

ULRICH SCHOLZ

# The Pathology of the Western Paradigm of Warfare

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Schön guten Morgen! Good morning! I'm going to talk to you about war, and I am going to call it a pathology of the West.

Let me start first by saying a few words about myself, so that you get the feeling that I'm not just a naïve peace activist. I have been a warrior half of my life: I'm an American-trained fighter pilot; I knew how to drop bombs, even nuclear bombs, and I enjoyed it. I got my General Staff education with the U.S. Air Force. I'm very fond of American culture. I have a lot of American friends, very good people. And I think I have to say that, because what I am going to say next might cause you to doubt that I am still very friendly with America.

I am going to use three metaphors, and I'm going to teach you three questions to ask, to come to the conclusion that war must not no longer be a means of politics. So that's the bottom line. I use metaphors because I have learned that it is the best way to get adults to learn without them knowing that they're learning.

Two metaphors on this picture: Who knows the movie from which this picture comes? Say it louder,— “Planet of the Apes,” that's right. And I am not going to tell you the plot of the movie, because the movie fits right into the center of what this conference is all about. At the break, if some of you don't know, I will tell you. It's worth watching, with Charlton Heston; and if



you haven't seen it yet, just get the DVD; it's fascinating.

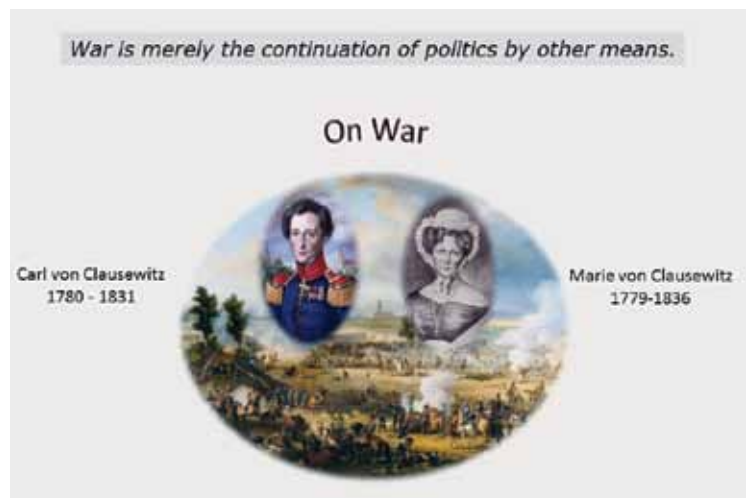
## Clausewitz on War

OK. It all started with these two sympathetic people, Carl von Clausewitz, a young general of the Prussian army, and his wife. [Slide 1] After the Napoleonic wars, Clausewitz sat down and tried to grasp the essentials of war by studying Napoleon, and he wrote the book, *On War*. Unfortunately, he died before he could finish it. So his wife Marie finished the book after the first chapter. She took his notes and wrote the book.

It was an extraordinary thing for a woman at that time to write a book on war.

One of Clausewitz's essentials is the famous dictum: “War is the continuation of politics by other means.” Again, it is a reduction of a description of what he stud-

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*War must not be a means of politics anymore.*



pathology behind that. Because, with these facts, I think nobody who is sensitive,— I always say, “War is an offense to human intelligence.” Because if you look at these facts, who could think of going to war? [applause] Thank you.

I am going to use a little rhyme that Goethe, the famous German poet, used as a metaphor. He wrote,

In breathing, there are two graces,  
Drawing the air in, and exhaling it.  
One constrains, and the other refreshes.  
So wondrously life is mixed.  
You thank God when He presses you,  
And thank him when He once again  
releases you.



ied. And now the unbelievable: Politicians and generals still, today, take this, Clausewitz’s observation, like a cookbook. We must just study wars to apply it properly, to drive home political interests. And this is a scandal. If you look at the facts, in the last 200 years, in major wars, we have had more than 150 million dead. At the moment, we have 4,000 nuclear weapons, armed, active, in this world. And in our charters of international law, we have it written that war is prohibited. [Slide 2]

But politicians and generals still think about how to use war to drive home interests. I think there is some

Now, I am comparing this metaphor of breathing to the capitalist system. For me, breathing in, is growth. In our systems we have learned to inhale; unfortunately, we have forgotten how to exhale. And war is for me, the ultimate, desperate way to try to inhale. You know, the disease behind this is asthma; people with asthma people cannot exhale. The Western economic system is asthmatic.

So what do we have to do, to get a balanced way of breathing into our world? A change of paradigm, that’s what we talk about. We must change. And my first step to that is to let go of this old war paradigm. That is where I want to get to.

### The Three Questions

Now to the three questions. If you read or hear about a government going to war, you should always put it into question, and ask questions about these three things: What is the political aim? How does the military propose to achieve it? And what about our ethics when we do it? These three questions you can address to all wars throughout history, and I have just looked at the last 25 years of wars the West has waged. The West *fails* in all three. And still, it goes to war.

I am going to use the current Operation Inherent Resolve. That is the American bombing campaign against Daesh, the Islamic State, just to show you how these three things are flawed.

The Pentagon’s homepage for Operation Inherent

Resolve is <http://www.inherentresolve.mil/>. It is accessible to the public. [Slide 3] One thing a political aim must always have, for the military to go after it with military means, is an end-state. If the military has done its job, what does the world look like? And as we are in the West, and we like controlling, we like *numbers*. We like to have a figure. And on this homepage, you can find it: Every day they update the targets they have hit and destroyed. You can see it every day. [Here it is for May 31, 2016.](#)

They started counting in 2014. Unfortunately, they haven't given a number that, when reached, means that we have won. So you can do this counting forever. In Vietnam, they lost over counting—"body count." You know that. They're doing it again. [applause] That's pathological, isn't it?

If you read, "destroyed buildings, 6,500," I ask myself, "who else was in the building besides terrorists? Who was in the neighboring building?"

So political aims must be clearly defined. There must be a clear statement of what the military must do. I will give you the political aims of Inherent Resolve. The first is "to militarily defeat Daesh, to increase regional stability." Is there any stability in this region? Is there anything we can increase? Read it! It's official. "To increase regional stability." That's fooling themselves, and fooling us. This is baloney.

A second political aim is "to defeat the ideology of Daesh." How can you defeat an ideology by dropping bombs? Tell me! "To stem the global flow of foreign fighters in all of our nations." Bombing in the Middle East will "stem the flow of terrorists in all of our nations." Can you do this militarily? [Slides 4, 5]

So these two political aims are the basis of all the bombing we do there every day. You could stop right there. What a waste of lives and money!

Next, military doctrine. President Obama said, in September 2014, that no U.S. ground forces will be used to fight Daesh. Doctrine is the *way* we fight. And after Vietnam, the United States developed a doctrine of jointness: We use everything we have in our stock—Army, Navy, Air Force, Special Forces. We look at the problem and then we decide, can we do it, and how do we want to do it. Obama said, "no ground

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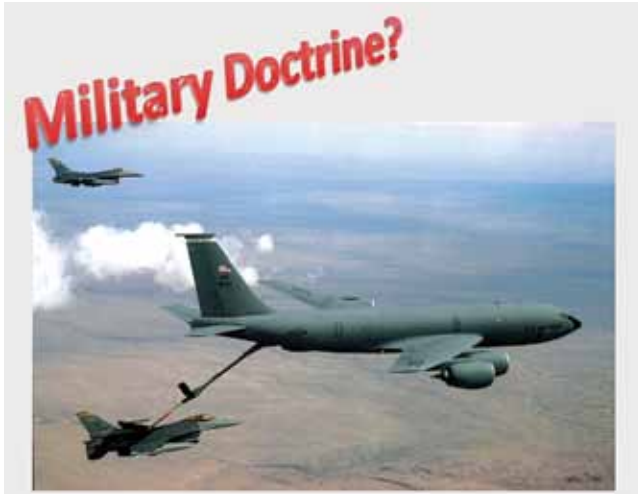
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forces." A general should have said, right there, against all doctrine, "we don't do it." They're doing it anyway.

They are using rebel forces on the ground, indigenous forces, they call them—sounds scientific. It has nothing to do with jointness: There is no common military culture, there is no common language, there are no common procedures, there is no force coherence. It's just two different things happening. The Kurds and all the good guys are on the ground trying to do something, and the air war is taking place on top of them. Not very





professional.

Waging war by air power alone—and in the last 25 years America and NATO have done it in several countries—is useless. It's just useless. [Slide 6]

### Air War's Death Sentences

And now, the knockout argument: Ethics. Rebels and insurgents will always avoid big military engagements. They will mingle with the population. They do this deliberately. If you, with all your precision, and all your thorough targeting, try to hit terrorists in Aleppo, or in Ar-Raqqah, you will hit civilians. Now, I ask you, how many children are we willing to kill, for one terrorist? I say: None. [Slide 7] [applause]

In the air headquarters in Qatar, in the planning process, there is a legal adviser. NATO has one, the French have one, the Germans have one, a legal adviser, a lawyer who will tell the planner how many civilians a certain target is "worth." He writes death sentences: He will say, 20? No. 10? OK. This happens every day, and we just don't care. I think that's a scandal. [Slide 8] [applause]

### How Do We Get to a New Paradigm?

Now, to my last point: How can we get rid of the old paradigm of making war? How can we get to a new one? I think it's a cultural change, and cultural changes do not work from above. That's dictatorship; we have tried this before. To make a cultural change



from below is the guillotine; we have seen that before. It can only work when people learn. And learning can only happen when you try to incite discourses, inform people, encourage them to say "no." Ask the politicians, ask the generals these three questions about aims, ethics, and of course, military ways of doing things.

So, my plea is for getting away from a paradigm of waging war for political reasons; we should wage war *only* for humanitarian reasons.