



HEDLEY BULL

## HEDLEY NORMAN BULL

1932-1985

HEDLEY BULL was born in Sydney on 10 June 1932. He was the third and youngest child of J. N. Bull, an insurance broker, and Doris, née Hordern, whose family had developed a famous chain of department stores in Australia. Rooted as it was firmly in commerce, there was nothing in his family background to foreshadow Bull's future academic eminence. From 1944 until 1948 he attended Fort Street High School in Sydney, and in 1949 he enrolled in the University of Sydney. He had originally intended to read for a joint degree in arts and law, but instead he specialized in philosophy and history. At that time the Challis Chair of Philosophy was held by Professor John Anderson, a profoundly original thinker whose sceptical and iconoclastic approach made a deep impression on Hedley Bull, as it did indeed on generations of students. It was from Anderson that he learned that combination of open-mindedness in approach and rigour in analysis which was to distinguish him throughout his career and which he would in due time pass on to his own pupils.

Bull graduated from Sydney with first-class honours in philosophy and a second in history. His lack of interest in organized games made him a poor candidate for a Rhodes Scholarship, but he was fortunate enough to obtain a Woolley Scholarship which enabled him to enter University College, Oxford, in 1953. A fellow student from Sydney, Frances Mary Lawes, also made the journey to Oxford, and they married in the following year. Mary Bull was herself an active figure in the field of Commonwealth history—she was for a time research assistant to the redoubtable Margery Perham—but she never permitted those activities to affect the support and companionship she provided for her husband throughout his career; this enabled him to devote himself to his work with a single-minded serenity that did much to account for his success.

Bull had gone to Oxford with the object of reading philosophy in the recently established two-year postgraduate B.Phil. course. In the event he found the field of politics more challenging and switched his allegiance to that. The lectures and classes of John Plamenatz on political theory, of Kenneth Wheare on government, and above all of Herbert Hart on theories of law provided

solid meat into which he could sink his teeth. Curiously enough he showed no interest in the field of international relations, which was in any case not highly developed at Oxford at the time. Firmly settled in the field of political science, he hoped to gain some teaching experience in Britain before returning to Australia, and in 1955 he applied for, and was offered, an assistant lectureship in political theory in the University of Aberdeen. Simultaneously, however, there came an offer from the London School of Economics, whose Professor of International Relations, Charles Manning, was very conscious of the contribution which a pupil of Herbert Hart could make to his staff. Bull decided to go to London and not to Scotland, and the future shape of his career was settled.

The absence of any formal training in international relations was no disadvantage at the LSE in the 1950s. The subject was still amorphous. Charles Manning himself was a strange combination of lawyer, philosopher, and poet, whose approach to the topic was at once idiosyncratic and inimitable. Most of his colleagues had graduated as historians, and it was one of these, Martin Wight, who was most deeply to influence Hedley Bull's thinking. Wight was powerfully to supplement the influence of Anderson. A deeply committed Christian pacifist, Wight was supremely concerned with the nature and significance of power in international relations, and brought to his study of the subject a spirit anguished over the tragedy of the human predicament and a mind richly stocked with historical learning. He had no time for the facile Utopianism of the inter-war years, and his range was too wide for him to be trapped into treating international relations simply as diplomatic history. As for the current transatlantic attempts to reduce international relations to a 'scientific' study based on quantifiable data, he considered them so superficial in their lack of historical or philosophical understanding as to be literally beneath contempt.

Although Hedley Bull never accepted the Christian basis of Martin Wight's thought and was sometimes to become impatient with his scholarly 'ruminations', he developed, as he himself put it, in its shadow: 'humbled by it, a constant borrower from it, always hoping to transcend it but never able to escape from it'.<sup>1</sup> In fact Bull did much, in his turn, for Wight, sharpening and focusing his ideas, especially in the dialogues sponsored by the Rockefeller Foundation under the chairmanship of Sir Herbert Butterfield, the range and profundity of which was inadequately mirrored in

<sup>1</sup> 'Martin Wight and the Theory of International Relations', *British Journal of International Studies*, ii (1976), 101.

the collection of papers published under the title *Diplomatic Investigations* in 1966.<sup>1</sup> The dialogues embraced the whole field of international relations: philosophy, morality, history, and not least international law. They deepened Hedley Bull's interest in the work of the great classics, Suarez, Vitoria, and above all Grotius, whose thinking was powerfully to mould his own thought.

The influence of Martin Wight was thus to rough-hew the outlines of Hedley Bull's thinking about international relations. Its immediate direction was determined by contact with another and widely known Christian thinker and statesman, Philip Noel-Baker. Noel-Baker had devoted his long and eminent career, both as an academic and as a politician, to the propagation and pursuit of the ideal of disarmament. He had just completed his major study, *The Arms Race: A Programme for Disarmament*,<sup>2</sup> and as a former holder of the Chair of International Relations at the LSE he looked to his old department to provide him with a research assistant in writing a further work, on the Disarmament Conference of 1932. Hedley Bull accepted the assignment; but a study of Noel-Baker's work quickly revealed an incompatibility of view so fundamental as to make collaboration impossible. Bull set out his own philosophy in a magisterial and dismissive review of Noel-Baker's *The Arms Race* in *The Australian Journal of Politics and History* in 1959.<sup>3</sup> The fact that the work had gained for Noel-Baker the Nobel Peace Prize did not impress him in the least. 'Its author', he wrote,

has brought to it the fruits of his experience of disarmament negotiations in the League period, and of a lifetime of study of the disarmament problem. But he has brought to it also assumptions about the possibility and desirability of disarmament which are dated [*sic*] as those of the early League period, are widely held today, and are perhaps as mistaken now as they were then.

In disposing of those assumptions Hedley Bull set out, in his first paragraph, a philosophy of international relations from which he was never essentially to depart and which to Noel-Baker and those who sympathized with him must have seemed like an academic version of Iago's *Credo*. It deserves quoting in full.

The sovereign states of today have inherited from renaissance Europe

<sup>1</sup> Herbert Butterfield and Martin Wight (eds.), *Diplomatic Investigations: Essays in the Theory of International Politics* (London, 1966).

<sup>2</sup> Philip Noel-Baker, *The Arms Race: A Programme for World Disarmament* (London, 1958).

<sup>3</sup> Hedley Bull, 'Disarmament and the International System', *Australian Journal of Politics and History* (May 1959), 41-50.

an ordered system for the conduct of their relations which may be called an international society. For though sovereign states are without a common government, they are not in a condition of anarchy; like the individuals described by Locke in his account of the state of nature they are a society without a government. This society is an imperfect one: its justice is crude and uncertain, as each state is judge in its own cause; and it gives rise to recurrent tragedy in the form of war; but it produces order, regularity, predictability and long periods of peace, without involving the tyranny of a universal state. Much thinking in the last fifty years has been concerned less with understanding this society and the conditions of its preservation than with dismantling or even abolishing it. One of its institutions has been national armaments; and one of the preoccupations of Western thinking has been disarmament, the attempt to do away with or drastically curtail them. Yet if armaments are an integral part of the whole system of international relations, and stand or fall with it, there are serious objections to the notions both of the possibility and the desirability of disarmament.

Ultimately Hedley Bull was to devote himself precisely to this task of understanding this anarchical society of states and the conditions of its preservation. Immediate circumstances, however, dictated that he should continue to focus on the subject of disarmament—or rather, as it was coming to be known, ‘arms control’. In the United States this was already a growth area, and in 1957–8 a grant from the Rockefeller Foundation enabled Hedley Bull to visit Harvard, Washington, and Chicago at a moment when seminal work was being carried out on the subject by thinkers such as Bernard Brodie, Albert Wohlstetter, Paul Nitze, Henry Kissinger, and above all Thomas Schelling, a scholar whose original approach and penetrating intelligence Hedley Bull immediately appreciated and admired. The views which Bull expressed in his critique of Noel-Baker, that it should be the function of arms control to stabilize the balance of power, especially the balance of nuclear power, rather than to destroy it, already show the influence of this American thinking. He was now to be given the chance to establish himself as an arms-control specialist in his own right.

In November 1958 the newly founded Institute for Strategic Studies established its offices a few blocks away from the LSE in Adam Street off the Strand, under the dynamic leadership of Alastair Buchan. One of its earliest enterprises was to convoke at Oxford an international conference on arms control, bringing together the leading specialists on the subject from both sides of the Atlantic. In preparation for this conference Buchan set up a study group to prepare a substantial document for discussion

and ultimately publication. The document was drafted by a rapporteur, over whose name the work would eventually appear. With brilliant editorial flair Buchan invited the as yet unknown Hedley Bull to undertake the task.

Bull brought to his work, in the words of Richard Goold Adams who chaired the study group, 'a lucidity, almost a ruthlessness, which has certainly not been surpassed on this side of the Atlantic'.<sup>1</sup> Bull admitted that his approach was 'terse and austere, not much softened by illustration or human feeling'—a description that might be applied to much of his subsequent work.<sup>2</sup> It was, he wrote, 'a plea for the recognition of the moral, military and political issues raised by modern war; for confronting this complexity rather than turning away from it: for rigorous study and anxious questioning in place of the pursuit of panaceas'.<sup>3</sup> Little modified either by the study group or the conference itself, Hedley Bull's book was published in 1961 under the title *The Control of the Arms Race*. Many other works were appearing on the subject in the United States, but the very 'terseness and austerity' of *The Control of the Arms Race* quickly gained for it a world readership denied to its more verbose and inconclusive transatlantic rivals.

Predictably, Bull turned his back on the whole school of thought of which Noel-Baker was the leading exponent. His object, as he described it, was

to demonstrate the inadequacy of such prescriptions as 'reduce!' or 'abolish!' and the need to replace them with careful strategic analysis. It is not to be assumed . . . that the answer to the question, 'What levels and kinds of armaments should arms-control systems seek to perpetuate and make legitimate?' is the formula, 'the lowest levels, and the most primitive kinds' . . . When we consider . . . what should be the content of an arms-control agreement or system, we must be guided not by any such formula as this, nor by an exclusive concern with the maintenance of the military balance, but by addressing ourselves with determination to the complicated strategic political calculation demanded by the question: what kinds, levels, deployments or uses of armaments would best produce security?<sup>4</sup>

As for the nature of the security being sought, Bull defined it in a dogmatic paragraph which distanced him yet further from the Utopians of an older generation:

Absolute security from war and defeat has never been enjoyed by

<sup>1</sup> Foreword to Hedley Bull, *The Control of the Arms Race: Disarmament and Arms Control in the Missile Age* (London, 1961), p. vi.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, p. xii.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, p. ix.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 30.

sovereign states living in a state of nature, and is foreign to all experience of international life. A great deal of public thinking about international relations is, however, absorbed in the pursuit of this fantasy. The solutions and recommendations produced by this kind of thinking are remote from the range of alternatives and spectrum of possible actions from which governments are able to choose. These solutions do not concern the problems with which the world is actually confronted, but concern the arbitrary dismantling or reconstruction of the world in such a way that these problems would not arise; a reconstruction to be achieved by acts of will, constitutions for world government, declarations, the abolition of war, gestures, research, therapies, and cures. They represent, in my view, a corruption of thinking about international relations and a distraction from its proper concerns. The fact is that we are where we are, and it is from here that we have to begin. There can only be relative security.<sup>1</sup>

But if he dismissed the Utopianism of the old school, Bull had little time for the equally unworldly rationality of some of the new strategic thinkers in the United States. They were, he believed, led into error by the same belief in the sovereign power of human reason that misled the Utopians:

The notion of 'rational action' is useful only when it is defined in a particular way, for the purpose of a particular body of theory. A great deal of economic theory proceeds upon some such notion of what is 'rational action' for 'economic man'. A great deal of argument about military strategy similarly postulates the 'rational action' of a kind of 'strategic man', a man who on further acquaintance reveals himself as a university professor of unusual subtlety.<sup>2</sup>

The abstract nature of so much American political science indeed repelled Hedley Bull as much as it did his mentor Martin Wight. He became more familiar with it in 1963, when he spent a year as Visiting Research Associate at the Princeton Center of International Studies. But whereas Wight treated the 'behaviourists' with Olympian disdain, Bull just went for them. 'The correct strategy, it appeared to me', he stated rather endearingly in his Martin Wight Memorial Lecture in 1976 'was to sit at their feet, to study their position until one could state their own arguments better than they could and then, when they least suspected, to turn on them and slaughter them in an academic Massacre of Glencoe.'

The bloody deed was done in the April 1966 issue of *World Politics* in an article entitled, with deceptive mildness, 'International Theory: The Case for a Classical Approach'. In it he

<sup>1</sup> Ibid., pp. 26-7.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid., p. 48.

castigated those thinkers who 'aspire to a theory of international relations whose propositions are based either upon logical and mathematical proof, or upon strict, empirical procedures of verification'. The approach he defended was that 'characterised above all by explicit reliance upon the exercise of judgement and by the assumption that if we confine ourselves to strict standards of verification and proof there is very little of significance that can be said about international relations'. The aspirants to a scientific approach, he suggested, were 'committing themselves to a course of intellectual puritanism that keeps them (or would keep them if they really adhered to it) as remote from the substance of international politics as the inmates of a Victorian nunnery were from the study of sex'. Their approach illustrated a pernicious tendency to substitute 'methodological tools and the question "Are they useful or not?"' for the assertion of propositions about the world and the question "Are they true or not?"' Above all, their thinking was

characterised by a lack of any sense of inquiry into international politics as a continuing tradition to which they are the latest recruits; by an insensitivity to the conditions of recent history which have produced them, provided them with the preoccupations and perspectives they have, and coloured these in a way of which they may not be aware; by an absence of any disposition to wonder why, if the fruits their research promise are so great and the prospects of translating them into action so favourable, this has not been accomplished by anyone before; by an uncritical attitude towards their own assumptions, and especially toward the moral and political attitudes that have a central but unacknowledged position in much of what they say.<sup>1</sup>

There was an exuberant lack of precision about Hedley Bull's attack which enabled some of his victims to survive and fight back, but the article remains a landmark in the development of international relations theory, often and deservedly anthologized. In general the solipsism of so much American thinking infuriated him, as much in the field of strategy and arms control as of international relations generally, with its tendency to reduce the complexities of the world to the simplistic issue of bilateral American-Soviet antagonism. While at Princeton he wrote a trenchant critique of the bland certainties of 'the McNamara Doctrine' and its attempt to lay down the law for allies whose perceptions and interests were significantly different from those of the

<sup>1</sup> Hedley Bull, 'International Theory: The Case for a Classical Approach', *World Politics*, vol. xviii, no. 3 (April 1966), 361-77.



United States.<sup>1</sup> He was constantly stressing the need for other voices to make themselves heard in debates over United States strategy and policy, and throughout his career he remained an implacable but usually friendly critic of almost everything that came out of Washington.

*The Control of the Arms Race* gave Hedley Bull an international reputation while he was still in his twenties. It brought many offers of posts in other universities, but he was promoted to a readership at the LSE in 1963 and remained in London. But his link with the LSE was to become something of a formality. In 1964 the new Labour government, coming into power with a strong electoral commitment to disarmament, appointed a minister with special responsibility in this field (Lord Chalfont, who as Alun Gwynne-Jones had been Defence Correspondent of *The Times*) and created within the Foreign Office a new Arms Control and Disarmament Research Unit to match the Arms Control and Disarmament Agency which President Kennedy had recently set up in Washington. Chalfont, an active member of the Institute for Strategic Studies, invited Hedley Bull to take charge of this unit. Interested in the prospects of this new experience, Bull readily agreed and in 1965 accepted secondment from the LSE for two years.

The appointment was equally unpopular with those orthodox officials whose entire approach he challenged as it was with the stalwarts of the Labour Party who regarded his attack on Noel-Baker as *lèse-majesté*, if not indeed outright blasphemy. But his new colleagues quickly came to relish his fresh, crisp, abrasive approach, and the Socratic dialogues to which he subjected them. He saw it as his role to stretch their minds rather than to lay down policy guide-lines, to winnow out essentials from inessentials as a good academic should. The terse dogmatism of his papers was always fleshed out in discussion with an expansiveness and humour in which his colleagues at the LSE and the ISS had already come to delight. As for Hedley himself, he took an uninhibited pleasure in being 'on the inside': the trips to Geneva, seeing the telegrams, the policy conferences, the meetings with the great. But he was never remotely corrupted by it. An impish spirit of self-mockery, quintessentially Australian, preserved his sense of proportion. He distanced himself from his official colleagues by adopting what he saw as academic uniform—a bow tie, a broad-brimmed hat, an omnipresent pipe—and when his two-year stint came to an end, he returned to academic life without repining.

<sup>1</sup> *Strategy and the Atlantic Alliance: A Critique of United States Doctrine* (Center of International Studies, Princeton University, 1964).

Academics had their place in the world, he concluded, and officials theirs. They could inform and fertilize each other, but their roles were fundamentally different.

Hedley Bull did not go back to the LSE. A chair was created for him at the Research School of Pacific Studies in the Australian National University, Canberra, and he returned to his own country after an absence of nearly fifteen years. It was a change which he welcomed for many reasons. There seemed little more theoretical work to do in the field of arms control, and negotiations were now focusing on such specific, technical issues as test-ban treaties and non-proliferation. Both East-West and alliance relationships had entered into a stage of relative quiescence. The issue above all others which now exercised the world community was the American involvement in Vietnam; and with the emergence of dozens of new 'Third World' states, the nature of the world community was itself now being transformed. From Australia a fresh perspective could be gained on both these developments. Freed from detailed involvement in one narrow aspect of a limited sector of international affairs, Hedley Bull was able to return to his study of the broad picture, that 'society of states' in which Martin Wight had first aroused his interest. He began work on his *magnum opus*, *The Anarchical Society*, which was to be published ten years later.<sup>1</sup>

There were now two new and interconnected questions which concerned him. First, what was the relationship between 'order' and 'justice' in international society, and how far could the first exist only at the expense of the second? And secondly, how far was the 'system of states' inherited from the European Renaissance appropriate to the vastly expanded, multicultural society of which the world was coming to consist in the second half of the twentieth century? Could the new nations, with all their problems and expectations, really be accommodated within the framework of the old states-system, or would that system simply provide a mechanism for fastening the yoke of the rich Northern world more securely on the neck of the poor South?

The question of nuclear proliferation, and the Non-Proliferation Treaty of 1968, opened up this whole issue. Hedley Bull was already familiar with Indian thinking on the subject, and engaged for several years in sympathetic debate with Indian scholars before the opportunity arose for him to spend four months at the Jawaharlal Nehru University in Delhi in 1974-5. The sinewy

<sup>1</sup> Hedley Bull, *The Anarchical Society: A Study of Order in World Politics* (London, 1977).

reasoning of his Indian colleagues, on a par with his own, delighted him; their perspective on the world refreshed him; and his experience of the poverty of their society deepened his understanding of the huge gulf between North and South which he increasingly was coming to see as the real problem of the twentieth-century society of states. But he saw that the demands for 'world justice' put forward by Asian and African states were in fact 'demands for the transformation of the system and society of states and are inherently revolutionary. They involved entering into conflict with the devices through which order is maintained'.<sup>1</sup> As a result he came to realize that order in the world system, though valuable in itself and a condition of the realization of other values, 'should not be taken to be a commanding value, and to show that a particular institution or course of action is conducive of order is not to have established a presumption that that institution is desirable or that that course of action should be carried out.'<sup>2</sup>

*The Anarchical Society* is a rich and subtle work which deserves to take its place with Raymond Aron's *War and Peace among Nations* as one of the major texts on international relations theory of the twentieth century. It firmly put the study of international relations back into the classical framework of political thought. It was avowedly analytic rather than prescriptive: 'the search for conclusions that can be presented as "solutions" or "practical advice"', stated Bull, with a touch of his youthful acerbity, 'is a corrupting element in the contemporary study of world politics, which properly speaking is an intellectual activity and not a practical one. Such conclusions are advanced less because there is any solid basis for them than because there is a demand for them which it is profitable to satisfy.'<sup>3</sup> None the less he did set forth his conclusions. The existing system of states, he claimed, was entirely viable as a framework both for order and for justice; but it must be kept viable, by 'maintaining and extending the consensus about common interests and values that provide the foundation of its common rules and institutions', and by 'the preservation and extension of a cosmopolitan culture, embracing both common ideas and common values, and rooted in societies in general as well as their elites'.<sup>4</sup> All the 'terseness and austerity' which characterized *The Control of the Arms Race* informs the thinking behind *The Anarchical Society*, but no one can complain that the latter work is not 'softened

<sup>1</sup> Ibid., p. 88.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid., p. 98.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid., p. 320.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid., pp. 315-17.

by human feeling'. Without losing anything of intellectual rigour, it remains deeply humane.

*The Anarchical Society* was ten years in the writing—ten years during which Hedley Bull had many other preoccupations. In spite of his frequent absences—a year in the United States and Britain in 1970–1, a year at All Souls College, Oxford, in 1975–6, as well as his time in India and frequent travel to international conferences—he was an active figure at the Australian National University. He played a major role in developing a new Master's course in international relations, which a Ford Foundation grant made accessible to students from south and south-east Asia. He was active on the Faculty and within the University, and provided much support and advice for the new Strategic and Defence Studies Centre which had been set up in 1966 shortly before his arrival. He was Research Director in the Australian Institute for International Affairs and maintained close, though largely informal, links with the Ministries of External Affairs and of Defence. He took a deep interest in the creation of the new sovereign state of Papua New Guinea, and he poured out a stream of articles and contributions to *Festschriften* on a wide range of issues: the theory of international relations, Australian defence and foreign policy, arms control, human rights, the problems of the Third World. On one topic he was surprisingly silent: American involvement in Vietnam. On this of all issues, one might have expected from him trenchant analysis and magisterial judgement. But he adopted no public stance on the issue. He appreciated its complexities better than most and was repelled by the extreme views voiced by Australian critics of the United States. Perhaps he saw it as a debate best left to the Americans themselves. Privately, however, it deepened his mistrust of American judgement and perceptions; a mistrust which his year in India had done nothing to alleviate and which was to grow steadily more intense. By the end of his life he had reached a position almost of 'Euro-gaullism'; one which enlivened international conferences, but did nothing to reduce his acceptability in the United States.

Hedley Bull's tenure of the Canberra Chair was cut short by the sudden death in 1976 of Alastair Buchan, who for the past four years had held the Montagu Burton Chair of International Relations at Oxford. The shock of this tragedy was mitigated by Hedley Bull's availability to succeed him—he was indeed on sabbatical leave in Oxford at the time. The loss to Canberra and indeed to Australia was great, but from Oxford Hedley Bull knew that he could make his influence more directly and widely felt, both

academically and politically, and he had little hesitation in making the move. He took up the appointment in April 1977 and strengthened his links with the International Institute for Strategic Studies and the Royal Institute for International Affairs, of which he became a member of the Council and Chairman of the Research Committee. He also reactivated, in association with Adam Watson, the old Rockefeller Committee which he had organized with Herbert Butterfield and Martin Wight, and initiated a new series of meetings, focused on his own central interests, which were to result in the beautifully planned and edited volume *The Expansion of International Society* published by the Oxford University Press in 1984. And he was able to salvage from oblivion the largely unpublished work of Martin Wight (who had died in 1972) and edit the bulk of it in two volumes, *Systems of States* (Leicester University Press, 1977) and *Power Politics* (Leicester University Press, 1978).

Once he had settled into Oxford, Hedley Bull began work on another major project. This was to be entitled *The Revolt Against Western Dominance* and was intended to bring together and explore further the ideas discussed in *The Expansion of International Society*. It was never to be completed. The work involved in building up a graduate school of international relations on the foundations which his predecessor had had so little time to establish was immensely time-consuming, and was made still more difficult by the ice age which hit British universities shortly after his arrival. His reputation attracted first-rate graduate students, not only from the United States but from the Commonwealth and the Third World, and had the British government pursued a less short-sighted policy in respect of graduate fees he could have attracted many more. Teaching, by lecturing, supervision, and seminar, he regarded as his first priority. He was meticulous in the trouble he took and rigorous in his expectations, but his students quickly discovered that his time and learning were entirely at their disposal. His lectures were fresh and brilliant, but his talents were best displayed in the impromptu feats of analytic bravura which made him the star performer at seminars and conferences. The weaknesses of the case he was attacking were precisely and damnably tabulated. 'Fourthly . . .', he would say; 'fifthly . . . sixthly . . . seventhly—I have forgotten the seventh point, and there were about five others, but anyway the whole thing is total nonsense'; a condemnation delivered with so charming and mischievous a smile that nobody could possibly take offence.

Hedley Bull was a tall man whose round face gave him an air of

diffident youthfulness. It was a diffidence which sometimes passed for arrogance; as a young man indeed he bore a remarkable likeness to the younger William Pitt, under whose portrait in Chatham House he not infrequently sat. But though never lacking in self-confidence, he was genuinely surprised and delighted at the influence which he came to exercise and the honours which came his way. His election to Fellowship of the British Academy in 1984 gave him immense pleasure, but he had a tragically short time in which to enjoy it. Spinal discomfort began to trouble him that summer. After a little while the cause was diagnosed as cancer. By the spring of 1985 he was clearly a dying man. Stoically he put his affairs in order, completing the editorial work on which he was engaged, in particular the lectures given in Oxford in honour of Adam von Trott, published as *The Challenge of the Third Reich* (Oxford, 1986), and the papers written for the series of conferences on Anglo-American relations organized by the Ditchley Foundation and the Wilson Center in Washington, jointly edited with Roger Louis and later published as *The Special Relationship* (Oxford, 1986). Until a few days before his death he was seeing his graduate students, commenting lucidly and constructively on their work. The end came peacefully on 18 May 1985.

With the work of Hedley Bull international relations as an academic discipline came of age. When he began in the 1950s it was at best a cluster of studies: diplomatic history, area studies, strategic studies, international law. The first generation of those who professed the subject either, like Zimmern and Noel-Baker, were concerned to transform the old states system and create a new kind of world community, or, like E. H. Carr or Hans Morgenthau, denied that international society existed at all, seeing only a Hobbesian search by power after power ceasing only in death. For Marxists the subject was an embarrassment best ignored. From the very beginning Hedley Bull insisted that an international society of states *did* exist, did function after a fashion, might be made to function better, and neither could nor should be transcended or abolished. Like all societies it preserved a modicum of order, which had to be legitimized by its success in implementing a reasonable measure of justice. It had to be studied not in terms of abstract models but of what was there and what had been there. That study must be educated by an awareness of what had been thought in the past, tempered by an equal awareness of the limitations of much of that thought. It was a proper concern for scholars—*real* scholars, not political activists seeking for

panaceas or justifications for particular policies—but the material for their scholarship was the world as it actually worked, not as it might be made to work. Hedley Bull's tough, demanding spirit will dominate the study of the subject for generations to come.

MICHAEL HOWARD