

BOOKS AND REVIEWS

LE DÉFI DE LA GUERRE — DEUX SIÈCLES DE GUERRES ET DE RÉVOLUTIONS (1740-1974)¹

War has often been presented as the great force which is the expression of societies, which transforms them and provides the ultimate solution for their conflicts, and which can never be totally abolished. Can we accept these notions in the nuclear age when developments of war are unpredictable and threaten the very existence of mankind?

The authors of this book, Mr. Gaston Bouthoul and Mr. René Carrère, of the *Institut français de Polémologie*, have attempted to reform concepts of this kind about war. To that end, they have drawn up a list of 366 major conflicts over a period of more than two hundred years, from wars of succession of rulers to wars of succession of nations, from wars of colonization to wars of decolonization; they have analysed and interpreted them, ending with a study of terrorism, the nuclear problem and the contemporary geopolitical world of parlous maritime frontiers, prone to engender conflicts, a world in which the fronts of collective aggressiveness move from place to place.

The book provides a veritable classification of the causes, effects and evolution of armed conflicts and abounds in short and long-term retrospective views and hypothetical projections.

Readers will welcome the mass of fresh and stimulating information which it contains on men and societies. This volume will provide for sociologists the basic material of the science of wars, while philosophers and moralists may discover in it the path leading towards the demystification of violence and the domination of the experimental mind over the use of force, as well as a means for the “deglorification” of war.

In this respect, it will be of interest not only to those who have devoted themselves more particularly to the humanities and social sciences but to all men and women throughout the world who yearn for a peaceful future for mankind.

M. T.

¹ Presses universitaires de France, 1976, 224 pp.