

Preface

In March 2003 Tony Blair and George Bush launched a brutal assault on the people of Iraq. Initially, the assault (which was illegal according to international law) was justified in terms of disarming Iraq of weapons of mass destruction and revenge for the 9/11 attacks, although they knew that Iraq had no weapons of mass destruction and that it had nothing to do with 9/11. When weapons of mass destruction were not found, the excuse changed to the desire to liberate the people of Iraq from a despot whom they had helped prop up. The “shock and awe” operations turned out to be shocking and awful, and the occupation forces ended up killing more Iraqis than the despot could have imagined in his wildest dreams. Meanwhile, the looters and scavengers were waiting impatiently to claim their shares of a big kill.

I have since realised that wars of aggression in particular are motivated by one thing and one thing only: financial gains for war profiteers. By coincidence, I came across an essay entitled *War Is a Racket*, in which General Smedley Butler argued along these lines and exposed war profiteers with reference to World War I. This is why I have decided to write this book to analyse the theories and hypotheses put forward to explain war and argue that they all have an economic/financial dimension. I thought that Butler’s arguments were valid for the wars that have taken place since his death in 1940. This is the task I undertake in this book, which is intended to deplore war and defend peace.

Writing this book would not have been possible without the help and encouragement I received from family, friends and colleagues. My utmost gratitude must go to my wife, Afaf, who bore most of the opportunity cost of writing this book. I would also like to thank my colleagues and friends, including John Vaz, Kelly Burns, Vikash Ramiah, Mike Dempsey, Larry Li, Liam Lenten and Brien McDonald.

In preparing the manuscript, I benefited from the exchange of ideas with members of the Table 14 Discussion Group, and for this reason I would like to thank Bob Parsons, Greg O’Brien, Greg Bailey, Bill Breen, Paul Rule, Peter Murphy, Bob Brownlee and Tony Pagliaro. My thanks also go to friends and former colleagues who live far away but provide help via means of telecommunication, including Kevin Dowd (whom I owe intellectual debt), Razzaque Bhatti, Ron Ripple, Bob Sedgwick, Sean Holly, Dan Hemmings and Ian Baxter. Last, but not least, I would like to thank Alex Pettifer, the editorial director of Edward Elgar, who encouraged me to write this book.

Naturally, I am the only one responsible for any errors and omissions that may be found in this book. It is dedicated to my daughter, Nisreen, my son, Danny, my grandson, Ryan and my granddaughter, Ivy.

Imad A. Moosa
April, 2019