

From “Australia’s Foreign Wars: Origins, Costs, Future?!” <http://users.cyberone.com.au/ibuckley>  
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## Appendix I

### Churchill in 1929 on the threat to Humankind from Future Weapons of Mass Destruction

In addition to Churchill’s warning following the Boer War as to the likely power of modern industrially-based weapons to totally undermine all Western States (along with their populations) should they involve themselves in any future wars with one-another - regardless of whether they were to be the vanquished or the victor (see 2B(e),13) – he, in light of the all-round disastrous outcomes of World War I, warned us once more in another insightful passage. The following excerpts are his reflections on the outcomes of WWI taken from his historical account, *The Aftermath*, which he published in the 1920s. (WC2, 450-455)

Referring to this account, he writes, *“But all this lies in the past. It is a tale that is told, from which we may draw the knowledge and comprehension needed for the future. The disproportion between the quarrels of nations and the suffering which fighting out those quarrels involves; the poor and barren prizes which reward sublime endeavour on the battlefield; the fleeting triumphs of war; the long slow rebuilding; the awful risks so hardly run; the doom missed by a hair’s breadth, by the spin of a coin, by the accident of an accident – all this should make the prevention of another great war the main preoccupation of mankind. ....Next time the competition may be to kill women and children, and the civil population generally, and the victory will give herself in sorry nuptials to the diligent hero who organizes it on the largest scale. ..(WC2, 450-51).”*

*“It was not until the dawn of the twentieth century of the Christian era that War really began to enter into its kingdom as the potential destroyer of the human race. The organization of mankind into great States and Empires and the rise of nations to full collective consciousness enabled enterprises of slaughter to be planned and executed upon a scale, with a perseverance, never before imagined. All the noblest virtues of individuals were gathered together to strengthen the destructive capacity of the mass. Good finances, the resources of world-wide credit and trade, the accumulation of large capital reserves, made it possible to divert for considerable periods the energies of whole peoples to the task of Devastation. Democratic institutions gave expression to the will-power of millions. Education not only brought the course of the conflict within the comprehension of every one, but rendered each person serviceable in a high degree for the purpose in hand. The Press afforded a means of unification and of mutual encouragement. Religion, having discreetly avoided conflict on the fundamental issues, offered its encouragements and consolations, through all its forms, impartially to all combatants. Lastly, Science unfolded her treasures and her secrets to the desperate demands of men and placed in their hands agencies and apparatus almost decisive in their character.” (WC2, 452-3)*

Then, speaking of what happened throughout the four years of the so-called 'Great War', he goes on to point out that the destructive possibilities in the future, aided by expanding financial, industrial and scientific capabilities, should not be underestimated, ending with a final warning to all of us: -

*“ Mankind has never been in this position before. Without having improved appreciably in virtue or enjoying wiser guidance, it has got into its hands for the first time the tools by which it can unfailingly accomplish its own extermination. That is the point in human destinies to which all glories and toils of men have at last led them. They would do well to pause and ponder upon their new responsibilities. Death stands at attention, obedient, expectant, ready to serve, ready to shear away the peoples en masse; ready , if called on, to pulverize, without hope of repair, what is left of civilization. He awaits only the word of command. He awaits it from a frail, bewildered being, long his victim, now – for one occasion only – his Master.”* (WC2, 454-5)

**Churchill**, Winston S. *THE AFTERMATH being a sequel to THE WORLD CRISIS*, Macmillan & Co. Ltd, London, 1944. (WC2)