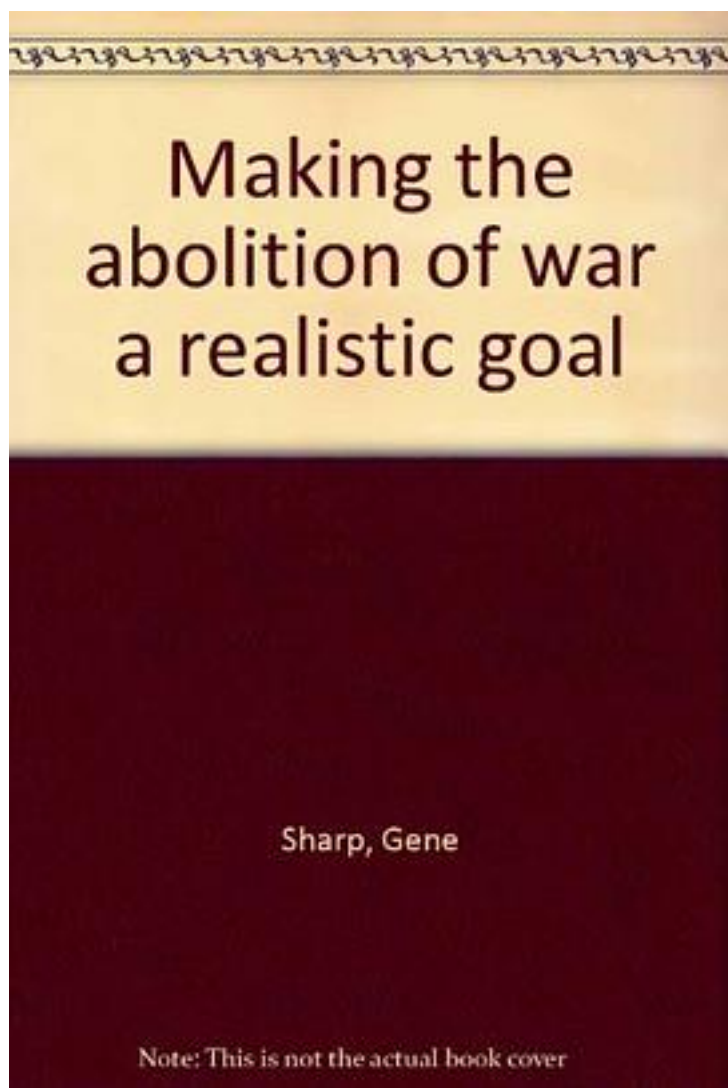


Making the Abolition of War a Realistic Goal



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The destructiveness of modern war is widely understood. Yet most governments, backed by their populations, amass the largest array of military weaponry and forces of which they are capable. Clearly, none of the past proposals and movements to abolish war and to bring in an era of world peace has succeeded. Indeed, in significant respects the achievement of those goals now seems less likely than it did in earlier decades.

This is, of course, not the only grave political problem we have failed to solve. Others include dictatorship, genocide, systems of social oppression, and popular powerlessness. They must be considered as we seek a solution to the problem of war.

Most people respond to the continuation of wars and war preparation with a sense of resignation, hopelessness, or powerlessness. "War is inevitable," it is thought; we blame "human nature" or our favorite "evil forces." Other persons faithfully persist in plodding the old paths to the now tarnished dreams without reexamining whether they are headed in the right direction. Still others try to run faster to their goal, or seek shortcuts, or carry out acts of desperation without a basis for confidence that their efforts can succeed either, or even certainty that they will not make matters worse.

All this is not good. More creative responses are possible. Indeed, it is our responsibility to seek to develop them. If soundly based and realistically developed and applied, they might offer new hope.

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