

## World Peace and How We Can Achieve It

by Alex J. Bellamy

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When George Santayana said, “Only the dead have seen the end of the war,” he was quite clear about the enduring nature of war and its grim realities. Sharing the same sentiment, Herodotus exclaimed, “In peace, sons bury their fathers. In war, fathers bury their sons,” reminding us of the devastating impact of war on human lives. Despite this knowledge, humans across the millennia repeatedly engaged themselves in bloodshed, wars, and conflicts. In this regard, the scholarly work of Alex J. Bellamy in his book *World Peace and How We Can Achieve It*<sup>2</sup> discusses the survival instinct of humanity that led to wars and further explores how global peace can be attained with the assistance of international institutions. The author correlates mankind’s deeply rooted warmonger nature with the prevailing anarchy, a connection he reinforces by mentioning the Stone Age era, where a constant struggle for mankind’s struggle was evident. This instinct of survival and competition together made the man warlike. In addition to the challenging nature of mankind, Bellamy shed light on how global peace can prevail in contemporary times.

Moreover, it is also evident that warmongering acts aren’t universal, and peace prevails in many parts of the world. The societies and regions where peace prevails are a hope that peace can be achieved globally. The book further entails a detailed historical exploration of variable attitudes of societies towards anarchic inclinations, where societies embraced peaceful practices. The peaceful gestures exhibited by African societies are one fine example, where gifts are exchanged to diffuse tensions and create a constructive environment for dialogues and discussions.

The author then outlines the significant role of international institutions in paving the pathway to peace. The major success of these institutions was the emergence of International Law (IL), which helped in declining the ever-growing mantra of war. By checks and balances, it has ensured that wars can be prevented, and it is also observed that interstate wars have been minimized. This shows that despite human tendencies towards warfare and aggression, they also have the will to advocate for peace and harmony. In this regard, he highlighted the significance of *peacekeeping*. Through peacekeeping, the global community ensured that the dream of peace is alive even in an anarchic world. Although conventional warfare declined with the emergence of global institutions, new challenges erupted in the form of intra-state conflicts. The

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new shift from inter-state to intrastate conflicts opened multifaceted challenges for the global community.

Through his reasoning, Bellamy pointed out three main reasons that address why wars persisted. First, it is how society is structured, where humans divide themselves into factions like groups associations, from families to political parties, and then nation-states, making them influential. Second is personal interests; securing personal interests makes wars beneficial for particular groups, as these groups attain political gains at the cost of war. Lastly, increasing security and military capabilities leads to a *security dilemma* in the anarchic world, raising threats and concerns for others. Accumulating the division in structure, personal gains, and desire for strength ignites the war.

Moreover, the author mentions the involvement of actors that accumulate wealth by spurring conflicts. These affluent groups consider war as a business to gain material gains. He highlights how the war economy benefits the industrial giants that make weapons and supply arms. Thus, for elites' war is a running business and an opportunity to expand their wealth.

The book further depicts the phenomena of the formation of states in relation to waging wars. Historical evidence indicates that states came into existence due to man's way of increasing its sphere of influence. It can be said that the struggle to create a city-state was indeed devastating and ugly in nature. However, the author establishes that states can act as both warmakers and peacemakers. But for most of the period, states were involved in war-making rather than peace-making. Moreover, war for many humans is a passion that has been implanted, and this passion drives individuals to focus on warmongering inclinations. Nevertheless, no one can rationalize the act of waging war and taking innocent lives based on personal emotions or passions.

The book is an exceptional contribution to comprehending the underlying causes of anarchy, conflicts, warfare, and the intricate facets of human nature entwined with the pursuit of power. In addition to this analysis, Bellamy adeptly delves into exploring the elusive aspiration for peace, offering insightful suggestions for its attainment within the context of contemporary society. The proposed path to sustainable peace inherently incorporates the substantial involvement of global institutions and the commensurate responsibility borne by nation-states. Consequently, fostering an optimistic disposition while relinquishing pessimistic paradigms becomes paramount in pursuing global peace and stability.