Chapter 7

An Agenda for Systemic Peace

This book has described in detail the worsening conditions that characterize the Third World War. The description and evidence provided herein should stand as ample argument that the Third World War warrants the immediate attention of the world's scholars, humanitarians, and global policy makers. The research also provides a compelling argument that the Third World War should be considered a *systemic war*. This "recognition" is not status-based or categorical as much as it is an imperative assessment. Western-oriented political science and international relations disciplines are overly concerned with order in their "own house." This preoccupation is "justified" with the fundamental observation that only the "major powers" have the capacity and capability to *unilaterally* affect the world's political relations in meaningful ways. The resulting "parsimony" of structure resulting from the "reduction" in the number of relevant actors is "useful" but it is not accurate and does not contribute to meaningful analysis; it is *reductionist* in the same way as an understanding of the system based primarily on the "sum of its parts." (See Waltz 1979) The world system is not simply defined as the sum of the political actions of the "major powers;" the world system and its varied regional sub-systems *condition* its many "parts" in very important and powerful ways. System dynamics are an integral part of political behavior and must be taken into account in any meaningful analysis leading to efficacious policy prescriptions.

The Third World states and sub-state actors may be "insignificant" actors and "minor powers" in the greater game of global politics and especially when they are considered individually and separately, but when viewed in the aggregate they may be seen to "pack a real mean punch." Something must be done. While the simple description of the Third World War is an important contribution in its own right, the explanation of the system dynamics that have contributed to the special circumstances of the Third World War is potentially of far greater importance. The systemic *diffusion of insecurity* dynamic, the *culture of violence* proposition, and the consequential *arrested development* syndrome provide a plausible and "useful" understanding of the transformation of politics to violence and war and an architectural blueprint of the "war trap" that has plagued human civilization

throughout its history. The evidence, as presented, is extensive and consistently supportive of the diffusion of insecurity hypotheses and is strongly supportive of the general theory of system dynamics.

More importantly, this research makes a contribution toward the further development of *normative science* by placing it in a proper relational context with "positive" science and showing its fundamental compatibility and integrity with the "behavioral revolution" in traditional security studies. I would go further to claim that positive science is meaningless without reference to normative science, just as it has been claimed that normative science is groundless without positive application and empirical accountability. Although the empirical research has focused mainly on the special characteristics and dynamics of the protracted conflict regions, the obverse argument concerning the Non-PCR regions is also illuminated: under normal (non-violent) conditions escalation of conflicts to violence is somehow dampened and the possibilities of more peaceful resolution of conflicts appears substantiated. More detailed comparative research in conflict management processes between these two distinct political environments is encouraged, especially those focusing on the eventual transformation of violent regions to more normal conflict processes.[1]

Very little has been said in these pages about the importance of "demonstration" effects in the transformation of social relations to cultures of violence. This is because the power of demonstration requires a receptive audience of actors who can imagine the "successful" application and are willing to use the demonstrated methods. It requires a very special understanding of the consequences of coercive action, mainly an ability to distance and discount the human, social, and spiritual costs of such action, in order for a perception of "success" to be formulated and a "rational" utility to be assessed in the use of force and violence. Thinking has to be properly conditioned *a priori* to the performance of violent acts by social groups; spontaneous action will not get the job done. Leaders can only lead where followers are willing to be taken.

The implications of the systemic diffusion approach to insecurity studies are many and varied. A general implication is that the resolution of protracted social conflicts and the problems stemming from the use of force and violence are fundamental and immediate concerns for all peace-loving states, groups, and individuals in the global community and, especially, of the immediate regional community. Denial and neglect do not make a problem go away or disappear but simply allow the problem to grow greater and command more "decisive action." Of equal concern is the problem of the proliferation of weaponry to regions at risk: putting guns and other weapons of mass destruction in the hands of those most likely to use them. The logical first step in both the avoidance and the resolution of violent conflicts would be to deny the object to the addiction; the second step would be to isolate the condition while "inoculating" those likely to be exposed to the "infection" with measured doses of "psychic security" (i.e., political autonomy, active protection from victimization, and reinforcement of trust in legitimate,

normative supraordinate institutions).[2] The inoculation metaphor can also be extended to the prescriptions designed to enhance the systemic "immune system" to counter the images and influences of the culture of violence. This is not a call for media censorship or state-controlled propaganda but, rather, a call for instructional reporting of policy events: what it is, what it means, what we can do about it, why we should do that something, what will happen if we don't. The system does not need a world policeman as much as it needs a world teacher. Effective, peaceful conflict management is a group activity that demands active participation, reflection, and reproduction. Democratization is not a political end nor a procedural characteristic nor an institutional attribute, it is a state of mind, a beginning, a means, and an obligation to pursue, provide, and maintain the preferred goals of peace and prosperity: truly non-excludable societal goods.

It has been proposed that the evidence of pervasive political violence and insecurity is also somehow an indictment of the failures of the normative system. In the global systemic context, the existence of warfare must be understood as the ultimate mechanism of systemic self-correction (a Malthusian "self-cleaning oven") when rational self-regulation fails. War should be understood as an unnecessary, consumptive, and duplicitous "enforcement" of incompatible demands and expectations. As one text has explained,

> In any legal context, 'enforcement' is to some degree a symptom of failure. The purpose of legal prescription, or proscription, is to set norms of conduct in the society with a view to their being observed. Before questions of enforcement arise there has, by definition, been a failure in the pursuit of the primary objective; this is nowhere more pointedly the case than in the context of armed conflict. (McCoubrey and White 1995, *x*)

Assuming that the evidence presented is a measure of the failure of the United Nations (UN) rule-of-law regime, we must not allow ourselves to be led astray so as to reject the entire system in favor of a return to the "glory days" of self-help or a leap into a "neo-*pax americana*" social order enforced by a "benevolent hegemon." The romantic fallacy of the first alternative is the single, most vivid lesson of the history of legal regimes: the systematic failure of a system does not obviate the essential function of a systemic legal regime and so does not justify a total rejection of the existing systemic legal regime; chaos does not call for anarchy as a remedy. *Revolutionary change* is the societal condition of total rejection of the existing regime while recognizing the necessity of such a systemic regime. Revolutions, while providing an excellent historical record of dismantling the *ancien régime*, have an equally abhorrent record of failure in properly reconstructing the public domain. *Empire building* has an equally poor track record as the fact of empire tends to focus systemic discontent on the single prominent actor leading to a deterioration (in relative terms) of the preponderant power and (in absolute terms) of the system as a whole. (See Kennedy 1987)

Incremental reform of the existing structure is the over-riding humanitarian concern. In simple terms: the UN has failed in certain issue areas, a UN is needed to maintain the system, a total rejection of the UN on account of its partial failure (even under the most compelling of pretenses and the most honorable of intentions) leaves the system with no legal regime and in a condition of chaos wherein the worse properties of the system will gain inordinate influence over the ensuing social process. Therefore, all the members of the global community share a fundamental, societal responsibility to correct those aspects of the UN regime that are failing to dissuade the resort to violence (or accept and tolerate the repercussions of failure). There is no leadership role for radical idealists or sentimental romantics in a rational scheme of systemic change. With this thought in mind and by way of a conclusion, I list several general implications of the diffusion of insecurity theory and some policy recommendations for reforming the UN systemic legal regime and normative system.

General Implications and Prospects

Five general implications of the diffusion of insecurity approach to the study of political violence can be listed:

- The essential problem of violence in societal relations is of universal concern and is best dealt with on the basis of regional conflict management schemes with global supervision and local participation (i.e., complex federalism).

- Utilitarian strategies must be viewed with real skepticism; the psychic motivation to use them is more likely generated by insecurity and therefore a symptom of the "infection" rather than the "cure." Utilitarian methods must only be applied in extreme cases and only in the absolute minimum amount necessary to stop the extant violence; force must not be used to "correct" the situation, to retaliate (i.e., reciprocal behavior making everyone equally "guilty"), or punish the "guilty." The use of utilitarian methods demands increased application of normative methods to offset the powerful negative influences of coercion and force. Utilitarian methods may change immediate behaviors but the alteration of subsequent behavior requires a change in disposition, attitude, values, and abilities that can only be accomplished through normative persuasion (force can change an action but only reason can change a mind).

- Insecurity is a psychic disturbance and, as such, it can be countered and compensated through increased receptivity and conscious and concerted effort. The social psychology is a public environment and its proper

maintenance is a public good. Peaceful conflict management requires broad support, commitment, and active involvement by the whole, civil society. Public resources must not be allowed for use to broadcast ideologies or doctrines of exclusivity, prejudice, or discrimination nor for the advocacy of violence.

- The systemic approach is under-utilized in research and under-applied in public policy. Future research needs to correct this deficit; future politics needs to acknowledge the complications and implications of system dynamics in conflict management and allocate resources to the further development of systemic information and analysis. Especially useful is this regard would be the enhancement, facilitation, and regulation of communication capabilities; bringing conflict dynamics into the public realm is crucial to peaceful conflict management, regulation is necessary to control the increased potential for the diffusion of insecurity.

- The diffusion of insecurity thesis can help to inform the interpretation of complex social events and processes and aid in understanding. Extraneous systemic factors and influences must surely be identified and accounted in any proposed conflict resolution, especially those that involve systematic violence. Micro-management can only be successful in conjunction with the macro-management of conflict and violence.

Systemic Policy Recommendations

As a result of the study and in light of the study's implications, six policy recommendations can be made:

Global Arms Moratorium

A global moratorium on all arms and weapons technologies transfers and purchases, including munitions, parts, and supply is desperately needed. Nothing raises the value of *not* using a weapon more than the real possibility of running out of ammunition; the non-use of bullets must be seen to be at least as valuable as the life their use would seek to displace. Such a moratorium has been discussed in the United Nations General Assembly (e.g., the debate preceding 1992 UN General Assembly Resolution 46/36) but its implementation has not been deemed feasible for various reasons. It seems that as long as private enterprise (including the burgeoning "black market") continues to control a substantial share of the global production and distribution of weaponry, multilateral attempts to regulate the arming of the world will remain ingenuous at best and ineffective as a result. The security dilemma and the arms race is no longer reserved for states and political

elites; it is now an issue of common politics and every person feels increasingly compelled to arm themselves in "self-defense." We no longer trust systemic or societal authorities to provide general security; the principle of "self-help" diffuses and pervades social relations. The irony of this problem is that the production of arms and ammunition is highly concentrated in exactly those states that retain the greatest degree of authority and social cohesion: the potential for an effective policy regime does exist but the will is slack. Transformation of the culture of violence requires a strategy analogous to that needed to control other forms of environmental degradation: universal promising and complex cooperation. These strategies, arguably, would require a fundamental transformation of the global political culture: new thinking. All memorable journeys begin with a single step in the right direction. That first step should be a universal recognition in international law that the only legitimate aid that one political actor may transfer to another is humanitarian, non-lethal, assistance and a political solution to social conflicts.

Normative Security

The concept of "collective security" must be expanded to emphasize normative conflict management strategies; allowing conflict situations to deteriorate to violence such that utilitarian strategies are necessitated and demanded produces a net systemic loss, regardless of the perceived "success" of the utilitarian effort. Few conflict situations are so clear, and the perpetrator of illicit violence so readily identified as to garner systemic consensus on proper action and target in cases of systematic violence. Such situations are always perceived to involve and threaten very high and closely-held values. The emotive power of the experience tends to be translated into folklore, to be culturally reproduced, and, thereby, persist for generations. As it stands, the global system has very little normative capability in monitoring and guiding/facilitating normative development. Normative assistance must be dissociated from the unilateral political objectives of advantaged states. The UN must be made self-supporting through the capacity to tax international transactions and, thus, capable of providing normative conflict management strategies (i.e., active normative strategies). At the same time, the UN must be prevented from acquiring autonomous utilitarian capabilities, that must continue to be handled exclusively through the collective security framework (i.e., passive utilitarian strategies). The laws governing the collective uses of force must be formalized and codified and the mechanisms of collective security responses must be institutionalized so that they may react with immediacy to clearly defined breaches of the peace.

Absolute Proscription of the Use of Force and Formal
Prescriptions for Its Legitimate Use as a Legal Sanction

A credible threat of superior force has been established by the U.S.-led Western powers, but even so, this threat must be administered judiciously and

sparingly. The rule of law can not be instituted nor maintained through coercion alone, at least, not in the medium-to-long term. It must be reserved for use as an extreme sanction in response to an extreme abuse of power and an egregious transgression of the prohibition on the use of force. The use of force to alter behavior creates a social psychology of resentment and resistance in its wake. Unless the motivation and inclination to act in an unlawful manner is transformed to prefer lawful behavior, the alteration of unlawful behavior will fail to outlive the application of coercion and force. The threat of lethal sanction should only be used for the humanitarian protection of civilians (in the case of civil repression and genocide) and non-combatants (in the case of inter-group warfare) or in the legitimate enforcement of *explicit and formal* proscriptions on the use of force in specific situations. Force must be used only as a last resort and only in punishment for atrocity; it should *never* be used for political purposes, that is, as the "power" to alter behavior or signal "resolve" or establish "credibility." The dividing line between legitimate enforcement and illegitimate repression can only be distinguished through the formal articulation of standards of conduct and thresholds of behavior. In general, the thresholds must be first placed upon grave breaches and "ratchetted" down as formal standards gain greater acceptance and compliance; the thresholds adopted, of course, must be governable (enforceable) and universally applied and enforced. The performance of a rule-of-law system is gauged primarily by the degree of compliance afforded to it by those societal elements least governed by it: the most advantaged and the least advantaged.

Regional Associations

The global system's most-advantaged members must look beyond their perceived particular and immediate systemic interests and allow/promote/enable the integration of states into effective regional associations rather than demanding their full integration into a global system which is dominated by the already affluent states. Regional organization initiatives have usually been viewed as threatening the particular and immediate interests of all those who are excluded. Such efforts have usually failed due to both internal inadequacies and external interference. Promotion of the "national security doctrine" has undermined regional association in favor of global participation under unequal conditions. There are no supraordinate organizations to help control the impetus and spread of violence in the problem regions and the UN is structurally incapable of effectively responding due to a combination of lack of resources and charter limitations that preclude its meaningful intervention in civil conflicts. What is called for is the construction of a complex network of political institutions that are functionally linked but which operate at varying levels of aggregation: *complex federalism*. Ascriptive identity cleavages must be "knit" together by complex associational linkages (often referred to in a negative sense as "cross-cutting cleavages"). All social groups must contain a "critical mass" of members who identify with and share important interests with members of other groups so that

supraordinate associations will be maintained and parochial, exclusive interests will not erode or preclude general, inclusive associational linkages. The system is best maintained when there are structural provisions and mechanisms for "opting" out of problematic relationships (autonomy) without dissociating from the organization (secession). Secession is only an attractive option when there are competing systems and "others" with whom to associate in order to retain access to the advantages of scale and who perceive an advantage in extending their influence in relative terms. Whereas the reorganization of units may be economically productive, such reorganization must not be undertaken in pursuit of traditional (military) security interests or concerns (meaning that such reorganizations must be accomplished multilaterally).

Decentralization of Systemic Authority

The other countries of the world must not depend so heavily on the United States for guidance; by doing so the global sense of collective responsibility and essential creative energy is lost, the burden of leadership becomes too great, and the capacity, faculty, and capability of the UN global regime is retarded. Because of its relative isolation and the strength of its parochial concerns, the U.S. polity does not properly understand nor value normative strategies with regard to distant and seemingly recalcitrant "others"; its essential, valuable, and useful leadership role is overwhelmed by the complexity of world events and so it only feels secure with one thing: its knowledge that the edge of its sword is keen. The U.S. polity understands very little of the suffering caused by the gaping wounds its sword can and does inflict. Legitimacy is crucial to the success of normative strategies but legitimacy is a state of mind that can only become reliable when the leadership is recognized and accepted by the collective consciousness and performance benefits are generally and equitably distributed. Effective systemic leadership is not attained through collective acquiescence and subservience to the 'visionary' leader (such power corrupts authority).

Universal Criminalization of the Individual in Acts Against
Protected Populations During Warfare

It is time to stop punishing whole groups for the problem of political violence as that adds to their insecurity and distrust of external groups and associations (that is the most invidious and insidious consequence of the use of war as the primary security mechanism). Warfare as a lethal contest between armed factions has too often provided a cover for the spontaneous and systematic victimization of non-combatants by ruthless and unscrupulous individuals. Such brutal sociopaths must not be allowed the confidence of anonymity nor amnesty nor non-accountability for acts in warfare that are punishable offenses during peacetime; this "externality" of warfare, the abrogation of the norms and sanctions of criminality, contributes strongly to the general mistrust of the system resulting from the war experience. When one level of governance fails, higher levels must

provide for personal security or the affected populations are forced to accept whatever authority can provide personal security (i.e., the local militant group or the gun under the bed). Following the end of the war, such criminality usually goes unpunished due to constraints on national legal authority; the system must demand legal sanction of criminal behavior and be willing to provide such in lieu of effective national law. The condition of warfare has also been used to justify systematic abuses of authority in the "interests" of national or group security. The larger system, again, must be responsible for protecting populations when the lesser systems abdicate or are unable to provide such protection. Such credible sanctions would provide effective constraints on individual behavior during warfare by raising the perceived costs of such actions. If the system is going to succeed in maintaining itself, it must demonstrate its willingness to provide security guarantees not only to states but also to individuals lacking protection under their national legal system.

Conclusion

We must allow peoples caught in the throes of violence a real, non-violent alternative. Leadership must be held accountable for mismanagement and alternative elites must simultaneously be rewarded for pursuing non-violent policies. There are always competing elites offering contrasting political agendas within any societal system. Where the non-violent fail, the violent are bolstered. In situations where the non-violent fail and the violent are punished, the more-violent are idolized. Conditions of unfulfilled performance expectations that have bred one violent leader are equally as likely to breed additional, similarly violent leaders. Unless the system is actively involved in improving the performance of the non-violent leadership, it can not enforce individual accountability without an attendant loss in legitimacy; the system and its agents then become the targets of frustration and hostility. We can not afford to criminalize and ostracize whole populations; they then become the seething seas within which the most dangerous fish can lurk with anonymity and immunity until they're strong enough once again to feed upon the unwary and unsuspecting. Without prompt and proper attention, the Third World War will continue to spread its effects and drain our resources, until it consumes us all.

Notes

1. What is especially encouraging is the observation that several of the protracted conflict regions detailed in this study are currently undergoing some form of "remission." The Southeast Asia PCR has been in this state of "PCR remission" since the reunification of Vietnam in 1975; as a result the episodal intensity of political violence and the impetus

to militancy have both diminished over the past twenty years. The most telling feature of the transformation of this culture of violence to a more normative culture is the reestablishment of normal relations between Vietnam and its most virulent antagonists: France, Japan, China, and the United States. The violence in Laos and Cambodia is also winding down, as are the lower intensity conflicts that have plagued the "staging areas" of Indonesia and the Philippines. A rough estimate is that twenty-five years may be needed to counter the direct experience of violence on the social psychology of an affected region; a more lengthy period of non-violent relations is surely necessary before a complete return to normalcy is accomplished. The cultures of violence that have characterized the South Africa and the Central America PCRs are also (only recently) undergoing the initial stages of remission and transformation. The crucial role of the United Nations in fostering and supervising such remissions must be acknowledged and applauded. Yet, it was not the UN that altered the course of these conflicts; crucial decisions by the actors themselves are mainly responsible for the change. The process of transformation *from* violence will be a worthy topic for future research.

2. These prescriptions appear counter-intuitive primarily because they run counter to conventional security prescriptions (i.e., alliances of convenience, self-help armament, and the articulation of "national security" mobilization doctrine). It has been argued here that such conventional policy rationality is simply an articulation of the insecurity system and, as such, is most likely to culminate in the very symptoms of the systemic syndrome of violence and underdevelopment that it purports to deter. The concept of collective security is founded on the concept that individuals and groups tend to identify most closely with that group that most successfully performs the security function. In the interests of maintaining greater identity association, that security function must be provided by the larger, more inclusive, multilateral (i.e., supraordinate) organization; the self-help doctrine leads individuals and groups to prefer the more exclusive group identification of "self." This supraordinacy is a relational concept, associating the identity "self" with the identity of "others." By doing this, the societal performance criterion remains extroverted and the enemy "other" becomes a system anomaly which can then be dissociated from the "normal" social network. On the other hand, an organization that is so large and abstract as to be too far removed from an individual's social identification can be equally ineffective as it is unable to mobilize identity and support from the affected populations. Performance is then seen to be imposed by effective "others" thereby instilling a sense of ineffective "self." Performance dissociated, or alienated, from the "self" leads to differential status and prejudice, which also contribute to identity dissociation through discrimination. This point will be discussed again as "complex federalism."