

Sources

Source 1

That the political view should wholly cease to count on the outbreak of war is hardly conceivable unless pure hatred made all wars a struggle for life and death. In fact, as we have said, they are nothing but expressions of policy itself. Subordinating the political point of view to the military would be absurd, for it is policy that has created war. Policy is the guiding intelligence and war only the instrument, not vice versa. (page 254)

Political goals can not be removed from war. The goals of the civilian leadership inevitably shape why and how the conflict develops. A war that lacks political direction is merely an episode of motiveless violence (Clausewitz, 2007, p. 254).

Clausewitz (2007) argued that politics was inseparable from warfare (p. 254).

Source 2

It is best to keep one's own state intact; to crush the enemy's state is only a second best. It is best to keep one's own army, battalion, company, or five-man squad intact; to crush the enemy's army, battalion, company, or five-man squad is only a second best. So to win a hundred victories in a hundred battles is not the highest excellence; the highest excellence is to subdue the enemy's army without fighting at all. (page 111)

Victory does not require bloodshed. Skillful leaders will aim to preserve as many of their own resources as possible, and avoid unnecessary battles (Sun Tzu, 1993, p. 111).

Sun Tzu (1993) argued that wise leaders would seek to achieve objectives by the least costly way possible, rather than fighting unnecessarily (p. 111).

Source 3

The question of what strategic purposes these new weapons could serve was first addressed seriously by historian Bernard Brodie, who had previously specialized in maritime strategy. On hearing of the atom bomb, Brodie told his wife, "Everything that I have written is now obsolete." Established forms of strategic theory were inadequate. "Everything about the atomic bomb," he observed, "is overshadowed by the twin facts that it exists and its destructive power is fantastically great. Thus far the chief purpose of our military establishment has been to win wars. From now on its chief purpose must be to avert them. It can have almost no other useful purpose."

From the start, therefore, Brodie recognized the dissuasive character of the “absolute weapon.” (page 146).

The most perceptive nuclear strategists quickly grasped that nuclear weapons had transformed great power war. Bernard Brodie, for example, argued that these weapons were so dangerous that states could only use them to ward off attacks from other nuclear powers (Freedman, 2013, p. 146).

The unprecedented destructive potential of nuclear weapons forced strategists to accept that war had changed. Great powers could not hope to use these weapons in offensive wars and survive (Freedman, 2013, p. 146).

References

- Clausewitz, C. (2007). *On war* (M. Howard & P. Paret, Trans., B. Heuser, Ed.). Oxford University Press. (Original work published 1832).
- Freedman, L. (2013). *Strategy: A history*. Oxford University Press.
- Sun T. (1993). *The art of warfare: The first English translation incorporating the recently discovered Yin-ch'ueh-shan texts* (R. Ames, Trans.). Ballantine Books. (Original work published 5th-4th century BCE)