



NEW WORLD ORDER

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"The earth is but one country and mankind its citizens."—Bahá'u'lláh.

VISION AND REALITY

For those who know that in very recent times God has spoken once again to mankind, through the voice of a great Prophet, these days of pain, and sorrow, and hatred are also days of boundless hope and certainty. They are days of excitement and anticipation, of sure knowledge that the high vision which has remained in the minds and hearts of men from the beginning of history, is now to be realised. The Old Testament has many references to this day; the last book of the Bible is full of it. The seer-poets have written of it. Thus Tennyson:

"When the war-drum throbs no longer and the battle flags are furled,

In the Parliament of man, the federation of the world."

And Blake:

"I will not cease from mental fight,
Nor shall my sword sleep in my hand,
Till we have built Jerusalem
In England's green and pleasant land."

Men of all nations and religions have this most glorious vision enshrined in their scripture and literature. Its realisation is indelibly bound up with a renewal of the *true spirit* of religion, that spirit which burns away the fettering creeds and forms, and pulsates through the arteries of mankind with the energy of brotherhood, selflessness, and the true joy of service to our one Father.

What then must be the feelings of those who realise that God has sent a messenger to restore this vital and invigorating power? Bahá'u'lláh, speaking in the name of the Prophets of old, declares this day to be the time of the fulfilment of Their promises. "Yet so it shall be; these fruitless strifes, these ruinous wars shall pass away, and the 'Most Great Peace' shall come . . . Do not you in Europe need this also? Is not this that which Christ foretold?"

But man is not left in his jungle of theories, political schemes, economic panaceas, selfish ambitions and unbelief, to tread this difficult path unaided and without guidance. Not only is the power of faith and zeal for the good life restored, but definite and practical guidance is given, by which eternal spiritual principles may be applied to modern conditions.

"The unity of the human race, as envisaged by Bahá'u'lláh, implies the establishment of a world commonwealth in which all nations, races, creeds and classes are closely and permanently united, and in which the autonomy of its state members and the personal freedom and initiative of the individuals that compose them are definitely and completely safeguarded. This commonwealth must, as far as we can visualise it, consist of a world legislature, whose members will, as the trustees of the whole of mankind, ultimately control the entire resources of all the component nations, and will enact such laws as shall be required to regulate the life, satisfy the needs and adjust the relationships of all races and peoples. A world executive, backed by an international Force, will carry out the decisions arrived at, and apply the laws enacted by, this world legislature, and will safeguard the organic unity of the whole commonwealth. A world tribunal will adjudicate and deliver its compulsory and final verdict in all and any disputes that may arise between the various elements constituting this universal system. A mechanism of world inter-communication will be devised, embracing the whole planet, freed from national hindrances and restrictions, and functioning with marvellous swiftness and perfect regularity. A world metropolis will act as the nerve centre of a world civilisation . . . A world language will either be invented or chosen from among the existing languages and will be taught in the schools of all the federated nations as an auxiliary to their mother

The Bahá'í Faith

The Báb, The Forerunner, declaration 1844, martyrdom 1850.

Bahá'u'lláh, The Founder, declaration 1863, ascended 1892.

'Abdu'l-Bahá, The True Exemplar and Interpreter, 1844-1921.

The Basic Principles

The Oneness of Mankind.

The Oneness of Religion.

The Independent Investigation of Truth.

The Relinquishing of Prejudices.

Education for Everyone.

Equal Status for Men and Women.

The Harmony of Religion and Science.

Solution of Industrial and Economic Problems.

A Universal Language. (Auxiliary.)

Universal Peace; international executive authority.

A World Commonwealth.

tongue. A world script, a world literature, a uniform and universal system of currency, of weights and measures, will simplify and facilitate intercourse and understanding . . . ”

“ A world federal system, ruling the whole earth and exercising unchallengeable authority over its unimaginably vast resources, blending and embodying the ideals of both the East and the West, liberated from the curse of war and its miseries, and bent on the exploitation of all the available sources of energy on the surface of the planet, a system in which Force is made the servant of Justice, whose life is sustained by its universal recognition of one God and by its allegiance to one common Revelation—such is the goal towards which humanity, impelled by the unifying forces of life, is moving.”

This authentic statement of the teachings of Bahá'u'lláh, made by the Guardian of the Bahá'í Faith, is surely the most practical outline of the brotherhood of man yet made. It rests on unity in all essential things, and yet preserves diversity for individuals and groups. Most important it takes into full account the oft repeated statement of 'Abdu'l-Bahá, that a great power is needed to put these high ideals into effect. That power is evoked in the human spirit by the Messengers of God, causing men to live according to His law, and to associate with each other as members of His family.

Without this power what is the use of the plan?

The Oneness of Mankind

by Constance Langdon-Davies

The Oneness of Mankind means first of all, that all races and nations of the earth are of equal importance, and that no one race or nation has the right to live at the expense of another.

This is very far from being accepted by many people of many nations. But there are other reasons for this non-acceptance besides prejudice and ignorance.

For example, the economic condition of the coloured races, Chinese, Indian and Negro, makes them willing to accept work for very small wages. This in turn makes it cheaper to employ human beings for work which in other countries is done by animals or machinery.

Thus we have the Chinese rickshaw man, who dies from sheer physical exhaustion at the age of forty, performing a task which in England is prohibited by law even for dogs.

There is nothing inherently due to race about this; it is not many generations since English children were employed long hours in factories and in consequence grew up stunted.

The important thing is to avoid regarding any group or category of men as inferior or bad. Men are not so much bad as limited; their loyalties are limited. In an extreme case they are limited to the individual and an utterly selfish and self-centred individual becomes either a maniac or a criminal.

But in far more cases their loyalties are limited to a group. Until recently the loyalty of a Chinese was limited to his family, that of a primitive race is limited to its tribe, that of a German or Japanese to his nation. Within these limits people are good citizens. The Chinese will sacrifice himself for his family, the savage will keep the law of his tribe, and the Japanese will work honestly and conscientiously for his nation. Outside these limits they will cheat and kill with a good conscience.

All human beings have this tendency to tie themselves up in a group and look down on other groups.

You hear people talk about “evacuees” as though they were an inferior species of humanity, and the evacuees also talk of their hosts in the same way. But in truth the same individuals may belong at one time to one group and at another to the contrary group. For example, a new group of child evacuees had a fight with some who had been in the country for some months, one lot boasting about the raids they had been in and the other about their knowledge of country life. The first comers said in defence, “It was those evacuees that started it.”

Almost everyone has a prejudice against some group of men, and this is not dispelled by meeting an intelli-

gent part or attractive member of this group, because we see them not as they are but in accordance with our preconceived idea. (Give a dog a bad name and hang him.)

If anyone has a prejudice against any group or race, they remember every story they ever heard against them, and forget any good they hear. Talking once to a man in a train who had such a prejudice, he told me the story of one member of the group which he hated, who had taken a furnished house and sublet each room to a whole family. I pointed out that he remembered this story about one individual and put it to the account of the whole group, whereas if he had heard of an Englishman doing a similar shabby thing it would never have occurred to him to enter it to the account of the whole English nation.

It is not enough to believe in the brotherhood of races and nations; it is easy enough to regard a Chinese as your brother—very likely you will never meet one. It may be harder to regard another class of Englishman justly.

It is generally when you feel quite sure that a certain race or category of men really are awful, that you want to stop and think.

It is worse to dislike a group than it is to dislike an individual. At least you probably know something about the individual, but if you hate a race or a group, you dislike any individual member of it before you have ever seen them. It is also worse to dislike a group for some reason which they cannot help (such as the colour of their skin) than because of their profession; you may not have the right to dislike all burglars but it is more excusable than disliking all black people or all yellow people.

Finally there is one thing which English people can easily do to avoid hurting members of other races, and that is to call them by their proper names. We English have a particularly offensive collection of words which we apply to other races. For example, "wops, dagoes, frogs, niggers, natives," etc. The black races in Africa like to be called Africans, and in the United States and West Indies "coloured people."

This recalls the story of the Indian student at Oxford who was asked if there were many natives at his college. He replied that with the exception of himself and his brother, they were all natives.

Do We Need Another Divine Messenger?

Many people say, "Why do we need another Prophet; we have the Gospel and the Bible." The following is 'Abdu'l-Bahá's answer to this question.

"When Christ appeared with those marvellous

breaths of the Holy Spirit, the children of Israel said, "We are quite independent of him; we can do without him and follow Moses; we have a book and in it are found the teachings of God. What need therefore have we of this man?"

Christ said to them, "The book sufficeth you not." It is possible for a man to hold a book of medicine and say, "I have no need of a doctor, I will act according to the book. In it every disease is named, all symptoms are explained, the diagnosis of each ailment is completely written out and a prescription for each malady is furnished; therefore why do I need a doctor?"

This is sheer ignorance. A physician is needed to prescribe. Through his skill the principles of the book are correctly and effectively applied until the patient is restored to health. Christ was a heavenly physician. He brought spiritual health and healing into the world. Bahá'u'lláh is likewise a divine physician. He has revealed prescriptions for removing disease from the body-politic and has remedied human conditions by spiritual power.

Therefore mere knowledge is not sufficient for complete human attainment. The teachings of the holy books need a heavenly power and divine potency to carry them out. A house is not built by mere acquaintance with the plans. Money must be forthcoming, volition is necessary to construct it, a carpenter must be employed in its erection. It is not enough to say "The plan and purpose of this house are very good; I will live in it." There are no walls of protection, there is no roof of shelter in this mere statement. The house must be actually built before we can live in it.

Briefly, the teachings of the holy books need a divine potency to complete their accomplishment in human hearts . . . it is evident that the confirmation of the Holy Spirit and the impelling influence of a heavenly power are needed to accomplish the divine purpose in human hearts and conditions. Jesus Christ, single, solitary and alone, accomplished what all the kings of the earth could not have carried out. If all the kingdoms and nations of the world had combined to effect it they would have failed.

The Holy Spirit is the only power which will ultimately unite and harmonise the races and nations of the world. The Cause of God is the only panacea which will heal for all time to come the social, economic and political diseases of mankind. The revelation of Bahá'u'lláh is the tree which will send its outstretched branches to all the countries and under its cool shade all the religious sects will gather there to fraternise and associate with one another. The world is full of ideas but they are either fleeting or profitless or impracticable or limited in their influence or confined within a narrow scope. The beaming shafts of the light of cosmic ideals must pierce through the hearts of men

Justice

and the power of the Holy Spirit is necessary to carry into execution these noble thoughts of the age. Human power is limited in its influence. It can unite two persons, or two tribes, or two communities, or at the utmost, two nations. At the same time it confesses that this unity is temporal and may be abrogated by the whim of either of the high contracting parties.

But the divine power unites nations and peoples and cements them together in the bond of brotherhood and peace for ages and cycles. Christ was one person, without any worldly assistance and help, but through the effect of the Holy Spirit he was enabled to unite many nations and religions under the standard of Christianity. Likewise Muhammad unified the wild, savage tribes of Arabs and made them the conquerors of Asia. Consequently there must needs be divine power for the accomplishment of this universal aim. Human power fails in this undertaking.

In Persia, Bahá'u'lláh reared and taught souls, established a bond of affiliation among various peoples and united divergent religious beliefs to such an extent that twenty thousand devoted ones sacrificed themselves for the Cause of God in the glorious unity of martyrdom. No differences whatever remained among these blessed souls; Christians, Jews, Muhammadans, Zoroastrians were all blended, unified and agreed through the potency of his heavenly power—not by mere words, not by merely saying, "Unity is good and love is praiseworthy."

Bahá'u'lláh not only proclaimed this unity and love; he established it. As a heavenly physician he not only gave prescriptions for these ailments of discord and hatred, but accomplished the actual healing. We may read in a medical book that a certain form of illness requires such and such a remedy. While this may be absolutely true, the remedy is useless unless there is volition and executive force to apply it . . . Therefore it is evident that the confirmation of the Holy Spirit and the impelling influence of a heavenly power are needed to accomplish the divine purpose in human hearts and conditions.

"Rest assured in the protection of God. He will preserve His own children under all circumstances. Be ye not afraid nor be ye agitated. He holds the sceptre of power in His hand, and like unto a hen He gathereth his chickens under His wings. To everything there is a season, and a time for every purpose under the sun. A time to be born, and a time to die, a time to weep and a time to laugh, a time to keep silent and a time to speak. Now, friends, this is the time of assurance and faith and not fear and dread."

'Abdu'l-Bahá said to the Lord Mayor of London in 1911 :

"It is well with a country when the magistrates are as fathers to the people.

"There is a great spiritual light in London, and the ideal of justice is strong in the hearts of the people."

This sense of justice is undoubtedly the best and highest part of our national character. We are in danger of losing it. Hatred and the desire for revenge have no part in Justice, and if these take possession of the heart, Justice cannot exist. We must show the utmost loyalty to our government, but we must not, and we are not asked, to sell our most precious asset. Long after the "tumult and the shouting" have died away, it may still be remembered that the ideal of Justice was "strong in the hearts" of the English people. What greater disservice could we render our country, and mankind, than to throw away this noble heritage now, in the day of trial? What greater contribution could we make to world reconstruction after the war is over, than a clear and steady vision of Justice, unclouded by passion?

"O Son of Spirit! The best beloved of all things in My sight is Justice; turn not away therefrom if thou desirest Me, and neglect it not that I may confide in thee. By its aid thou shalt see with thine own eyes and not through the eyes of others, and shalt know of thine own knowledge and not through the knowledge of thy neighbour. Ponder this in thy heart; how it behoveth thee to be. Verily justice is My gift to thee and the sign of My loving-kindness. Set it then before thine eyes." Baha'u'llah.

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