CHAPTER VI

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This chapter has been intended to embody our humble attempt at throwing light on Russell's reaction to wars that he had to witness during his own lifetime. Truly speaking, for him wars are the manifestation of the predatory and atavistic zeal that some people wildly possess to derive certain advantages, though in many cases illusive, at the cost of common people's longing for peaceful living. Although he came to know the evils of wars, both large and small, it was the World War I that gave severe jolt to his entire outlook about human nature and global political situation. The world picture of political relations among the nations, particularly in Europe, after the World War I turned out to be much appalling and disgusting for Lord Russell that he could not help raising protests against war-crimes through different activities to make people realize the evil consequences of the war-mongering attitude of the belligerent nations. The use of Atom-bomb by America in 1945 towards the end of the World War II with its consequent destruction of Hiroshima created a grave fear in the mind of Russell about the imminent peril of human civilization if such a barbarous attitude of any big power is allowed to continue further without any protest. His first experience of war was what he had acquired during the Boer War towards the close of the nineteenth century in which, of course, he took side with England initially because of his inclination towards imperialistic expansion that was going to be made by his motherland.

Later on, he came to realize that war of any scale is absolutely a monster to mankind. From the bitter experiences of the World War I of 1914-18 he could easily visualize what would come out from the World War II of 1939-45. Moreover, Vietnamese War, Cuban War, Korean War, Indo-China war and many other such conflicts rooted
in various types of antagonism based on race, creed, politics, culture and so forth had depressing impact on his life, and he became confirmed that the world would no longer remain a peaceful and happy place for human dwelling unless these forms of aggression and antagonism were abolished as early as possible. This being the background, we would like to throw light on Russell's reaction to the evil consequences of wars that he happened to know during the long span of his life.

Russell's various writings about wars show that he came to realize after the World War I the fact that War is one of the permanent institutions of all free communities though apparently all of them want to live in peace and good relation among themselves. In the essay War as an Institution, he calls war one of the permanent institutions of human society just as parliament is one of our permanent institutions in spite of the fact that it is not always sitting. Regarding the nature of war, in the same essay he states:

"War is a conflict between two groups, each of which attempts to kill and maim as many as possible of the other group in order to achieve some object it desires. The object is generally either power or wealth. It is a pleasure to exercise authority over other men, and it is a pleasure to live on the produce of other men's labour. The victor in war can enjoy more of these delights than the vanquished."

It is true that war is promoted not so much by the end which it has in view as by an impulse to kill and destroy. It seems to spring from the bellicose impulse rather than from a calculation of the advantages that the people of the first aggressor can expect to enjoy. Moreover, it is not waged with much rational deliberation and conscience; so, the fury of war is always devastating and pernicious leading to the large scale killing, torturing and suppressing of the enslaved people.

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Socio-political disputes are always man-made, and may also be settled by men if honestly desired. Some misfortunes of human beings are caused by some non-human environments, but some are inflicted by some other human beings living in the same universe. It can never be denied that outwardly mankind is on the path of so-called continuous progress with the increasing knowledge about the world of nature as well as the human world; it has also seen the wondrous progress of technology as gifted by science. At present, though many parts of the world are facing the threat of famine and other natural calamities that are found to bring about immeasurable devastation to the human race, the main havoc that mankind is ill destined to suffer is caused by men themselves who create wars and other forms of hostilities that breed sorrows and miseries in human society. Referring to the World War I Russell, in his article Principal Causes Are Human, passes his comment in this way: "The civilized nations of the world devoted all their best energies to killing each other, and they find it difficult suddenly to switch over to keeping each other alive". The warring nations felt no hesitation to destroy each other's harvests, agriculture, machinery, disorganized shipping etc. Such behaviour of a nation towards another nation aptly shows that man is man's worst enemy. It has been possible because of their evil passions for irrational pleasure. So, Russell further says: "people who our vigorous and brutal find war enjoyable, provided that it is a victorious war and that there is not too much interference with rape and plunder."

Again, any measure of Victors' exultation over the Vanquished suggests that men the rational beings are very much prone to turn into animal beings that may remain totally callous to the suffering of other people in the orgy of their cheers and enjoyment. If this be the human behaviour, Russell questions the people of the word- how can man be called the true friend of man? Having seen the irrational and inhuman exultation of the English people at the defeat of the German he regretfully comments: "During the First World War, I used to hear English people saying how immensely British trade would benefit from the destruction of German trade, which was to be one of the principal fruits of our victory.

3. Ibid - P. 3.
These are really evil passions and War is the poisonous fruit of such passions though it is pregnant with the sense of so-called patriotism for one's own nation. This type of patriotism is, beyond question, shorn of love and respect towards other nations, and ultimately gives rise to false beliefs that lead to the great wars. This sort of patriotism, no doubt, works like a canker to eat up the essence of human attitude towards peaceful co-existence of all nationalities.

War is the manifestation of accumulated hatred and enmity of a nation towards another, and also of long cherished desire of a nation for keeping another nation under political and economic suppression in order to derive some advantages over the subjugated nation. Thus, war is a human affair though its results are gravely harmful to human beings. In his work Has Man a Future Russell says about man's attitude to war in the following manner:

"War has long been a part of human life that it is difficult for our feelings and our imaginations to group that the present anarchic national freedoms are likely to result in freedom only for corpses. If institution could be created which could prevent war, there world be much more freedom in the world than there is at present just as there is more freedom owing to the prevention of individual murder"  

In Russell's view, love for power pollutes the healthy atmosphere of society, and this point may easily be understood from his elaborate analysis of the role of power in different perspectives of society and life. There are some people who want to acquire power for power's sake, and this type of power has been categorised as naked power by Russell. It is the naked power that makes war "the chief promoter of despotism and the greatest obstacle to the establishment of a system in which irresponsible power is avoided as far as possible". It may, thus, be well argued that war is the evil fruit of man's desire for naked power. It is also worth-mentioning here that the desire for naked power

5. Ibid, p. 13
must be removed from the minds of the war-mongers if human beings are to be made free from the predicament of socio-political domination.

The history of nations shows that every state has its own military force both for self defence and, if need be, for invasion of foreign land. The big powers, though not all, are very much keen to maintain such military force not only for self defence but also for aggression in order to materialize certain advantages over the attacked nation. If this type of attitude does not lurk in the minds of the power hungry, war cannot come into being. But history stands as an undeniable evidence that lust for aggression is like an instinct for many of the big powers. Russell views that the human race cannot last long if it be haunted frequently by the demon of such pernicious attitude of the big powers to warfare. So, Russell remarks:

"To spread ruin, misery and death through one's own country as well as that of enemy is the act of mad man. If East and West could cease their enmity, they could devote their scientific skill to their own welfare, to living without the burden of fear that only their own silliness has caused".7

People can learn the fact from history that there are many a nation to whom violence is attractive, but it is not the case that anything in human nature makes it impossible to restrain such men and nation from such evil deeds. On the contrary, Russell views that the propensity for war that is found in human nature can be thwarted through rational and humanitarian deliberation. To substantiate this view Russell says: "Individuals who have a taste for homicide are restrained by the criminal law, and most of us do not find life intolerable because we are not allowed to commit murders."8 So, he professes that if desire for power to exercise domination over others can be restrained, war is not likely to occur and mankind does not face any threat either.

Now, our questions are- 'why does war occur?' and 'what are the causes behind wars?' Without knowing the real causes that actuate wars to the gruesome threat to mankind, it is futile to raise any kind of protest against such man-made cataclysm. Unless

7. Has Man a Future, op.cit., p. 49
8. Ibid. p. 50
and until the evil factors that give rise to wars are totally uprooted, the appearance of this nightmarish situation will always remain appalling to the common people with growing dreadfulness. Here, we should better admit that the nature of modern warfare is much more different from that of ancient ones as the effect of scientific weapons on modern wars has added an extremely dreadful dimension to the warring psychology.

Mostly wars are the result of political conflict and intolerance between two nations. The object of showing superiority over any weaker nation may lead the stronger nation to warfare provided some enmity exists between the two. In addition to that, a vigorous sense of nationalistic patriotism may also goad a stronger nation to invade a weaker one to show its dominating power. Crimean war, Penninsular war, Boer war and a few others are the befitting examples of such political wars. In this regard, Russell states; "The common interests of mankind are numerous and weighty, but our existing political machinery obscures them through the scramble for power between different nations and different parties."\(^9\)

The desire of a powerful nation to keep her sovereignty unharmed may give rise to a grave political conflict which ultimately, if not checked, turns into a dreadful political war. In this connection, Kingsley Martin, in his work *War, History and Human Nature*, states: "Ever since the beginning of modern history, people have agreed that national sovereignty is the devil we have got to rid ourselves of"\(^10\) He goes one step further to comment on the war-mongering nations that these nations are like the dogs out of leash so far as their bellicose behaviours are concerned.

Modern wars are the wars of scientific armament. These nations which are industrially and technologically far advanced can easily manufacture scientific weapons in huge quantity. Such stock of scientific weapons may be supposed to strengthen the hunger of invasion. Russell is going to describe

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the attitude of a powerful nation with the help of a simile which is as follows:

"Most of us have, at some time, wantonly disturbed an ants' nest and watched with mild amusement the scurrying confusion that resulted. Looking down from the top of a sky-scaper on the traffic of New York, the human beings below cease to seem human, and acquire a faint absurdity."

This is exactly what the common people usually appear to be during war-time. Russell is also going to mean that in the eyes of the powerful nations they are almost like the ants and the small people below the sky-scaper. Such attitude of being superior to and dominant over other people devilishly inspires the big nations to exercise their sovereignty over the weaker which, in the long run, ignites invariably the fire of war.

Besides, the motive of economic benefit of the nation that makes an aggression is also an undeniable cause of war. Russell observes that the powerful nations always want to keep the economic position free from erosion and well-secured amidst all possible adversities. So, such nations want to politically dominate those nations which are considerably rich in natural resources but comparatively weak in political power. In a word, this type of aggression may be termed as imperialistic aggression on the part of the big capitalist powers. He also wants to say that the main cause behind the First World War was initially economic though, later on, it took on the political colour. The Triple Alliance of Germany, Austria and Italy wanted to keep their trade treaty unaffected against the threat of Tsarist Russia which had already formed a league with France. Similarly, England launched Boer War towards the end of the nineteenth century being motivated chiefly by economic factor. What is more, all the imperialistic countries wanted to keep their colonial countries under their domination as it happened in the British Dominion in India.

The impression that Lord Russell received from the First World War is to be taken into account here inasmuch as his reaction of war is the main theme to be discussed in this chapter. It is the beastliness of the World War I that turned Russell, the student of

philosophy, into a social thinker of universal repute. As we all know, the First World War broke out between the **Triple Alliance** of Germany, Austria and Italy, and the **Dual Alliance** of Russia and France at the initial stage on the issue of the murder of the young prince of Austria in Sarajevo of Bosnia. The pattern of alliances ultimately divided the European Big Powers into two rival military groups, and none of them wanted to back down from their own standpoint. The indomitable patriotic spirit and desire for imperialistic expansion were the guiding factors for the **World War I**. The war-mongering nations got involved in the business of killing and destroying being intoxicated by the hemp of nationalism at the cost of all human values, and in both sides the poor and the down-trodden had to be severely affected by the evil consequences of such madness. Russell regrets that no nation of the world, during the time of **World War I**, came forward to think over how the security of mankind could be restored by extinguishing the flame of violence with rational and humanitarian feelings. As opposed to such view, program was encouraged and victory became the ideal of the combatants. In the essay **War, the Cause and the Cure**, he states:

"Throughout Europe, Millions of ordinary peaceable citizens who had no wish to be disturbed in their daily pursuits have suddenly left their homes and their work and been sent to distant places for the purpose of killing each other. This action is universally praised, and it must be confessed that it involves courage and willingness to face a horrible death with little hope of personal gain. Nevertheless, it is an action whose results are immeasurably disastrous, and have not been desired by the men who bring them about." 12

In war, it comes to notice, when an army succeeds in inflicting greater losses upon the opponent army than it faces, there are rejoicings and thanks are given to God. Russell also points out how vindictive desires are gratified by both the sides to torture each other. He says:

"In order to facilitate the actual fighting, towns and villages are burnt, women and children are driven to starve, crops and stores of food are destroyed, and

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the utmost possible destitution is inflicted upon those who are not fighting". 13

Thus, the results that war produces are poverty and want, hatred and fear, crime and brutality and so forth besides a general lowering of the whole standard of civilization and happiness. In this mad orgy, the ordinary people become worst victims of it by obeying the insane commands of the War-mongers. From the above discussion, all are expected to agree with Russell that war affects the human race completely in a negative way. In his paper *War, the Offspring of Fear*, he states:

"To all liberal minded and humane men, this war has come as a shock and a challenge, shattering hopes, and too often uprooting life-long convictions. The horror of what is happening throughout Europe is so staggering that men seek to escape realization by various means--some by such minor deeds of humanity as the time allows, nursing the wounded, providing for the relief of distress or finding an asylum for stranded aliens; some by cherishing hopes of a regenerated Europe to emerge at the end of the struggle; and some by yielding to a fiery conviction in the righteousness of the nation to which they happen to belong." 14

Paradoxically, many people were there who wanted to oppose war but could not raise any strong voice and launch any action of protest against for fear of being maltreated by the war-mongers. Those who could visualize the harmful effects of war could not unitedly combat such mad passions of the belligerent nations. They, of course, could grasp the idea that no better world would come out from such brutal behaviours and actions. To justify the war activities, this group of people always inclined to find out the ethical grounds if any. So, the causes of war are to be counted in each case. What generally happened in the past and also happens today is that people go to support it without making any detailed analysis of the causes. As a result, each side of the war professes that it fights solely for resisting the unprovoked aggression from the opponent side. This argument, of course, is very insipid and insignificant to all the politically conscious men. It is a theory which seems not to be based on scientific truth.

13. Ibid. p. 17.
Russell thinks that England was much responsible for extending the First World War to different countries, big and small, causing a great threat to the world population as it came forward to support the War without making proper search for the causes that actuated the acts of ferocity and cruelty in 1914-18. Thus, human civilization was extensively endangered to face its doom. England was so envious of Germany's greatness and scientific advancement that she could not tolerate any further extension of such greatness of the latter, and hence, took side with Russia and France. Such a narrow cause made England to plunge into the war-game, during 1914-18.

In this way, the entire European countries turned into a battlefield that was formed by the narrow interests of the respective nations which were engaged in war, and which forgot all their power of rational judgement about the peaceful co-existence of different peoples with their own identities. He regretfully states:

"Europe at this moment is like a house on fire, where the inmates instead of trying to escape and to extinguish the flames are engaged in accusing each other of having caused the conflagration, and are willing to be burned themselves provided the others can thereby meet the just punishment of their crimes. This state of mind is barbarous, contrary to reason, contrary to humanity, utterly contrary to self-interest, a return to the savage beneath the miserable rags of a tawdry morality" 15

According to Russell, the heroism in war is of no avail for the permanent benefit of man. He regrets that whatever amount of heroism and devotion is destroyed in war through blindness and fear might have easily been used for good of mankind instead of mutual death. Such constructive behaviours on the part of the nations might be possible only through mutual understanding and respect for each other, not through partisan accusation of perfidy and greed.

Russell also found many people who wanted to justify war of their own accord. War is, in many cases, the outcome of feeling, not of thought. Generally, as it is

15. Ibid. p.40.
seen, when a country breaks a certain treaty, crosses certain frontier commits certain technically unfriendly acts then a war may break out resulting in killing, arson, loot etc. in tremendously large scale. In Russell's view, it is necessary, as regards any war, to consider the real justification of what good it may bring to mankind if it becomes inevitable under certain circumstances. Usually, in the beginning of war each nation under the influence of what is called patriotism, believes that its own victory is both certain and of great importance to mankind. Unless the consequences are known, it is impossible to judge in an appropriate way whether a war is or not likely to be beneficial to human race. Historical records show that the consequences of wars have always turned out to be harmful both for the victorious and the vanquished. This is the first and prominently noticeable evil of war, big or small. Russell also comments in all his writings about war that the nations engaged in war become almost blind to the evils that war produces by concentrating their attention solely on the supposed advantages of victory on their own sides, and consequently the common people are to suffer to a great limit. A large number of young men who are obviously courageous and physically fit for any manly work are killed; many are maimed; some go mad; others become nervous wreck and so forth. Thus, the evils of war befall not only the combatant groups or nations but also the non-combatant nations that want to remain neutral. This misfortune happened to Belgium during the First World War. For those whose sons or husbands or brothers are at the front, the extent of economic injury inflicted by war is much greater than what is realized in normal situation. Russell also observes that the well-to-do try to distract men's minds from the claims of social justice and, thus, lead their motives to clamour of war. In the paper The Ethics of War, Russell states:

"Everywhere the well-to-do, and the political parties which represent their interests, have been the chief agents in stirring up international hatred and in persuading the working man that his real enemy is the foreigner. Thus war, and the fear of war, has a double effect in retarding social progress: it diminishes the resources available for improving the condition of the wage-earning classes, and it distracts man's minds from the need and possibility of general improvement."16

16. Ibid. p.66
Having seen the evils, Russell has classified wars into four categories on the basis of the causes that work behind them. They are- 1) Wars of Colonization 2) Wars of Principles, 3) Wars of Self defence, and 4) Wars of Prestige.

**Wars of Colonization:**

By this term Russell is going to mean those wars where the main purpose is to drive out the whole population of some territory and replace it by an invading population of a different race. Ancient wars were very largely of this type. In modern times, as Russell examines, the conflict of European with American Indians, Maories, and other aborigines in temperate regions, have been of this kind, Such wars are totally devoid of technical justification, and are apt to be more ruthless than any other war.

**Wars of Principles:**

This type of war represents the conflicts between the Protestant and the Catholic, and the English and American civil wars. In such cases, each side, or at least one side, is honestly convinced that the progress of mankind depends upon the adoption of certain beliefs or institutions, which, through blindness and natural depravity, the other side will not regard as reasonable, except when presented at the point of the bayonet.

**Wars of Self-defence:**

According to Bertrand Russell this type of war is almost universally admitted to be justifiable. He says: "The justification of wars of self-defence is very convenient, since so far as I know there has never yet been a war which was not one of self-defence," in the World War 1, Servia is defending itself against the brutal aggression of Austria, Hungary; Russia is defending slavdom against the menace of Teutonic aggression; Germany is defending Teutonic civilization against the encroachment of the Slav and so forth. So, when there is no attack, question of self-defence does not arise.

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17. Ibid.  p. 69.
18. Ibid  p. 70.
Wars of Prestige:

Some big nations are there which plunge into war for the sake of prestige just as Russia and Austria plunged into war in 1914. Austria might have remained silent at the murder of the Austrian prince in Sarajevo, but did not do so. Because it was a question of prestige to take revenge of the murder of the prince. So, this nation attacked Servia accusing it of conspiracy. Russia came forward to help Servia as because Servia was largely inhabited by the Slav people. So, it was the question of prestige for Russia to defend the Slav people living in Servia. Thus, one murder ultimately led to the massacre of large scale for the sake of prestige. Russell says:

"Men desire the sense of triumph, and fear the sense of humiliation which they would have in yielding to the demands of another nation. Rather than forgo the triumph, rather than endure the humiliation, they are willing to inflict upon the world all those disasters which it is now suffering and all that exhaustion and impoverishment which it must long continue to suffer". 19

This type of prestige sentiment is always condemnable as a cause of war as it is largely prone to inflict immeasurable suffering on the lives of the ordinary and honest people. Such sentiments are generally nurtured by the aristocracy and the powerful people. In many cases it is the result of racial prejudice. It is Russell's view that friendly relations among the nations are never possible if the narrow sentiment of race, creed and economic privilege are not suppressed at least to the minimum level.

Though Russell has divided wars into four categories keeping in view the main causes that give rise to them, he always professes that all types of wars are extensively harmful both to the physical and to the mental condition of the human race as well. History evidences say that when war occurs the common people of both the sides who want to live in peace and enjoy sound sleep after day's labour are found to be frequently haunted by the demon of violence and cruelty. Again, what he thinks about the consequences of any war, particularly the modern one, deserves heed from all the

conscientious people of the world. Russell hopes the belligerent nations must come forward to avoid the disastrous situation that may be caused by human enmity. The most urgent business of the conscientious people is to make the war-mongers realize that it is their uttermost blindness and also delusion if they want to keep the universal men under terror and brinkmanship since war-mania never helps mankind go ahead through the path of progress and mental happiness.

Another negative aspect of war is that the warring people get much more inclined to the deadly weapons invented by science like machine-guns, artillery, nuclear bombs and so forth instead of any constructive initiative for the benefit of the human race. The World War I has given mankind the taste of scientific weapons, to the effect that the larger section of the people who want to live peacefully are much terrified about their further existence on this planet. As a matter of fact, it was the World War I that aroused in different countries like Turkey, Bulgaria, Rumania, Greece and others an intense tendency to manufacture scientific arms and weapons and also join allies according to their choices. Moreover, widespread Civil War broke out in Russia during the War period, and the world could see a new social system namely 'The Union of Soviet Socialist Republics' which was formed in the land of Russia in 1918 under the leadership of V.I. Lenin. The worst result of the war is the germination of enmity among the big powers, and this situation ultimately caused undesired halt to the socio-political and economic progress of all the countries of Europe. Russell was very much concerned at the negative impact of the World War I on the intellectual, moral and social aspects of what is known as International Relation.

World War II (1939-1945)

No sooner had the agony of the World War I been fully appeased than the agony of the World War II started worrying the minds of world people about the disastrous future of the human race. It was Hitler who let loose terror almost in every part of Europe. He was the leader of the 'National Socialist German Workers' Party (NAZI for short) and believed in will and heroism to take revenge of the Versailles Treaty (1918), in
which "German had been stabbed in the back in 1918 by Jews. Marxian Socialists and other "traitors" to the nation. He himself was an insuppressible rebel against the injustice and humiliation which was made to Germany at Versailles Treaty. He wanted to secure dictatorial power by bringing about certain changes in the constitution and eliminating rival parties from the arena of politics. The plans he undertook to rejuvenate Germany may come to notice of any one from the following description of William H. McNeill:

"He set out to make Germany great once again by rebuilding the armed forces, putting men and machines back to work, and engaging in shrewd and daring diplomatic manoeuvres. Neither France nor Britain was able to resist Hitler's action effectively. The United States and Russia did not even try. Hitler was therefore able in an amazingly short time to make Germany once more the dominant power on the continent of Europe, while at home, by persecuting Jews and ending unemployment, he consolidated his popularity among the majority of Germans."  

From the above description it becomes very clear that Hitler really turned into "Terror" for the entire people of Europe. He disobeyed, until 1938, the terms and conditions of "Versailles Treaty", and reorganized the German military power to make as strong as to face France and other powers. With a view to expanding the agricultural land for the people of Germany he started occupying more and more area in the East, and settled German people there. This type of expansionist activity was not tolerated by France and Britain. Then, he attacked Poland on 1 September 1939, and this was the beginning of the World War II, a dark chapter in the history of human civilization. Here, we are basically concerned, not with the way how the war took the devastating turn, but with how European civilization was affected by the consequences of this beastliness of war-jingoism, McNeill States:

"As in 1918, Europe in 1945 was extensively devastated; Massive air raids had shattered German and other European cities; communications were badly

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damaged; economic paralysis was general. Yet recovery came far more smoothly after
1945 than after 1918, mainly because all concerned realized that spontaneous return to
normal was out of the question. As a result, techniques of social and economic
management that had been developed during the two World Wars and in response to the
depression of the 1930's were used to reconstruct postwar Europe.  

Such crippling consequences of wars made Russell sullen and sulky, and resolved
deliberately to stand against war-mongerings of nations at any risk. How he reacted to
the First World War may be seen in what he writes in his *Autobiography,* Vol. II.
Having seen the atrocious victory of Germany in the *Battle of Marne,* he could not
resist himself from protesting against war-culture of the Big Powers. He says:

"I never had a moment's doubt as to what I must do. I have at times been
paralysed by scepticism, at times I have been cynical, at other times indifferent,
but when the work came I felt as if I heard the voice of God. I know that it was
my business to protest, however futile protest might be. My whole nature was
involved, as a lover of truth, the national propaganda of all the belligerent
nations sickened me. As a man of thwarted parental feeling, the massacre of
the young wrung my heart."

Thus, the war of 1914-18 brought about many changes in his views and visions. He
came to realize that puritanism did nothing for human happiness. He took to thinking in a
new light about his love and responsibility for the living ones. Russell was not swept away
from his decision as he had profound compassion for the sorrows of the world. He had to
adjust himself to a new mental set-up. In this regard, he says: "I lost old friends and made
new ones. I came to know some few people whom I could deeply admire." One of his
new acquaintances was E.D. Morel who also, had to go to prison for their pacifist mission.

We have so far learnt that apparent causes of war may be ascertained to be political,
economic, ethnic, religious and so forth. In this respect Russell has, of course, offered

22. Ibid, p. 500


one different view which is, in no way, less significant. For him "the ultimate fact from
which war results is the fact that a large proportion of mankind have an impulse to conflict
rather than harmony, and can only be brought to co-operate with others in resisting and
attacking a common enemy. This is the case in private life as well as in the relations of
states." 25 This type of impulse of quarrelling and self assertion is native to most men,
and this may produce various human conflicts including war and create difficulty in bringing
about a World-State. According to Russell this impulse, is not confined to one nation
only, it exists, in varying degrees, in all the vigorous nations of the world. This warring
impulse is always condemnable in the interest of the peaceful existence of mankind. He
maintains that it is better to forego material comfort, power, pomp and outward glory than to
kill or be killed, to hate or to be hated, to throw away in a mad moment of fury the bright
heritage of the ages. Thus, about the philosophy of war Russell very sarcastically remarks:

"Devotion to the nation is perhaps the deepest and most widespread religion on
the present age. Like the ancient religions, it demands its persecutions, its
holocausts, its lurid heroic cruelties; like them, it is noble, primitive, brutal,
and mad." 26

As regards the wars of creeds, Russell wants to say that the fanatical intolerance
creates conflicts among the followers of different creeds. He points out in the essay
Creeds and Ideologies that China and Japan were never religiously disturbed as they
still believe that only a single religion cannot be exclusively true. That is why the Chinese
believe both in Buddhism and in Confucianism, the Japanese in both Buddhism and in
Shinto. 27 Similarly in the Greco-Roman world, the Romans identified their gods with
those of Greece. Temples to Egyptian and Babylonian gods were built in Rome. It is
evidently true that people of different religions may live peacefully and constructively
unless they become fanatical about their respective religions and hateful towards others.
But unfortunately, Russell believes, wars of religion began with the rise of

26. Ibid. p. 77.
Mohammedanism. He says:

"The Moslems, like the Christians and the Jews, held that there could be only one true Faith. They were less intolerant than the Christians, but sufficiently so to make any genuine peace between Christian and Modern States impossible." 28

Ideological rifts and variations may give rise to fanaticism which finally leads to conflicts in the socio-political life of men. There was fanaticism in the French Revolution, but it had been brought under control within two years. There was fanaticism in the German resistance to Napoleon, but it almost died down after 1815. There was fanaticism on both sides in the American Civil War and in the struggle between Russian revolutionaries and the Tsarists. But except in Russia, the fanatics started losing ground off and on. Thus the world witnessed in the past and also witnesses at present various forms of fanaticism which are directly and indirectly conducive to the war activities in different parts of the world laying indelible stains on human civilization.

It is worth remembering here that the period between the World War I and the World War II witnessed no major war except few small ones which were not so dreadening as the big ones. Nonetheless, war is war, it harms mankind in general, kills life on each side of the combatants. Therefore, the whole period may be considered to be a ceaseless strife to settle the issues that sprang forth in the wake of the World War I of 1914-18. Whatever may be the attitude of the warring nations, Russell was profoundly pained having seen the game of killing and destroying by human beings and became doubtful whether mankind would survive or not as he observed that each outbreak was tending to be more violent and devastating through the use of scientific armament. So rapid and so suicidal is the technical advance that every political issue is ready to work like a spark to inflame violence. The tragedy of the human civilization is that it may happen to face nuclear war at any moment unless the thinking and behaving of the universal people be guided by rational judgement and moral obligation for keeping the human race alive on this planet.

28. Ibid. p. 117.
Kingsley Martin writes elaborately about the dreadening effects of nuclear war in his book *War, History and Human Nature* passing this comment that the world is now preparing for suicidal madness by inventing nuclear war-arms without thinking of its consequences which are morally condemnable. He also expresses grave concern at the warring attitude of the big powers of the world. He states:

"We know a nuclear war would mean destruction on a scale never even conceived before. A crowded country like England, a small island of 50 million people, could be made uninhabitable by a very few H-bombs; I have often heard the figure put at ten. And Britain, with great American H-bomb bases on her east coast, would necessarily be an immediate target for Soviet missiles. The advantage in nuclear war would, of course, be on the side of countries which are widely dispersed, like Russia or China—which has 650 million people."  

From the above picture of nuclear war, it may well be comprehensible that the world is going towards suicidal madness by exhibiting blindly the competitive expertise in producing nuclear weapons of any form. As a lover of mankind, not as a Briton or European, Russell protests vehemently against nuclear warfare as he thinks that such a movement will destroy a large section of the human race as so many conflicts persist in the world today. Among such conflicts he mentions those between "Jews and Arabs; Indians and Pakistanis; Whitemen and Negroes in Africa; and, overshadowing all minor conflicts the Titanic struggle between communism and anti-communism."  

(Essay: Man's peril)

If such conflicts continue, any side, at a certain moment of mad passions, may take recourse to nuclear armament, and, thus, may create a situation in which mankind may face large scale loss of lives and properties. To aggravate this moral atmosphere, H-bombs have made men more passionate for war which ultimately may result in the collapse of universal brotherhood. So, Russell fears while an atomic bomb could utterly obliterate Hiroshima in 1945, one hydrozoan bomb can, no doubt, obliterate the large cities like London, New York, Moscow and so on within a very few moments. From the

following words in the essay *Man's Peril*, we may easily understand how an H-bomb can affect land and life if written exploded:

"Such a bomb, if exploded near the ground or under water, sends radioactive particles into the upper air. They sink gradually and reach the surface of the earth in the form of a deadly dust or rain. It was this dust which infected the Japanese fishermen and their catch of fish although they were outside what American experts believed to be the danger Zone. No one knows how widely such lethal what radioactive particles might be diffused, but the best authorities are unanimous in saying that a war with hydrogen bombs is quite likely to put an end to the human race. It is feared that if many hydrogen bombs are used there will be universal death—sudden only for a fortunate minority, but for the majority a slow torture of disease and disintegration". 31

The people of world became first aware of H-bomb in 1945 when America attacked this small country on August 6, 1945.32 The great powers like United States, Canada and Britain became so prone to invent it that work towards making it began very soon after the beginning of the Second World War in 1939. Later on, it came to the knowledge of the general people that Russia also accelerated the process of making atomic weapons causing a great fear in the minds of the peace loving people. To the agony of the world, all great powers, thus, became all but mad, and did not hesitate to indulge in such evil temptations. Ironically "hate was considered synonymous with patriotism, and preparation for war thought to be the only safeguard of peace"33 Obviously the world was set upon a wrong course, and, in coming years, it may travel further and further along the road towards disaster.

The great humanitarian thinker Lord Bertrand Russell was extremely shocked at the overwhelming inclination of the big powers to the making of nuclear armament in

32 Has Man a Future, op.cit., p. 18.
the disguise of self defence. To him, this type of gesture was totally immoral and inhumane. He knows very well that the damage that a nuclear war may cause is impossible to ascertain and those who may be destined to survive such war will simply get a grim picture of human society to their utter sorrow and grief. In the essay *Science and War* he writes:

"The atom bomb and still more the hydrogen bomb, have caused new fears, involving new doubts as to the effects of science on human life. Some eminent authorities, including Einstein, have pointed out that there is a danger of the extinction of all life on this planet. I do not myself think that this will happen in the next war, but I think it may well happen in the next but one, if that is allowed to occur." \(^{34}\)

Those countries which do not possess H-bomb naturally feel unsafe and insecure as the nuclear war, in their eyes, may break out at any moment as the result of conflicts that persist among the big powers. Russell is also of the view that the innocent and common people are to face grave disasters if the International anarchy and the skill for making such weapons are allowed to continue any further. From such attitude of the big powers to nuclear armament one may assume that there are definitely a great deal of horrors in store for mankind unless certain changes in men's outlook and behaviours are done very soon. The conspicuous feature of the twentieth century world politics is that the warring nations were very sensitive to the use of nuclear weapons in war. K.P. Karunakaran, in his work *Modernization of Capitalism, Communism and World Politics*, writes:

"We have already witnessed the experimental explosion of a fifty to sixty megaton Bomb i.e. of a weapon with about 3000 times the power of the bomb used in 1945 against Japan. Hundred megaton devices, weapons about 5000 times the size of those used in 1945 are no more difficult to devise." \(^{35}\)

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34. *Impact of Science*, op.cit, p. 87

Russell’s concern is that those scientists who manufacture such megapower nuclear weapons without paying any heed to the further continuity of mankind are the masters of devilish knowledge and their creativity is nothing but a curse to the entire human race. Such knowledge is of no use for the survival of mankind.

Many may say that nuclear weapons may be put aside by a universal agreement of the big powers for not using them. Nevertheless, the risk of nuclear war cannot fully be negated so long as there are nuclear weapons in stock, and the culture of manufacturing them is not totally banned by World Authority. The adherence to manufacturing such weapons will always be terrifying the human civilization. Here Russell's point is very striking when he says that the lessons of history show very clearly that the world has not learnt to live by throwing away war weapons, it be traditional and sophisticated. That is why Russell suggests that the chief concern of man should be the question as to how people of the universe can live rationally and conscientiously if they do not want to see the doom of mankind sooner or later. The belligerent nations must come forward to sacrifice some of their interests for an assurance of survival of the human race.

So far, we have touched upon, though in brief, how Russell’s views and visions were largely affected by the consequences of the World War I and the World War II respectively and also his speculation about the avoidance of war as a very fruitful means to keep the continuity of mankind on the main track. Before we make any attempt at throwing light on his activities for World peace, we think, it will be better on our part also to touch upon his reaction to Vietnamese war, Cuban war, Indo-China war and so forth which broke out during his own life time and also actuated his peace mission for the permanent safety of mankind.

Lord Russell, in his scholarly work "Unarmed Victory" has elaborately discussed the American way of treatment towards Cuba, an island which is full of natural resources and agricultural produces, and which is located to the South of the USA. Because of certain rift in relation between the big America and the small Cuba, the former imposed a blockade against any importation of arms to the latter in 1961. Under such circumstances, Cuba appealed to Russia which immediately expressed willingness to
supply arms in spite of the U.S. Blockade. On such pact, "the president of the U.S. arrogated to himself the right to threaten the Soviet Union publicly with nuclear destruction unless the Soviet Union bowed to American will." Very interestingly the U.S. justified its action in the U.N. by claiming that in the nuclear world it was not necessary to have an open declaration of war. Anyway, Russell was much concerned at such a bellicose behaviour of the U.S. and its mad willingness to plunge into war.

The dispute between China and India was not on any ideological grounds, but solely on certain territorial questions. The regions under question were quite close to the Himalayas which is, even today, sparsely inhabited, and practically of no importance for either party except for military reasons. As a matter of fact, the rift between the two nations started working in 1957 and continued till 1962. Russell apprehended that no ceasefire would take place between the two powerful nations, and thought that the war would be disastrous for India and China as well. Moreover, the Indo-china war generated a grave sense of horror in the Eastern part of Asia. The war between Vietnam and America gave a severe jolt to the conscientious people of the world. Regarding the causes of this war Russell says:

"The war in Vietnam is looked upon as the inevitable and tragic product of backwardness, poverty and savagery supposedly indigenous to South East Asia. The roots of the current conflicts are sought in the dark past; ancient conflicts between North and South are dredged up. The American intervention is, on the view, fortuitous. The Vietnamese people are thought to be pitiable creatures, into whose affairs the Americans have reluctantly and unfortunately been invited." 37

Whatever may be the causes, it was the United States that was solely responsible for Vietnamese war. Vietnam launched an anti-colonial movement against America, and the latter applied all measures to suppress such anti-colonial sentiment by waging barbarous war against the sons of the soil of Vietnam. It is also equally worth mentioning that

"during the decades between the two World Wars, discontent and alienation were reflected in a variety of developments in Vietnam". Nationalist thought was germinating. Those who were not easily satisfied by the American colonialism were determined to oust the American from their native soil at the cost of life. Big powers like China and Soviet Union were at the point of plunging into war against America with a view to liberating Vietnam from the clutch of atrocious colonial rule. Russell apprehended that such involvement of big powers in war was going to lead mankind to the point of extinction. So he says: "The tragedy in Vietnam indicates the extent to which it is possible to hide or disguise terrible crimes and it is true that people in the West raised their voices for an end to the bloodshed." (Essay: War and Atrocity in Vietnam)

Thus, Russell happened to witness a number of wars during his long life-span which appalled him in such a way that he had to devote the larger part of his life from 1914 to 1970 to an indomitable and indefatigable mission against war-mongering of the big powers. This, of course, does not mean that war against suppression and oppression needs no support from the conscientious and humanitarian section of the world population. Russell himself supported England to wage war against Hitler in the World War II, but the main motive of Russell was to save mankind from the terrorist and fascist activities of the Nazis. Yet Russell is of the view that war should be avoided for the general good of universal men as far as practicable since the effect of war is always negative. In his work Pacifism and Revolution (1916-18), he has stated in great conviction that human welfare is not to be achieved through violence. So he says: "The war may help the weary population of the world to see that force is not the road to a secure peace or to friendly relations between the nations. If so, good may come out of it in the end. But it will come through revulsion against war, not through continued belief in punishment, destruction and death." (Essay: American's Entry into the War)

Lord Russell the humanitarian thinker, thus, condemns the bellicose desire of any big power, it be American or European, as it is feared to be the root cause of any melodramatic scenario putting innumerable lives into death and causing a horrific feeling of distrust among the people that are left to witness the grim picture of anti-human and irrational exercise of the belligerent nations.

40. Pacifism and Revolution, (1916-18), op.cit., p. 130.