A (Realistically) Bleak Future

In *Five and a Half Utopias*, Weinberg addresses several possibilities for the future of Earth, describing utopias that could blossom from the chaotic world that exists today. Each vision places power in the hands of a different sociopolitical force; economics, religion, intellect, and technology rule these respective futures, while only one vision imagines a return to a simpler life, where the abandonment of technology brings mankind to a more peaceful existence. Though this list is far from exhaustive it addresses a wide spread of problems and perks that each of these societies would offer, as Weinberg attempts to zero in on the ‘best’ possible future for mankind.

While none of these futures are perfect, as Weinberg points out, the possibility of a Republic-esque oligarchy seems improbable in the heavily democratized U.S.A. The ‘free-market’ future also seems unlikely, given the long standing placement of a governmental body that watches over society, and the businesses that fuel a nation's economic well-being. Given the extreme variance that accompanies different religious beliefs, it is doubtful that any single religious organization could establish itself in such a position of power, though the ultimate level of control that it supposes is among the scariest of all of these futures. Weinberg addressing the inequality that has been imposed upon women in such societies, and the brainwashing of children to become warriors ‘for the cause’. With this being said, a technological utopia seems the most probable of any of Weinberg’s futures - the growth of technology has always been exponential, and it is unlikely that this development can be halted by anything short of extinction, or total destruction following some sort of cataclysmic war.

My idea of a utopia is a fairly simple one, though highly unlikely. War is the most devastating force that plagues our race, and though it seems impossible, a warless future would be a true utopia, in which the incredible amounts of money that are invested in warfare or ‘national defense’ could be redirected toward education, scientific development, and the improvement of public resources like museums, roads, and libraries. The ever-increasing population of the human race will soon run out of space on this planet, and through continued technological development, nearby planets could become truly ‘new’ worlds in which mankind could establish an entirely new form of society. However, as a flawed species, I do not foresee any future in which a truly utopian society can form - greed and inequality are a part of the human experience, and will always subvert any attempt to establish a utopia.