

# PEACE OR WAR

By Ven. Narada Maha Thera

Peace or war depends entirely on respective Governments. Religious leaders, philosophers, or eminent writers may denounce war with their powerful pen and tongue, but their voice will be like a cry in the wilderness.

One may almost be tempted to say that religions have failed in preventing war. Perhaps it would be more correct to state that many religionists have failed to put into actual practice the religious principles which they profess. At times even so-called religious leaders go to the fanatic extent by encouraging killing without the least compunction.

What spiritual force on earth could prevent those two powerful nations from attacking each other if they are determined to bring about their own destruction?

Will even a Buddha, a Krishna, a Christ, or a Mohamed be able to check the mad career of warring nations?

Will they give heed to the teachings of the Tipitaka, the Vedas, the Bible, or the Quran?

Do most Buddhists practise their friendliness, Hindus their harmlessness, Christians their neighbourliness, and Muslims their brotherhood?

Will Peace Conferences held in Geneva be of any avail when nations are arming themselves to their teeth?

Even if Capitalists or Communists were to create a Paradise on earth, no substantial peace or genuine happiness could be guaranteed.

We are told that even in actual Paradise there was an unfortunate quarrel for power that ended in eternal damnation. The quarrelsome person in question was not an ordinary mortal but an archangel, and the contention was between him and his all-powerful, all-merciful loving father. Will ordinary mortals fare better?

Now, who are to be blamed for this deplorable state of affairs in the world?

Well, the individuals themselves. More strictly it is our own minds – actually the three roots of evil, lust, ill-will, and ignorance latent in all – that are solely responsible for all the ills of life. We ourselves are creating our own heavens. We ourselves are creating our own hells.

Until and unless these evil roots are either eradicated or attenuated, and their opposites – generosity, loving-kindness and wisdom – are fully developed, no perpetual peace and genuine happiness could ever be guaranteed.