

**UNITED NATIONS CANNOT ENDURE
WITHOUT FAITH IN MAN'S
COMMON HUMANITY**

A chapter from a book entitled "The Faith that gives meaning to Victory", by Dane Rudhyar. Though published in 1942 during the Second World War, the message remains as relevant and impelling today as it was then. (Headquarters Group, Cycle of Conferences.)

"The century on which we are entering—the century which will come out of this war—can be and must be the century of the common man."

—Henry A. Wallace

WE, who fight today for the freedom of our lands and of the future generations, we are banded together under the ringing name of the United Nations... If the United States could emerge into a position of world-ascendancy within a century, we feel that these United Nations, which are now forging on battlefields and in factories bonds of solidarity, likewise can grow to include the whole world. The original Thirteen Colonies were the nucleus of the continent-wide United States. The United Nations now linked by a tragic fate should be the nucleus of a planet-wide, global Union, of which Thomas Jefferson dreamt when he spoke of the "Universal Community of Man."

They should be this nucleus. *Can* they be such? Is there, pulsating within these United Nations as today constituted, that mysterious power, which, in the nucleus of the cell, is life—sustaining, expanding and creative life? In human collectivities this power of life is *faith*. It was faith which energized the amazing spread of Islam, when a band of Arabs dynamized by their Prophet's vision conquered nation after nation. It was faith which made the nearly unarmed men of the French Revolution and of the Russian Revolution triumph over their organized enemies encircling them and boring from within through the Fifth Columnists of their day. It was faith which led the way in the westward march of the Pioneers who built the substance of America. Different kinds of faith—but nevertheless faith in man's creative power, in man's power to build a new world, a better world, a more glowing world of Man.

Have we such a faith today, we, of the United Nations? Or is it only that we fight for self-preservation and the maintenance of the *status quo*? Have we faith beyond the optimistic belief in our big factories and our luck, beyond a vague feeling that somehow this is a nightmare and if we just hold on to the fringe of our consciousness, we will awaken to see the sun shine again? Have we ever thought, or instinctively realized, that without faith we cannot win the peace and the after-war, even if we muddle through a technical victory in the ring of our planet? Have we pondered upon what kind of a faith ours must be to summon the shapes of a new and better world?

Our most progressive statesmen have given us noble words and slogans. We know about the Atlantic Charter—not unlike Wilson's Fourteen Points and, for the same recurring reasons, as limited. We have heard about the Four Freedoms and the People's Revolution. The word "faith" has been loosely repeated. But how vague and unrealistic to most people this "faith" that they are supposed to hold burning in their souls! It is not enough to have faith in a better world. We must know, we must realize acutely, vibrantly, the nature of the very foundations of this world which we are asked to build. Faith in what? In a revived old religious ideal? In a political "way of life" which a century and half of modern technology has unavoidably and profoundly altered? In "freedom"—this strange word which means millions of things to millions of people, and which each of our United Nations interprets in radically different ways?

It must be more than a multi-colored word, more than a changing political system and more than an organized religious belief to dynamize into the living and creative nucleus of a "Universal Community of Man" nations as dis-similar as China, Russia, England, Yugoslavia, France, and the

republics of the Americas. It must be some deep reality which every human being in these United Nations *can* experience, some basic, vital factor which is self-evident to all. It must be a "self-evident truth," yes, but a truth *evident not only to the intellect, a truth of the whole human organism—of every human organism anywhere on earth.* It must be the most fundamental thing in the life of every man, woman and child.

We must reach bottom. We have soared for centuries so high in the sky of idealistic and abstract theories that we have lost the sense of those values which have power and meaning deep in the nature of every human being. Mr. Wallace tells us in his challenging speech that the next hundred years "can and must be the century of the common man." However, this phrase "the common man" is susceptible of many emotional interpretations and it seems to imply, in the eyes of many, a levelling down ideal and an undertone of subservience to the unenlightened and easily swayed masses.

What is really at stake is not the idealization and glorification of the "common man" or the "forgotten man," but a new understanding of the value and meaning of all the factors which are common, and which have been forgotten, *in man.* We need to give a new value, a basic and creative value, to all the things *every human being has in common with every other human being.* We need to Stress our "common humanity." We must use this common humanity. We must use it, not as an ideal goal to which to aspire, but as a foundation from which to grow. It is indeed the common Root. There cannot be a "Universal Community of Man" without reliance upon that common Root. Without root there can be no growth, no flowering. An organized, global humanity must have a common Root. Unless the United Nations become energized and sustained by the unwavering faith in the power of that Root there will be no planet-wide federation of nations. The recognition of, and the faith in man's common humanity are absolutely necessary conditions for the upholding of a permanent Union of nations which live on the several continents. We are fighting against peoples who have been compelled to accept an ideology which denies man's common humanity. We can only win if we assert by words and deeds, if we believe passionately, without restriction or fear, in this inclusive Root-reality which vivifies all men. This must be our standard. There can be no other, for none can cement ultimately Chinese, Hindus, Malays, Slavs, Africans, Europeans, Americans— and also Japanese, Germans and Italians.

What Is Man's Common Humanity?

Every human being is a member of the human species, of the genus *homo sapiens*. Because we are human beings—generic human beings—we have many features in common. Our generic, common humanity consists in the fact that we have a special kind of skeleton, that we stand erect, that we have hands to use, brains to correlate the experiences brought to us by our especially human senses and our still more especially human hands. We all have warm red blood in our hearts and arteries. We digest food in the same basic manner. We love and procreate in the same basic manner. We breathe the same air through the same kind of lungs.

This is not all. Modern psychology has shown conclusively (especially since the work of C. G. Jung) that there is a common foundation to human psychology. We speak now of the Collective Unconscious, and of the Images or Symbols which operate, in still somewhat mysterious ways, in that part of our inner life (or psyche) which becomes known in dreams, in fantasy, in unusual moments of creative inspiration or of mystical awareness. This Collective Unconscious is nothing that need puzzle us. It is, symbolically speaking, in relation to our conscious mind what the soil and the root (drawing chemicals from this soil) is to the leaves and flowers of the plant above the ground. This above-the-ground realm is that of conscious activity; below-the-ground is the realm of the Collective Unconscious. Consciousness must emerge from the Collective Unconscious.

The conscious mind is a differentiated product evolving slowly out of the basic realities of

human experience which all human beings have in common. Societies and cultures develop, which become invested with particular and differentiated characteristics; but the foundation of the most specialized flowerings of the most rigidly restricted and proud cultures is always the common experience of men— man's common humanity. Thus we find that every type of people or cultural group has used throughout the ages and on all continents, a vast number of common basic symbols. These common symbols at the root of all cultures (particularly during the so-called "primitive art" periods) are expressions of man's common humanity. They are born of man's common experience with sex, with food, with hunting, with the elements, with sun and stars, and with those common urges leading to activities which (under the broad label of religion, philosophy and art) are the universally true signature of every human society.

The signature of man's common humanity—this is the signature which is wanted on the pacts establishing the common faith and purpose of all the United Nations. Without it, all pacts will be as useless as those signed by the Allies of 1914-1918. Yet we have long forgotten the meaning and power of this signature. Men have warred against men, nations against nations, in their desire to forget its reality. Men have prized all the things which made them different, and given low valuation to all the factors they have in common. Man's inhumanity to man has grown in horror as the sense of man's common humanity became lost.

It was unavoidable. Mankind has passed through several thousand years during which the goal of human evolution has been to accentuate all possible differences—differences of races, of types, of cultures, of societies, of castes and classes, and at the last, differences between individuals. This has meant constant conflicts, wars between groups, between creeds, and fights between individuals, from duels to business competition. We have become so accustomed to this state of affairs that after centuries of glorification of war we find it very necessary, some of us at least, to glorify the ruthlessness of our competitive system and of our "rugged individualism." First, men were so used to living under the shadow of death in the jungle that they could not conceive the possibility of living in cities far from the danger of encounter with wild beasts. When, after eras of wars between states and nations, the ideal of international peace and humanitarianism finally was held up to mankind, the ceaseless conflicts involved in unrestricted capitalism and individualism came at the same time to be taken for granted. Differentiation through conflict still existed as a goal.

It still exists. The totalitarian nations have tried to glorify once more national wars. But whether it be conflict fostered by individual, class or national differences, the goal of differentiation through conflict is still paramount today. It must remain the driving force among men as long as a far-reaching reversal of human consciousness does not occur. As long as individuals will glory in that they are different from others and *identify themselves exclusively with their differences*, there can be no peace on earth. Peace and union will come when individuals will know themselves first as humans, then as individuals; when individuals will be willing to consecrate their differentiated gifts and faculties to the welfare of humanity; when the ego-centric personalities of our day will realize, to use the beautiful words of St. Exupery in his *Flight to Arras*, that: "The individual is a path. Man only matters, who takes that path."

This does *not* mean collectivism. It does *not*, mean communism or the sentimental worship of the "common man." It does not mean that individual differences are not the most precious products of human and social evolution. It means that the differentiated energies and faculties developed through the individual's own efforts have to be placed at the service of Man-the-Whole. It is a question of use, not of valuation. The unique individual, the highly specialized worker, the trained mind—even if this specialization leads to relative neurosis and uncommon habits—must be produced by society. The most differentiated mechanisms of mind and feelings, of body-response and nervous operation are needed. Man needs them and Man must have the use of them *through* the individuals who develop them.

Does this sound unfair to the individual? Shall we hear objectors exclaiming: "Why should I consecrate to humanity, to my group or my nation, these powers which I have struggled to develop

through years of hard work? Am I not free to do with them as I please? The individual alone counts and all else is merely to serve the individual. What I have gained is for me to use, under no group supervision."

Thus, of course, speaks the rugged individualist. But such a man merely indulges in intellectual dishonesty. He forgets that this precious individuality does not exist in a vacuum. He forgets that, flower as it may be, it is fed by the root—yes, by the root of man's common humanity; that it would last but a few brief moments without being sustained by those generic and collective energies which belong to Man, and not to the individual. The individual is a differentiated product of breathing, blood-circulation, food-metabolism, muscular energy, sex-power, etc. The individual ego cannot operate more than a minute without these biological factors common to all men. He cannot even operate for any great length of time normally without some form of moral collective sustainment—the product of social and cultural, family or group activities. Without such a psychic sustainment, insanity is not very far away, in most cases.

Thus the individual is rooted in man's common humanity, whether he admits it or not, whether he likes it or not. He cannot escape such a rootedness. Escape would mean death. The individual is bound to the destiny of the genus, *homo sapiens*. Behind his will and his power is the great tide of human evolution, which sweeps on and ultimately fulfills its inherent goal—merely modified, delayed or accelerated by the individual wills of separate men. Surely, the individual is the supreme flowering of that human evolution; surely, the great genius stands as the guiding light and the creator. *But what is it that is power within him?*

Naively, modern man has learnt to believe that his grand gestures are conditioned only by the narrow circle of his conscious egoism. How foolish this is! Power is welling up constantly from the common humanity and the common structures he shares with all men. His differentiated brain-energy is nothing without the support of his glands' energy. Let his physician inject some particular hormones or some drug in his veins, and gone will be his inspiration. He may pride himself in having detached his mind from the behavior of his body. But what he has so detached—and only relatively so!—is the ability *to give an individualized form* to his ideas. The power which will energize such forms, artistic or otherwise, is nevertheless surging from his Root-nature. That power belongs, in its essential part, to Man; the individual has it only in trust. It is his to manage. He does not own it. All power belongs to the Whole, for it is essentially rooted in the Whole, and a function of the organic wholeness of that Whole.

As the individual begins to learn that lesson and to feel his rootedness in man's common humanity, a tremendous change gradually takes place within him. He does not become less of an individual, but the quality of his individualhood and above all the *use* he makes of it become altered. As an individual alone he is like a taut string sounding feebly in empty space; as a man through whom man's common humanity is given an individualized meaning and direction, the individual is this same string stretched within the framework of a magnificent Steinway grand piano. He responds thenceforth with the added tremendous power and support of the sounding board of humanity. His vibrations become rich, powerful, compelling.

This is not all. When a man has become thus rooted in man's common humanity he finds for the first time in his conscious life a foundation on which he can meet other individuals who have become like him. Then, and then only, a truly vital union can be formed by these individuals. They stand now on common grounds. They acknowledge one common Root: Man. From that Root, their union receives power and life. Without it, no union between men or nations has any power or permanent vitality to release. Human evolution leads to union and synthesis; but that goal can only be reached in proportion as the power that is in the original Root of Man is tapped and released *in full consciousness* by every participant in that union.

All else leads to mere theory; to big words and splendid abstractions—to ultimate deceit.

Mankind has been cruelly deceived, not so long ago, after the War which was to end all wars. It must not be deceived again. The United Nations cannot endure and cannot create the new and better world of Man unless they live by an unshakable faith in man's common humanity, and act accordingly.

The Creative Union

Many of us have witnessed the spectacle of a dozen well-meaning, idealistic and progressive individuals discussing in a salon or a dining room matters affecting the welfare of humanity. Each individual brings to the discussion not only a different point of view, but his complete identification with the intellectual mechanisms (or psychological complexes) which made him reach that point of view. The result is either tragic or wasteful—or there is no result at all. The same is true when nations meet through their representatives at the council table. It is true wherever individualized men meet who are proud of their uniqueness and of their achievements as separate persons.

Through such meetings of highly individualized men some constructive results may be reached if there is a strong enough need which they all experience in common; or at times when they have a deep feeling of respect for a common tradition or ancestry. The point is, however, that no united decision can be effective and lasting *as a creative force* unless the primacy of the common factor over the individual differences is consciously recognized or instinctively realized as a basic feeling. It is useless to expect much from a meeting of differentiated individuals unless they have in common not only a vague ideal, but, under-toning all discussions, a deep allegiance to a common Root. It is this allegiance which will give power to the final decisions and the united acts. As the root, so the flower. There can be no creative union without a potent Root-force acting as the sustaining foundation of that union.

If the representatives and the peoples of the United Nations faced the problems attendant to the building of a new and better world with this in their consciousness great things could be achieved. But, today, what is felt is only a common need. The common Root is not faced. Nations are still jealous and proud of their differentiated achievements. These, they insist, must be retained; not only retained, but owned exclusively; not only owned exclusively, but flaunted in the face of less differentiated and more "primitive" nations or races. The brotherhood of Man, for most nations, is but a word, at best an ideal of transcendent remoteness. Man's common humanity is not the foundation upon which they seek to build. Union is a matter of expediency, not of common rootedness in Man.

We are still living in the shadow of the symbolic Tower of Babel, amidst the confusion of tongues. We are still emphasizing differences of language, of culture, of creed, of color and race—differences of blood. Inasmuch as we do so, we are not free from the aberration of men who enthrone as their creed the worship of "pure blood," who kill or castrate in the name of race-purity and for the glorification of their own particular brand of biological and cultural Roots. We are of their kind, to the extent to which we still establish unbridgeable distinctions between Asiatics and Europeans, white and coloured races; and in so far as we fail to ground our united efforts into the rock of man's common humanity....

It is strange indeed that we, who are fighting against enemies claiming an absolute superiority of blood and race, or unique descendance from divine ancestors, have not come as yet to realize that our cause will never seem real and vital to millions whose lives we demand in sacrifice until we face our adversaries with a standard truly opposed to theirs. Blood-exclusivism is the battle-cry of the Nazi. Ours must be the denial of all basic differences of blood, color and race; the proclamation and glorification of man's common humanity. All other goals are lesser goals; all freedoms pale in significance before the freedom from the concept of blood-excellence and blood-tyranny. There can be but one truly valid charter. It cannot be either an Atlantic or a Pacific Charter. It must be a Human Charter; our way, the human way.

Are the United Nations ready to proclaim the new crusade? It cannot be a crusade for Democracy—for Russia and many other nations do not believe in our democratic institutions, and our own political ways are far from pure and efficient enough to allow us to idolize them for the worship of less evolved peoples. It cannot be a crusade for a Christian world—for many who are ranged under our banners do not believe in Christianity, and our Christian record is not immaculate enough to warrant our proclaiming it as the salvation of the world.

There is only one essential reality for which all the men of the United Nations can be asked to die and to create in self-sacrifice; this reality is man's common humanity. It is our common foundation, our common fountainhead of power. We can only fight as united men if we proclaim the primacy of *human* blood over any brand of racial mixture; if we proclaim the end of an era of racial exclusivism and its consequence—national imperialism. The "war to end all wars" cannot be fought for the enthronement of words and abstract political theories or business systems. Our victory needs to be grounded in a common denominator realized by all those who participate in it. The common realities of our lives must be emphasized and glorified. They must be sung; not in sentimentally humanitarian terms, not while blurring *human* realities with the mist of merely humane ideals, but in firm and concrete terms. Ours must be a realistic humanism, a creative humanism.

Our record in this present planetary struggle is one of amazing reliance upon side-issues and antiquated words, of strange inability to come out with the proclamation of the essential fact which alone could steel the resistance of nations on the lands where the struggle is most virulent. It is high time indeed for the United Nations to tap the one foundation of their power and, as their representatives meet, to agree that however great the differences which separate their mental concepts and their commercial interests, they are unanimous in their faith in man's common humanity.

That faith alone can insure victory and a creative future for humanity. That faith alone can see us through the crises ahead. That faith must undertone and sustain our determination and our acts. It must ring like a bell calling the multitudes to the celebration of a new humanity, to the glorification of that way, that truth and that life which are human, all-human, all-inclusive; which cast forever into the shadow the exclusions, the prejudices and the denials of an age of war and civilized barbarism abroad and in our midst.

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