to age depending on socio-political conflicts. Each period of history has different conditions that favour or hinder the outbreak and conduct of war. Each particular war has its own direct causes. All the roots and sources and conditions in fact constitute a system of causes of war. War has, in fact, no single cause and there is no single explanation for the inter-state conflicts. It implies the absence of a cause which may be common for all wars. Over the years, several traditional causes of war have diminished in importance and frequency and others have become more important. Though war reflects political conflict between states, there may be economic, psychological or other causes for it; but they have to be transformed into political conflict for a war to start. Even if indirect economic causes may be there, a war among states is always political. An arms race may increase political tensions between states and that may become a political cause of war; but armaments in themselves are not a cause of war because they represent only military preparations, and are the means. And means cannot be called the causes.

The reasons for which states have gone to war have been described as rational, customary, ideological, idealist, psychological, maintaining balance of power, defending allies, defending commercial interests, etc. But, according to Blainey, all war aims are "simply varieties of power. The variety of nationalism, the will to spread an ideology, the protection of kinsmen in an adjacent land, the desire for more territory,... all these represent power in different wrappings. The conflicting aims of rival nations are always conflicts of power" (17). If one accepts—and historical record does bear it out—Raymond Aron's explanation that "the stakes of war are the existence, the creation or the elimination of states" (18), then one can find enough historical evidence to the fact that states fight to acquire, to maintain, or to enhance and increase their capacity to act as independent actors in the international system. It may appear that states have gone to war, occasionally, for peculiar reasons, which may not at the time appear to be rational or logical; but, in general, states go to war because they act rational, and going to war appears to them a logical and rational act, and because they believe that dangers can be dealt with effectively before they become immediate; because they believe they can lose their position unless they fight for it, and because they believe it is necessary to go to war to maintain and to enhance their power, and to act so
while it was still possible. The domestic tensions, the military and industrial complex, the ideological and fundamentalist or nationalist fervour may fuel the conflict, but the war in itself begins with reasoned and rational calculations in which the states involved believe they can achieve more by going to war then by not going to war.

Conflicts among states result from conflicting claims and interests and perceptions. In the international power calculus, another factor that determines the nature of international conflict is the development of weapon technology and, the consequent, arms race. But an arms race is not the end of war. It is only an attempt to match power for power. It is only a means to achieve, or maintain, a favourable balance of power as was the matrimonial politics of the Hapsburg or the Mughal Empire. The apprehension of the threat that motivates states to war has not changed: it might come from furtherance of territory, or of allies, or of warships, or of the number of forces, or of missile systems. But all of them represent the means which states use to maintain, protect and enhance their power. The underlying objective has not changed over the time.

In this way, international relations are governed by the power as capacity to act, and the desire to acquire and exercise it is the core of international politics in which war proves an effective means to secure or retain it. A powerful state wants to compel others to pattern their behaviour after its own desires and this power is used to influence/regulate the behaviour of others by gradual transformation of the adversary’s intentions, by stimulating a revolution from above, by stimulating a revolution from below, or by war. Whereas Karl Deutsch (19) describes it as the ability to prevail in conflict and to overcome obstacles, Morgenthau believes that “all nations actively engaged in the struggle for power must actually aim not at a balance—that is, equality—of power, but at superiority of power on their own behalf. And since no nation can foresee how large its miscalculations will turn out to be, all nations must ultimately seek the maximum of power attainable under the circumstances “ (20).

There are a few determinants of expected and potential gains that encourage the states to resort to war and they include the perceived threat, perceptions of own military strength and capabilities and estimates of potential gains. The determinants that deter other states from resorting to war include perceptions of military strength of the opponent, estimates of war costs, strength of international institutions and order against war, effectiveness of international public
order, the degree of dependence on those states who do not share the views of the state in question about going to war.

States articulate their desired goals as the national interest, which is a generalized abstraction reflecting a state’s basic wants. National interest that revolves around national security is survival of the state with a degree, that is acceptable, of political independence, territorial integrity, basic institutions, values and national prestige and honour. War is an instrument for the achievement, maintenance and enhancement of this national interest. The conflict of national interest has been the most traditional cause of war. This conflict may manifest itself in a drive for power, for security, for defence of independence and sovereignty, for altering the status quo in own favour, for access to raw materials or the drive to make strategic gains. All the political aims of this conflict reflect the causes of war in each age. The present age reflects the transformation of the various force alignments and the development of nuclear and other weapons of mass destruction. The force alignments include the phenomenon of liberation struggles and conflicts for raw materials in the Third World; sand the weapons of mass destruction also include the fast and far-reaching delivery systems. This conflict has also led major global powers to strive for political-economic concessions and to encourage the Third World conflicts and wars so as to improve own strategic position.

When a state attacks another, obviously there is an aggressive motive. But it goes beyond that. When this aggression is undertaken to obtain some territorial gains, then the motives are expansionist. Motives of states are actually their foreign policy aims. We have to study intentions of states so as to understand war, because the war is a rational and logical activity which is not accidental and is always intended. The states may, sometimes, not intend to go to war but this intention would be different from the intentions to get something that released the forces and created the circumstances which ultimately resulted in war. It is the motives of the state in its foreign policy dealings that lead a state into war against others. A general motive, which is common to all the states, is the desire to achieve national interests and to acquire, maintain, and enhance national power. There may be specific motives which may be relevant to particular states at particular times, such as recovery of Sudetenland, or the West Bank or the Falklands. If the motives, whether general or specific, are competitive and can be achieved only by the one at the expense of the other, then conflict would result. It is such incompatible goals that lead states to war: “While one nation attempts to achieve its goals, it must
watch and resist another nation competing with it, and it may occasionally need to block the achievements of still another nation. Thus a context of rivalry surrounds nations as a normal and perennial condition of power politics. ... If this context is the general condition of power politics, then war may be seen as a particular aspect of that process” (21). Some issues are important to some states because they are perceived to be particularly important at a particular time. States resort to war if there is incompatibility between what each of them wants and the differences cannot be resolved by other means, available at the time. So, it is important to comprehend the nature of the wants which states perceive important enough to fight for. There may be some wants which may be common for all, or most of the states, and some particular wants which may be felt by particular states at particular times. In all these cases, the wants have to be incompatible, perceived important enough and the matter may not be resolved through other means, before the states resort to war.

It is not always easy to answer the question: What do states fight about and what are the issues that prompt states to war? The issues that may appear significant to one side in a war may be different for the other. Even if there is a single issue which may appear significant to both the sides in a war, there may have been rivalries and differences, over the years, constituting long-range causes of a war. Even the common issues have varied over time: in the late Middle Ages, there were questions of dynastic rights, and in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries religious questions were dominant; whereas questions of national unification were there between the French Revolution up to the First World War, the question of ideological competition, of national liberation and questions of resources have been uppermost in the present period. One generalization which, according to Blainey, can be made with a degree of confidence is that the aims of war are “simply varieties of power. The variety of nationalism, the will to spread an ideology, the protection of kinsmen in an adjacent land, the desire for more territory or commerce, the avenging of a defeat or insult, the craving for greater national strength or independence, the wish to impress or cement alliances—all these represent power in different wrappings. The conflict aims of rival nations are always conflicts of power”(22).

Over the ages, the issues over which wars have been fought have not undergone much change, and they have included conflicts of national interest and rivalries for status and power. Few wars, if any, are fought over one specific issue; few wars, if any, can be identified as
the result of particular actions or particular circumstances of particular persons. Usually, there are a number of issues involved, which vary in their degree of importance, short and long-termed, relating to general principles and to immediate interests. Actually, what is important is the perception of the states concerned, what they thought they were fighting for and what both the sides believed the issues to be. The perceptions and issues may undergo a change over the period the war is fought, but the issues of a war are believed to be those which the states thought to be so when they decided to go to war. For the issue to be the cause of a war, it need not have an intrinsic importance but should be seen to be important to the states concerned: “Whether Dutch ships dipped their flags to English (or vice versa), whether the Chinese responsible for the death of an English sailor were adequately punished, whether the German Kaiser had been discourteous to the French ambassador or not were of very little material importance to the rulers of the countries that made them a casus belli, still less to the mass of their people. They were thought worth war by those who wielded power because they were symbolic: they became questions of national pride, and were believed to have important implications for the relative status of the two powers concerned” (23).

Motives by themselves do not cause the war. War occurs only when a state believes that it is not possible to achieve the objectives and goals that it desires by other means. When the desired object cannot be obtained in any other way, war remains the logical option for the states. This makes war only a means and not an end.

The acquisition of a throne, the maintenance of a dynasty, the desire to protect or expand a religious faith, promoting national power through acquisition of territories, the quest for national independence and nation building, the desire to expand a political ideology and to instal particular governments in other countries, and the quest for the control of vital natural resources in other lands—all these, over a period of time, have been motives and incentives that have led states to war. In this, the steps that one state believes necessary for the attainment of its objectives may appear to threaten the motives and security of the other. Some issues have been given as indirect causes of war, such as nationalism, innate aggression, economic systems, the arms race, inequalities of wealth, differences of race, language or religion, population pressures, etc (24); and some issues constitute direct causes of war, such as quest for possession of territory, desire for extension of political control, desire to preserve balance of power or to promote ideological objectives, attempts at trade monopolisation and
Chapter II, p-62

Other economic gains for strategic advantages, including for reasons of security, etc (25). Both these types of issues constitute contradictions that lead to wars such as emanating from territorial disputes, economic rivalries, ideological conflicts, the arms race, revolts against national suppression, revolts against poverty, unwarranted revolts, i.e. armed uprisings against injustices which could otherwise be redressed by a more rational policy, etc (26).

In the contemporary international relations, states have resorted to war, in some cases, to coerce an opponent. This was the object of the British-French-Israeli attack on Egypt in 1956. In some cases, the motive has been retaliatory, like Vietnam’s action against Cambodia in 1978, to retaliate against Cambodian incursions, and then Chinese action against Vietnam, in 1979, to ‘teach Vietnam a lesson’ for her intervention in Cambodia. In cases of coercion and retaliation both, the state initiating the action feels justified in using force to prevent some particular action of the other side. The degree of provocation and that of the counter-action need not always be proportionate. Many contemporary wars have resulted from the concern of some states about internal developments in other countries. Arms, training and other assistance are provided to groups within a state from outside, as in Punjab, Kashmir and Nagaland, in India, Biafra in Nigeria, or to many freedom-fighters in southern Africa. There have also been active intervention by forces of one state in the struggle for independence in another, like the Indian action in Bangladesh and the Turkish action in Cyprus. There is support given by some states to groups in other states which have, with them, some ideological affinity. This was there in the intervention by Britain, France, the USA, Japan etc in the Russian civil war, or in the interventions to overthrow the governments in Cuba, Dominican Republic, Grenada and Panama, in the assistance to Nicaraguan and Angolan rebels, and in the Vietnamese and Afghan wars. Direct military action has sometimes been taken by a state as an intervention in other state to support a particular cause, as the Indian action in Sri Lanka, Israeli action in Lebanon, South African actions in Angola and Mozambique, and Libyan actions in Chad. States have also undertaken military action in order to overthrow a particular government, of a particular person, in some other state, as in the case of the British-French-Israeli attempt against Naser’s Egypt, the US action against Noreiga in Panama, against Castro in Cuba, against Qaddafi in Libya, Tanzanian action against Amin’s Uganda, and Iranian-Iraqi actions against each other in the ten years’ war. The superpowers have mostly intervened and used military force in
different regions primarily to prevent an opponent from obtaining some strategic gains as a result of political developments, and thus actions have been undertaken in Eastern Europe, Central America, the Far East Asia, South East Asia and Central Asia. These actions reflect the desire to preserve the strategic interests that the superpowers enjoy in these areas.

Whereas the medium powers and less powerful states have shown more interest in challenging and trying to alter the status quo, since 1945, the superpowers, mainly for defensive purposes, have developed a tacit understanding and collusion in maintaining the existing situation. The latter prefer the status quo in their neighbourhood and have been willing to militarily intervene to maintain or restore it. Each of them has tolerated military action taken by the other towards this end; and this mechanism has maintained peace between them. On the other hand, medium powers are interested in changing the existing conditions to their favour. Everybody is hostile to the status quo in the Middle East, and the Arabs tried to alter it in 1948, 1965, 1973 and Israel in 1956, 1978 and 1982. North Vietnam challenged the status quo established by the Geneva settlement of 1954. Both Iran and Iraq wanted to alter the status quo of their adversarial relationship, to their advantage. Political change within a state has been a fairly common motive of wars and military action since 1945, changing the aspirations of states. Concern about the internal system of government in other countries has led to interventions in various ways. When security considerations are perceived to be affected by internal developments in another state, forcible intervention has been resorted to by states.

Economic interests, conditions and motives have also driven states to wars. Norman Angell (27), in the beginning of this century had contended that mainly economic reasons caused wars; but he concluded that since war, in industrial age, could not be profitable, it will not survive as a lasting means to resolve disputes. The determination of a people to raise national living standards or to protect existing standards, population pressures and food shortages, and financial capitalism have been some of the causes which scholars have traced for wars (28). It is maintained that the pressure of the capitalist economy toward economic expansion and military pressure abroad to safeguard the former is the root cause of modern war, together with the vulnerability of the public to manipulation on national security issues. National interest is identified, in this context, with economic opportunities outside the national frontiers. On all of
these issues, when there are conflicting economic interests which states endeavour to advance or safeguard, war is likely to occur. Also, wars offer an opportunity—and, for this reason are resorted to—for redirecting domestic economic conflicts and systemic inconsistencies which get an outlet through war. Such inconsistencies often result into internal wars but, otherwise also, powerful economic groups who have influence on the decision-making of the state profit in different ways by wars. The Marxist-Leninist approach, discussed later on, believes that war has its roots in the division of society into economic classes and that war is one of the means by which dominating classes implement their policies of domination.

A state may perceive a threat to itself in a situation or may resent some action of another state as a challenge to itself and all of this may act upon some long-held unrealized desire, thus promoting a state to take the decision to go to war. Along with this, a factor that greatly influences the decision to go to war is the perception about one’s own capability, invulnerability and about the chances for success and the likely consequences of one’s actions. States may not necessarily have the precise idea of the perceived gains before a war is initiated and there may be some vague ideas about national objectives, and the precise ‘war aims’ may emerge much later on. Whether the goals and aims, for which a war was initiated, were achieved, or even could be achieved, determines the cost-benefit profitability of war. The actual decision to initiate a war is conditioned by the perception about these goals, perceptions about the success, and perceptions about the consequences.

There is no consistency in states’ behaviour about the issues over which they go to war. Issues seen important in one age become irrelevant in another. But, in each age, such issues are determined by concerns which are considered vital by states in that age; and these concerns constitute the motives of states.

**Classification of Wars:**

The classification of war may be grouped into two categories and approaches that (a) focus on the socio-political content of war, the nature of the participants and the character of the causes, aims and issues of war, and (b) focus on external features such as the technomilitary aspects, the weapons used, the manner of their use (total, limited, direct or indirect), the geographical scope of military
operations (global, regional, local) etc. On the basis of international configuration of forces, wars may be categorized as inter-systemic, involving the global antagonistic blocs, and the inter-state local wars which also include the revolutionary wars. Whereas earlier wars could be categorized according to their aims, the geographical scope of operations or their duration, now, with the introduction of nuclear weapons, wars may be thermonuclear, limited atomic and limited conventional. This categorization is based on the weapons used or to be used in the war. Though it is believed that a particular weapon would dominate a particular type of war, it is always possible that a weapon of higher level may be used in a war, for instance small tactical nuclear weapons in a protracted conventional war which may not escalate into a nuclear war, even of a limited variety. An irregular conventional guerilla or covert war would be part of the limited conventional war.

There is a long list of classifications (29) which categorize wars according to their causes and the issues involved. Mainly, any one single cause is emphasized, the one which appears to be the main one but, at times, multi-causal explanations have also been given. Wars may be studied on the basis of factors (such as political-economic, religious, psychological etc) that affect the state behaviour; or they may be studied on the basis of ideological differences such as between nationalities, religions, classes and political ideologies. There are a number of tension producing factors that emanate from perceptions of one or the other side, affecting the state behaviour, and they include the arms race, population pressure, differences of religion or race, unequal distribution of resources or wealth. On these bases, Hedley Bull (30) believes that wars may have one of such aims as to enforce international law and order, to maintain the balance of power or to secure a just change. On the basis of issues, he distinguishes between wars for some economic gains, wars to ensure national security and wars to enhance or achieve ideological objectives. Similarly, on the basis of the issues in war, Rapoport distinguishes (31) between wars for territory, for extension of political control, for trade monopolies and for strategic advantages in future wars. In another work (32), he has talked about the cataclysmic and strategic models, in which the former war is a catastrophe, spontaneous event that is independent of human will, and the latter is a conscious political act. His political philosophy of war views war as a rational instrument of national policy, eschatological philosophy views it as part of a grand design and the cataclysmic part views war as a catastrophe befalling some nation or even the entire humanity.
Quincy Wright, in his classical *A Study of War* (33) makes a category of 'legal' wars and includes in it civil, imperial and international wars. His interstate wars are balance of power wars, defensive wars and imperial wars, in which the latter signifies the aim of a state to conquer another state and include it as part of an 'empire'. And for Andre Beufre (34), a distinguishing characteristic of wars is the form of fighting on the basis of character of weapons, intensity and duration and, on this basis, he categorizes wars as primitive, classical, colonial and mixed.

Raymond Aron, Alastair Buchan and Herman Kahn (35) have classified wars on the basis of how they might begin:

Aron distinguishes between intended and unintended wars. The former include: (i)- a war in which a strong state attacks a small nuclear weapon state, so as to destroy the latter's deterrent force (an example, in some ways under this category, might have been the war following the Israeli attack on Iraq's nuclear reactor); (ii)-a pre-emptive war by some small nuclear power state against another small nuclear power state (and a possible war between India and Pakistan, at some time in future, may fall under this category); and (iii)-a war between the two superpowers, if the balance of terror is broken due to some scientific-technological breakthrough (like something spectacular happening under the SDI programme). The unintended wars may start accidentally, or due to to a misunderstanding and mis-perception of intentions of the parties concerned, or by escalating from a local conflict, or because of some irrational action. It is difficult to say whether a probable war following the shooting down of a civilian passenger plane would have been treated as due to misunderstanding or due to irrational action. Aron has also made a categorization of inter-state wars, which he treats as 'perfect wars' and which are wars between political units whose existence and legitimacy are recognized by each other; imperfect or super-state wars which are wars for elimination of certain belligerents, thereby forming a unit on a higher level; and the infra-state wars are either for the maintenance or 'decomposition' of a political unit. He treats civil war as one in which only one side is recognized by the international community.Aron further uses a division based on the nature of the protagonists in war and the nature of weapons applied in war. The former includes feudal wars, dynastic wars, national wars and colonial wars, and the latter includes nuclear, limited and conventional wars.

Alastair Buchan, as mentioned above, has also analyzed wars according to the way they might be initiated—by accident, by
premeditated attack, by pre-emptive action or evolving from local conflicts. And like Aron, Herman Kahn discusses intentional and unintentional wars. By inadvertent war, he means one occurring unintentionally as a result of some error, that may be either human or mechanical, a false alarm or a behaviour unauthorized by the political authority. This would be different from a war by miscalculation which might result from a miscalculation on the part of decision-makers or their misunderstanding of events and developments. Whereas a war by calculation would be the one when a state opts for war from among various courses of actions, a catalytic war is the one when a third state, for its own reasons, might deliberately precipitate a war between two major powers, so that the latter may destroy each other thereby improving the relative position of the third state.

Singer and Small (36) discuss inter-state and ‘extra-systemic’ wars and subdivide the latter into colonial, imperial and internationalized civil wars. Whereas the last is the one in which the established government fights against an adversary situated within the territory of another state who intervenes on behalf of such insurgent, an ‘extra-systemic’ war is a conflict in which a state fights against a political entity which is not yet a qualified member of the inter-state system. The war for Bangladesh may be termed an internationalized civil war, and the wars of the SWAPO against South Africa and of the PLO against Israel may be cited as examples of extra-systemic wars. McCloughry (37) distinguishes between four kinds of war, which he calls four categories of war: total, limited, local and cold—in which the ‘total’ is a conflict without any limits in nature or even in geographical scope and weapons used, the limited is characterized by non-use of weapons of mass destruction though the geographic scope is unlimited and the local war is limited both in geographical scope and in types of weapons used, whereas in the Cold War the use of armed force as a means of foreign policy is not open. Maxwell Taylor (38) presents a classification which is based on a diverse criteria. He believes that on the basis of their ultimate purpose, wars may be total or limited. Some wars, like strategic, nuclear, tactical nuclear, conventional and subversive, may be grouped according to the weapons and tactics employed. Wars may also be grouped according to the effects they produce on the balance of global power.

Leon Goure made a distinction between the Western classification of war, into general, limited and counter-insurgency, and the Soviet classification based on the political objectives of the states at war (39). But David Hughes, in an article published in the late ‘Sixties,
criticized the ‘overuse’ of the classification of general war, limited war, Cold War, which he considered outmoded. But most of the western classifications are variants of a three-category typology consisting of total, limited and local wars. The local war was the one with the use of conventional weapons and the total war, in such classifications, was considered to be the one with an unlimited use of nuclear weapons. Limited war was the one with a limited use of nuclear weapons and it involved the use of strategic, long range, weapons and was to be voluntarily and deliberately limited as regard the total damage threatened, planned and executed and the kinds of targets threatened, planned and attacked. This involved graduated retaliation and was a slow motion war, involving the delivery of several successive attacks with a limited use of nuclear strategic weapons. Each of such successive attacks would be made so as to convince the enemy that one does not intend to start a total war but is ready to use nuclear weapons and that the enemy should now stop fighting. Since only parts, not whole, of enemy’s retaliatory capacity is destroyed this is called a controlled strategic war of military attrition or limited counterforce war (41). Robert Randell (42) talks of ‘multilateral’ wars which are in the forms of several combinations of external wars coupled with internal war situations. A single internal or external war would involve two adversaries, and more than two adversaries would constitute a complex internal or external war. Randell classifies wars according to their level of violence and the type of weapons used, and this category comprises of nuclear, limited and general conventional wars; and according to the purposes and aims of wars, and this category comprises of imperial expansionist, colonial, religious, national liberation wars. And, finally, Julian Lider (43) has discussed a complex typology of wars based on the concept of ‘structural violence’ and Johan Galtung’s idea of the war caused by inequalities and asymmetries between and within states, in the relationships of dominance and dependence both in the international system and within particular states. There are different criteria used: the division of wars into interstate and internal wars is combined with the distinction between so-called central nations and peripheral nations; the division between nations of the two competing camps and wars within each of these camps (imperial wars within a camp); external or interstate wars and internal or civil wars; liberation or subversive wars and internationalized class wars. All the types proposed by Galtung, in fact, represent four basic categories of interstate, internal, armed interventions and internationalized wars.
A classification of wars may be attempted on the criteria of weapons used. The basic division would be between nuclear and conventional, which may be extended to include, for both nuclear and conventional, unlimited and limited wars. Further extension for both unlimited and limited would be general, global and total. The nuclear war may be thermonuclear, or general nuclear war, tactical nuclear war using smaller nuclear devices, and limited nuclear war. These versions are also known as strategic nuclear war, tactical nuclear war and limited nuclear war. It is believed that it is possible to fight a strategic limited war with a limited, graduated and controlled use of strategic nuclear weapons. An inter-systemic war is an armed conflict between rival political blocs. Its political goals are unlimited and are based on an ideology. It is a total war because its ideological character will encompass all fields of life. It will not aspire for just some economic advantages or territorial gains, but the total domination of one system and the total destruction of the other system. For such unlimited goals, the means applied will also be unlimited and this war will be in the form of a thermonuclear war at the global scale. This war will involve not just military operations but intense rivalry in weapons and energy production, in science and technology and various areas of economic activity. The political aspects of this war were symbolised by the Cold War that started after the Second World War and which was fought on political, ideological and economic fronts. Its aim was also to compel the adversary to capitulate, without a direct use of the armed force, achieving the same results as a real(hot) war but without using the armed violence as a means. Its objective was to impose one’s own political and economic system on the adversary. It involved not just the economic and technological rivalry but military threats, quasi-military methods, intimidation and deterrence, besides the limited application of force in the form of a local hot war of a conventional type. Since both the superpowers realize that a total war would mean the annihilation of both sides, there operates a balance of terror between them and, therefore, a total war is supposedly not feasible. However, the relative balance of power is rather delicate. Any major breakthrough in weapon-technology or defense system may alter this balance. Not only is there a possibility of a limited war escalating into a total war but the aims and intentions of one side may be misjudged by the other. A paradox is that a total war is hardly likely to result in a total, convincing, victory. A victory in such a war will hardly result in peace. It may so happen that a state which is victorious may be in a worse condition than it was before the war because of the total
depletion of all the resources that were required for the total war. The case of Britain after the Second World War exemplifies this, at the level of conventional war.

During the course of a war, its character may change, thus affecting its type also. From the war of a pure type it may emerge into a war of complex causes and types. Both the Korean and Vietnam wars started as civil wars between the two parts of a divided country, developed into defensive wars of the southern parts against the north, and then, with the involvement of big and superpowers, became local wars between the two antagonistic blocs. A civil war may soon become a mixture of civil war and against foreign intervention in the civil war. During a war, the position of states may change in international setting, thus affecting the character and type of the war.

The traditional studies of war had ignored civil wars, revolutions and other such conflicts having a combatant without a sovereign status. It was only after the Second World War, when it was believed that the object of armed forces is to protect the state against enemies both domestic and foreign, that internal war came to be included as a part of the categories of war.

The revolutionary or subversive war gives primacy to political objectives while linking it with military means. It may be just an armed form of domestic group/class struggle in the form of an uprising and a civil war, or it may be a local and unlimited inter-state war where a subversive group is supported by another state. The revolutionary wars are characterized by their socio-political essence. In the Third World, it has an anti-imperialist, anti-colonialist, anti-feudal character. Partisan warfare may be treated as a part of the revolutionary warfare and it is waged in support of the (inter-state) revolutionary warfare. It is the military form of the anti-colonial or revolutionary war. Revolutionary war has three phases of crystallization, organization, and militarization: the first consists of the mobilization of the population for desired aims and objectives, the aim being the launching of political-psychological warfare and preparation of underground organisational work; the second, creation of an apparatus for political and military struggle, the aim being the paralysis of the enemy's counteraction and achieving the political-psychological aims and, the third, consists of the struggle over a wide spectrum of political and partisan warfare and its course depends on the gains achieved in the initial periods. The last, encompassing the war itself, would involve armed attacks, diversionary tactics and sabotage performed by small armed groups; the establishment of a network of bases and points of
resistance and military action of an increasing scale; and then a big
offensive resulting in the seizure of some territory, or the cities,
and, finally, the seizure of the centres of power. The entire armed
struggle proceeds from the periphery towards the centre, the strategic
aims are realised in successive phases and the enemy is compelled to
fight under unfavourable conditions. Protracted war is a political war
whose end is the overthrow of the existing political system. The use of
terrorism in this warfare is related to the need to gain international
recognition as a negotiating body. For reasons of state, other countries,
instead of getting engaged in anti-colonial or limited wars, supply
arms, money and equipment to terrorist or guerrilla groups and
organisations and this encouragement is intended to create a diversion
or to embroil the country involved in a struggle that weakens or
compromises it internationally. Mostly, such conflicts become proxy
wars between two states or alliances. There is always the probability
that the intervening state, as in Vietnam or in Sri Lanka, may become a
participant in civil war

The Marxist-Leninist Approach:

The Marxist-Leninist approach to war treats it as a social
phenomenon and a conflict between or among social groups, a political
conflict between classes in order to achieve definite political goals. As a
continuation of policy, each war is seen as a clash in its essence. It is
stolknovenie (armed fighting) between states, or coalition of states, or
between antagonistic classes in the state (civil war) for the achievement
of their political goals. There are contradictions and conflicts between
classes and between nations led by classes, and when such
contradictions and conflicts increase, they are resolved through war.
War represents the high point of social conflict as well as the method
by which this conflict is resolved. It is seen as a continuation and
instrument of policy, by violent means. Since imperialism is taken to
be the main source of war in modern age, war has a transitory
character.

This Marxist-Leninist approach treats politics as an activity of
organised social groups directed towards other social groups and
expressing their mutual relations. The different classes that compose
the society express their relations through politics that reflects their
relative economics; and they aspire, and fight over, for political power
to protect and project their interests. As a Soviet scholar sees it,
"politics expresses relations between different classes and their organisations and establishments that represent their interests, of which the state with all its agencies is the main one" (44). The state is considered an organization of the possessing class for its protection against the non-possessing class, and it uses the political power for the protection of the existing economic system and for the suppression of the resistance of its class antagonisms. Extensions of the international politics of the state, beyond its territorial boundaries, is considered foreign politics. Civil war is considered the most acute form of class struggle when a series of economic and political clashes which repeatedly occur, gather momentum, spread, become more intense, and are transformed into an acute and armed conflict.

Since policy is related to class interests, and war is a continuation of policy, war is an instrument of class policy and all wars are class wars. The aims and objectives of war are determined by the interests of class represented in the policy of the classes governing the state. Class interests are obvious and easy to discern in some wars and difficult in some. The ruling classes of a state use the political structure and machinery of the state to enhance their interests beyond the borders of their state. In an earlier period, the ruling classes of different states competed for colonies and empires, and now the international class struggle is in the form of conflict between the capitalist and socialist systems. There is always the possibility that such conflict will not remain within peaceful bounds and that war may start. If peaceful means fail, war is a legitimate instrument for the achievement of goals and, therefore, all states have to be prepared for it. Victory is not just success on the battlefield but should be related to political objectives for which war was started. Marxism-Leninism believes that war is politics of a special form in which other forms are also used, and that war is one of the stages in an ongoing political conflict.

Marxism-Leninism believes that all wars, in some way, fit into the designs of imperialism and are links in the chain of a world-wide struggle between the antagonistic systems of imperialism and socialism. Each war is an intrinsic part of the imperialist designs for world domination and, if an immediate gain is not perceptible, it may be for generating conditions for a new world war. Analysis of war cannot be confined to the particular states engaged in the war but has to relate to the international system as a whole. The origins of modern war lie in the operations of the law of unevenness and spasmodic nature of the political-economic developments in capitalist countries,
in the contradictions inherent in the capitalist system and in the struggle of the imperialists for world domination.

In 1916, in *Imperialism: the Highest Stage of Capitalism*, Lenin had explained international conflict in terms of imperialist rivalries brought about by the decline of capitalism in domestic economies. Further extending Lenin's analysis, Soviet ideologists foresee the decline of capitalism, producing increased aggressiveness on the part of the Western countries. They believe that the current international conflicts and arms race are the result of capitalism's aggressive attempts to maintain and preserve their pernicious system by force. The basic economic sources of war are rooted in the deepening conflict between the modern productive forces and the economic political system of imperialism: "As a result of the social antagonisms inherent in capitalism and the operation of the law of the uneven, leap-like economic and political development of the capitalist country under imperialism, the contradictions between the bourgeoisie states aggravate to the utmost, and this leads to a division of the capitalist world into hostile coalitions, and to wars between them" (45).

Lenin believed that war is a continuation of politics, and politics also continues during war. During war, the class struggle and class-nature of social conflict do not cease. Lenin declared that the nature of the political aim has a decisive influence on the conduct of war (46). Indeed, the political aim determines the just or unjust nature of war, and this influences strategy in a radical manner, since in one case the strategy is supported by a whole-hearted endorsement of the war aims by the population, and in the other case these aims cannot be shared by the people. Because of the intensification of the class struggle, the goals of modern warfare are not confined to the adversary's armed forces. The aim now would be a total destruction of the politico-economic potential of the adversary. This has resulted into the politicisation of strategic goals.

The basic question in any analysis and evaluation of war must be the question as to what is the class character of a particular war, what classes are fighting it and for what goals and what classes are managing and directing it. Every war is inextricably linked up with that political order out of which it flows. This concept of war, thus, differs from the traditional Western concept which believes that the entire country and all the people conduct war and that it is a conflict of one armed people with another. In the Soviet concept, the acute class nature of the war would predetermine the extreme decisiveness of the political and military aims of both the sides. The Marxists believe that the response
of the working class, in a capitalist country, will depend upon the nature of war. If the war is aggressive, they intensify the class struggle; if it is defensive, they increase their productive contribution to the war effort. Also, the centre of gravity of an armed conflict is transformed from "the zone of contact between the adversaries, as was the case in past wars, into the depth of the enemy's location, including the most remote regions. As a result, the war will require an unprecedented spatial scope" (47).

A modern Soviet author Tyushkevich believes (48) that wars may be grouped, on the basis of the 'trinity' concept of their nature, into general, particular and individual, in which each war is caused by three kinds of causes, which reflect the activity of the socio-political forces which are interested in war: general causes that are rooted in the political-economic conflicts characteristic of class antagonisms, particular causes which are specific to the given socio-economic formation, and individual causes that are generated by specific objectives and factors. This classification may be further broadened and five main kinds of war may be analyzed, in Marxist-Leninist terminology: the main causes which are present in all wars of a particular age; the essential causes related to particular types of war; the final causes that lead to the outbreak of a particular war; the direct causes that reflect the circumstances directly affecting the outbreak of war; and the reason for war. All of them are inter-related. There may be some accidental causes which act as a pretext for war and they include such factors as the personality of decision-makers, mistakes in misinterpreting the conflict situation and certain financial crises. But political requisites, such as aggravation of contradictions and expansion of the class-national struggles are at the base of other causes. It is the conflict which leads to crisis and which, in turn, leads to war; but this movement is not automatic and is governed by the policies and responses at each level. Finally, Marxism-Leninism believes (49) that wars of national liberation are a category between international and internal wars, since the colonial power is an external state but the political regime, established by it, and against which the oppressed classes struggle, is composed of domestic reactionary forces. In such cases, there are attempts by the ruling classes to redirect the dissatisfaction within the country by unleashing an external war or by just stepping up preparations for a war. This may convert a civil war into an international war; or a third party may intervene in a civil war, transforming it into an inter-state war. On the other hand, an international war may so weaken the position of the government that
an internal war may result, as had happened in Russia during the First World War and the October Revolution.

Many things about a war become clear by analyzing the way the decision to go to war was undertaken. It explains the various factors and considerations influencing such a decision, alternatives available, power potential/projection ratios and the expectations of states concerning the outcome of the war. An important factor about the decision to go to war is the timing of the decision—sudden on the spur responding to a particular crisis, or well-planned in advance waiting only for the appropriate time. If the war decision of a state was short-termed and sudden, resulting from a perceived crisis, it would still be possible for the other state to contain and regulate the crisis through appropriate signals of crisis management. This had happened when the Pakistani apprehensions regarding Indian military exercises, Brasstacks, were allayed through proper crisis-management techniques from the Indian side. But if the decision to go to war was well-planned, then war-preventive or war-containment measures from other states would hardly have any effect on those who decided to go to war, come what may. Such decisions may be based on the desire of a state to exploit a particular situation or a careful calculation may have been made of possible costs and gains. The parties to a war, or even one side, may have carefully planned everything, anticipating and calculating many factors, or they, or even one side, may have been a victim of misunderstandings, miscalculations and circumstances, without intending to go to war. There may be instances where war was decided upon and planned much in advance and then the state waited for some reasonable justification to start a war. We may put even the First World War in this category, when the war was desired for some reasons and was planned for some reasons but was started for an entirely different reason.

There can always be a miscalculation in taking the decision to go to war. The very fact that one state is defeated proves miscalculations in its war-planning, war preparations and war fighting. No state would go to war believing in the certainty of defeat. One state may not, in fact, be planning a war but the other may perceive so and this miscalculation of the other’s intentions may lead to war. Miscalculation may be there if a decision is undertaken about some act which the other might see as provocative or prejudicial to its interests though the state taking this decision might have believed in the legitimacy of its stand. This was there in the Cuban missile crisis of 1962 and the Falklands war of 1982. Similar miscalculations may be
there about the perceived reactions of the other side to a particular action, like the Pakistani miscalculations about Kashmir.

Even if decisions for war are (perhaps) more scrutinized in democratic societies than in others, there is no concrete evidence that democratic states are any less prone to go to war. Democratic nature of a state hardly affects its propensity to war. Britain, France and the USA—who are democratic societies, have been as much engaged in wars and armed interventions as the USSR and China, who, from the western norms, are not. The US Congress took vital decisions regarding Vietnam on the basis of misleading information, about the Bay of Tonkin, provided by the Administration. Such decisions, even in a democracy and in spite of an enlightened and informed public opinion, are affected by extraneous considerations. As Evan Luard has pointed out, "The 'military-industrial establishment' which has a direct interest in the continued increase of military spending, has found innumerable means (as even President Eisenhower who had once belonged to it, complained at the time of his retirement) for influencing policy-making (50).

States have been involved in wars which, in the beginning, were not of immediate concern to them, and their eventual entanglement resulted from their gradual involvement. Its best example is the US entanglement in Vietnam, when advisers were sent in 1961, US forces were sent in 1965, and bombing raids against the North Vietnam started in 1967. Similarly, the Soviet Union got eventually entangled in Afghanistan in the same fashion—from advisers to a full-fledged embroilment. India had also experienced a similar entanglement in Sri Lanka. Such an involvement is not the result of a well-planned, calculated and single decision, but a number of subsequent decisions over a period of time lead to greater and greater involvement. All of these decisions are deliberate and rational, resulting from gradual change in circumstances. In all such cases, the ultimate cost far exceeds any gains, but it is difficult to foresee this when the decision(s) is undertaken. Whatever may have been the reason, and howsoever gradual it may have been, when the decision was taken the intention to go to war was very clear.
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