

The Concept of the United Nations

A Philosophical Analysis

By
E. M. HOUGH, M.A., Ph D.

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By
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TRANSACTIONS

Many valuable lectures are given, papers read and discussed, and oral reviews of outstanding books presented, at the Indian Institute of Culture. Its day is still one of small beginnings, but wider dissemination of at least a few of these addresses and papers is obviously in the interest of the better intercultural understanding so important for world peace. Some of these are published in the Institute's monthly organ, *The Aryan Path*; then we have two series of occasional papers—Reprints from that journal, and Transactions. The Institute is not responsible for views expressed and does not necessarily concur in them.

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The Indian Institute of Culture was founded on the 11th of August 1945, the day on which the Second World War came to an end; that was a coincidence—which in India we call *Karma*. Foremost among the aims and ideals of the Indian Institute of Culture from the first has been to work in a humble way for the unification of the minds of the peoples of the world. A few months afterwards the United Nations Organization and its allied body, the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, came into existence. The Indian Institute of Culture has been endeavoring to co-operate as fully as possible with the UNO and the UNESCO. We have had generous co-operation and encouragement from these two great and influential world organizations. A short time ago a suggestion was received from the UNO Headquarters in New York that the Institute might devote one of its Transactions to a philosophical analysis of the concept of the United Nations. In accordance with this suggestion we are now publishing a special Transaction on the subject.

The recognition of the world's need for peace, for mutual sympathy and co operation, and the realization of the self-defeating effect of self-seeking action, are not sufficiently wide-spread. Organized efforts for unity and peace have a powerful ally in the philosophic concepts underlying and encouraging the hope of a united world. In this paper Dr. Eleanor M. Hough brings forward some of the basic postulates of ancient Indian thought, which are also to be found, expressed or implied, in the utterances of all the world's great sages and lovers of mankind, and which are implicit if not specifically proclaimed in the ideational background of the United Nations.

These concepts, of man's essential nature, of the unity of the human family and of the working of the moral law, show unity and peace to be the norm and suffering to be the unavoidable reaction to the denial to others— whether by nations or by individuals—of freedom, justice and compassion. They offer the self-compelling basis for co-operation and whole-hearted support to such an effort towards world unity as the United Nations represents.

THE CONCEPT OF THE UNITED NATIONS

A PHILOSOPHICAL ANALYSIS

At San Francisco, California, on June 26th, 1945, the representatives of 50 Nations signed the United Nations Charter. The way to its passage had been paved by the deliberations of the Conference of Foreign Secretaries held at Moscow in 1943 and by the meetings at Dumbarton Oaks in Washington, D. C., from August to October 1944, where the Charter had taken shape. But the United Nations Charter did not spring, full-panoplied like Minerva, from the brains of the deliberators who framed it. Whitehead once wrote:—

We notice that a. great idea in the background of dim consciousness is like a phantom ocean beating upon the shores of human life in successive waves of specialization. A whole succession of such waves are as dreams slowly doing their work of sapping the base of some cliff of habit; but the seventh wave is a revolution—“ And the nations echo round. ”

The idea of a united world had been stirring in the minds and hearts of men long before Tennyson sang in "Locksley Hall" of his vision of the future, when

.. the war-drum throb'd no longer, and the battle-Hags were furl'd
In the Parliament of man, the
Federation of the world.

Dostoevsky was not far wrong when he wrote; “Mankind as a whole has always striven to organize a universal state.” The Delian League of the Greek City States represented a pioneer attempt, as far as detailed Western records go, of politically developed states uniting formally for common action. The Roman Empire brought about a very wide-spread unity. The federations, from the Hanseatic League of North German towns in the 13th century, which had its political as well as its economic significance, down to the American and Swiss Federal Republics; and even the “Concert of Europe” in the last century, all played their part in the growing trend towards political and economic unity.

Across the Atlantic, “The Long House” or common dwelling, as the Iroquois Indians of North America called their League, established long before the European colonists arrived in the early 17th century, succeeded in preserving peace for hundreds .of years among previously warring tribes. The American historian James Truslow Adams, who wrote of the League of the Iroquois in *The Aryan Path* for September 1937, ascribed its success primarily to its spiritual basis as "3. Social organism based on the fundamental belief in the Brotherhood pf Man,"

The development of nations and the exaggerated stress which followed it, upon nationality and race, were at the expense of the mediaeval consciousness of unity, especially among intellectuals, though the substitution of the larger national unit for the smaller feudal groupings should have been a step towards the larger unity of mankind. Even the imperial and totalitarian expansion programmers of the last century and of recent decades, and the League of Nations itself, however diverse or mixed their underlying motives, represented gropings towards this ideal, dimly held in the background of mankind’s collective consciousness as the norm.

The United Nations had, therefore, an ideational foundation in advance in terms of the pooling of resources for common if not disinterested ends, and a background of practical if limited experience in joint enterprise. But all the earlier alliances had been partial brotherhoods, limited and temporary, foredoomed to ultimate failure by their restricted scope, by the taint of self-interest, by their denial of justice and of human rights, and/or by acquiescence in such denial.

These shortcomings and defects the United Nations Charter was designed to overcome,

within the limitations set by hard and fast national divisions and the reluctance of Member Nations generally to relinquish any of the sovereign power traditionally indispensable to national prestige. The overcoming of these limitations will be a matter of time, of practice in international sharing of responsibility, of growth in mutual trust, and especially, as we shall see, of the patient education of all peoples in the philosophical basis of the Preamble of the Charter and the encouraging of action in accordance with its implications.

For the purpose of this philosophical analysis of the concept of the United Nations, we need not deal at length with its formal structure. Educated people in general know the principal organs of the United Nations and their respective functions. It will suffice to mention them to give an idea of the vast extent and variety of the United Nations' wide fields of interest and of effort for the commonweal. Its principal organs are :—

The General Assembly, with its single vote to every Member Nation, irrespective of the size of its population, and representation for each on all its main Committees.

The Security Council of 15 Members, of whom the 5 Permanent Members (China, France, the United Kingdom, the U.S.A. and the U.S.S.R.) have each the power of the veto in respect to action, investigation and recommendation by the Council, a concession which, however necessary to the acceptance of the Charter, has in practice seriously obstructed the Council's working. Reporting to the Security Council are the Military Staff and Conventional Armaments Committees and the Atomic Energy Commission.

The Economic and Social Council, concerned with international economic, social, cultural, educational and health problems. Its important subsidiary Commissions include its Regional Economic Commissions for Europe, for Asia and the Far East and for Latin America, respectively; and its Functional Commissions, dealing severally with economics, employment and development; transport and communications; fiscal and statistical matters; population ; social problems, narcotic drugs and human rights; international law; and the several Sub-Commissions on the prevention of discrimination and protection of minorities, the protection of women, etc.

The Trusteeship Council, supervising economic, social and educational developments in not fully self-governing territories placed under United Nations supervision.

The International Court of Justice.

There are also the United Nations Relief and Works Agency and the International Children's Emergency Fund, the latter set up on the vote of the General Assembly to ameliorate the sufferings inflicted by the war and its aftermath on some of their most defenseless victims. Plans had been made by the beginning of 1951 for an Inter-Governmental Maritime Consultative Organization in connection with technical problems of international bearing and the removal of unjust discrimination by Governments and unfair practices of shipping companies.

The sending of the United Nations Tropical Housing Mission to India and several other Asian countries, the report of which Mission was recently laid before the Social Commission, encourages hope of ultimate relief of the deplorable conditions under which millions in the East are living, conditions so intolerable as to constitute a flagrant denial in practice of basic human rights.

It should be mentioned also that early this year a meeting of the United Nations Commission on Freedom of Information drew up a convention upholding the free availability of information through the press, the general acceptance of which should go far to minimize

future misunderstandings between peoples, which flourish in an atmosphere of concealment and baseless suspicions.

A carefully worked out and widely inclusive plan which holds the potentiality of vast amelioration of the lot of man.

Space does not permit discussing as fully as they deserve to be discussed the complementary efforts of various United Nations agencies. Those especially of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization are of such direct bearing on this subject as to merit fuller consideration of all their implications than can be given here. Its designation indicates sufficiently for present purposes its general approach to the related problems of world unity, of justice and of peace.

The other nine agencies by which the aims of the United Nations are sub-served, as formally constituted at the beginning of 1951, were the long established International Labour Organization, seeking to promote social justice and economic stability by improving labour conditions and living standards; the Food and Agricultural Organization, working for higher levels of nutrition and improved production and distribution of food products; the International Civil Aviation Organization, the World Health Organization, the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development, the International Monetary Fund, the Universal Postal Union, the International Telecommunication Union and the International Refugee Organization, with its budget larger than all the money spent by all the rest and its stupendous achievement in directing the greatest peace-time migration which history records.

The Charter contemplated regional arrangements for mutual collaboration, subject to United Nations approval. Already long steps have been taken towards effective economic and political alliance among Western European countries. Economic nationalism may be considered to that extent weakened, but history shows its power of revival as long as the snake of self-interest is only scotched, not killed, as exemplified by the abandonment, after hostilities had ended, of the high degree of economic collaboration between nations which had helped to make victory possible. Any grouping short of world unity, moreover, may indirectly encourage, as we have seen, the substitution of a larger exclusiveness for the smaller one, and so, unless altruistically motivated, holds the threat of proving to be a new stumbling-block in the road to the effective brotherhood of all mankind.

The expansion of the Economic and Social Council's programme of technical assistance to undeveloped countries is an important development in the right direction. It may be suggested in this connection that the possibilities of the United Nations' sponsoring a World Development Authority, on the general lines of the Tennessee Valley Authority, so spectacularly successful for an underdeveloped region, which String fellow Barr, President of the Foundation for World Government (New York City), outlines in his brochure, *Let's Join the Human Race* (University of Chicago Press, 1950), deserve very serious consideration.

It was apparently the superannuated ideas of national prestige that blocked prompt implementation of the proposals drawn up in November 1947 by the United Nations Conference on Trade and Employment. The International Trade Organization should by now have been able to do much towards bringing down tariffs and insuring equal access to the world's raw materials and markets.

In this connection, the possibility of bringing the Co-operative Movement into closer relations with the United Nations effort may well be explored. Organized co-operation falls

short of being a purely altruistic undertaking, as its primary aim is the benefit, economic and moral, of its members, but the formula " Each for all and all for each " is susceptible of indefinite expansion. The basis of co-operation is essentially democratic, and the Co-operative Movement offers a *via media* between uninhibited Capitalism and Communism' The history of the movement in several countries shows a generous policy towards projects for the common good. In England, where consumer co-operation began in 1844, it has not only made a tremendous success economically, but is a force to be reckoned with even in politics. Most of the business in Iceland is co-operatively organized. Particular lines of co-operation have been favored in different countries, credit in India and Hungary, land consolidation and consumer cooperation in Sweden, insurance in France and Belgium and marketing in Denmark, which co-operation has transformed from a country with a tenant-farmer majority into one where over 97% of the farmers own their land.

This "man-making" world movement, as Gladstone called it, has a great contribution to make to world unity, not only through its principles of integrity and united effort but also through the international exchange of goods between co-operative wholesale organizations in different countries. Considerable progress in that direction had been made before the last war, through the International Co-operative Alliance, with its International Co-operative Trading Agency. Would not the United Nations do well to bring this constructive movement with its millions of members throughout the world into direct alliance with it, perhaps through a Commission on Co-operation, so that its force potential may be brought effectively to bear on such desiderata as the lowering of tariff walls?

The multifarious harassing restrictions on the movement of persons between countries, which have grown up since 1914, constitute only less of a handicap to world unity than tariff barriers. Their reduction by United Nations effort would be a great contribution to the possibility of better mutual acquaintance between peoples.

Their full abolition, like the establishment of a common currency and an international standing army of adequate size, must, no doubt, await the gradual education of public opinion to the point of approving the United Nations' development into a World Federal Union. Meantime the possibilities of a full and effective World Government are being explored by many minds. World citizenship is in the air. The Parliamentary Committee for World Government in England and the Committee to Frame a World Constitution in the United States have been especially active. In the latter's monthly journal, *Common Cause*, for March 1948, a "Preliminary Draft of a World Constitution" was offered for consideration. That Draft, dedicated to Mahatma Gandhi, contemplated, besides the Legislative and Judicial Branches, a "Chamber of Guardians," under the chairmanship of the World President, which would have exclusive control and use of " the armed forces of the Federal Republic of the World. "

Meanwhile the United Nations as at present constituted offers the best hope of bringing the nations into effective union within the framework of a common government, however limited its scope. Let not the perfectionist, individual or nation, spurn the tool for its admitted imperfections. We must use it as skillfully as we can until its defects are remedied or a better tool is wrought.

The annual world-wide celebration of United Nations Day on October 24th is the renewed expression of faith in the ability of the United Nations and its subsidiary and affiliated agencies to maintain peace and to promote prosperity. It ought to be observed as the occasion of rededication of all peoples to the ideals which the Preamble of the Charter

proclaims and implies.

That Preamble is a milestone on humanity's long and difficult road to enduring peace in justice and in freedom. Its declaration of principles is nobly conceived and nobly phrased :—

“ We, the peoples of the United Nations, determined to save succeeding generations from the scourge of war, which twice in our lifetime has brought untold sorrow to mankind, and to reaffirm faith in fundamental human rights, in the dignity and worth of the human person, in the equal rights of men and women and of nations large and small, and to establish conditions under which justice and respect for the obligations arising from treaties and other sources of international law can be maintained; and to promote social progress and better standards of life in large freedom ; and for these ends to practice tolerance and live together in peace with one another as good neighbors; and to unite our strength to maintain international peace and security; to ensure, by the acceptance of principles and the institution of methods, that armed force shall not be used, save in the common interest; and to employ international machinery for the promotion of the economic and social advancement of all peoples;

“Have resolved to combine our efforts to accomplish these aims.”

These words form the soul of the Charter; in them spoke the intuitive and compassionate heart of man; whereas the structure of the United Nations Organization is the work of his generally far from disinterested, calculating mind. If that structure shares the limitations of its creator, we have the consolation that no embodiment can perfectly mirror the soul; the statue can at best approximate more or less closely to the sculptor's vision, but mallet and chisel can coax out of the marble a form of ever greater harmony and beauty. The structural defects revealed in the working of the United Nations are amenable to peaceful change, so long as the objects and insights expressed in the Charter's Preamble are held inviolate and performance is constantly checked against its principles. For, as an ancient Tamil sage, Tiruvalluvar, assures us in his *Lural*,

every aspiration may indeed be achieved if one knows how to keep his aim ever before his mind.

The United Nations started with several advantages over the League of Nations. Not only have the two most powerful nations of the day been members from the first, however great their difficulties in working together, but also the mistake of making peace the great desideratum to the ignoring of just grievances has been avoided in the Charter, which stresses no less emphatically fundamental and equal human rights for men and nations, justice, and social amelioration than it does the lasting security and peace of which they are conditions. It offers, moreover, a very wide field of mutually as well as generally beneficial co-operation along non-political lines, in some of which the League of Nations had admirably blazed the trail.

It is necessary, however, that the lessons of the League's failure be taken to heart. The League foundered in spite of the ideals and anticipations with which it was launched, and the constructive achievements both of itself and of its auxiliary bodies. Unable from the first to command universal support, handicapped at many crises by its Members' putting self-interest ahead of righteous principles and obligations solemnly accepted, too often judging the seriousness of aggression in inverse ratio to its distance from them selves, the League of Nations failed.

One important lesson which the world learned the hard way was that the condoning of

aggression anywhere was an invitation to its spread towards chaos and ultimate world war. The League averted hostilities in several cases, but, as Viscount Cecil pointed out in his constructive "Memorandum on World Settlement After the War" (September 1940), the successive attacks of the Dictatorships on peaceful European countries which had finally precipitated World War II would probably never have been made if the Italian invasion of Abyssinia in 1935 had been forcibly prevented.

The United Nations' swift decision and firm stand in Korea have raised its prestige, moral and political, throughout the world and given a check to aggression that should discourage future unlawful bids for power. But there is real need, as Prof. Gilbert Murray has pointed out, "not for mere precautionary Security, but for active Reconciliation." Therefore the prime necessity of keeping the ideals of the United Nations alive in the minds and hearts of all peoples, analyzing and presenting and re-presenting them so that men and women everywhere shall be prepared, not only to defend them intelligently, but also to make them a vital factor in daily life as well as in international relations.

Let us consider, then, the assumptions underlying the Preamble to the Charter, taking the implications of its phrases not in their exact sequence but in what seems to be a logical order. The several related assumptions are, that

- I. Dignity and worth attach to the human person *per se*.
- II. Certain inalienable rights appertain to every human being.
- III. Every man and woman and every nation, large or small, has the same rights as every other individual or nation.
- IV. War, which is an evil, bringing untold sorrow to mankind, is not a fortuitous calamity but results from failure to observe the conditions indispensable to international peace and security, which include:—
 - (1) The maintenance of justice.
 - (2) Respect for obligations arising from treaties and other sources of international law.
 - (3) The promotion of economic and social progress and better living standards for all peoples.
 - (4) The maximum possible individual freedom.
 - (5) The practice of mutual tolerance.
 - (6) Living together as good neighbors.
 - (7) A courageous and united stand against aggression.
 - (8) The institution and maintenance of the necessary international machinery for the promotion of these ends.

It is proposed here to develop briefly some of the philosophical assumptions, bypassing modern philosophical speculation, confirmatory or contradictory, to seek their roots in the spiritual inheritance of mankind, the testimony of its great teachers, drawn from and constituting in the aggregate the unsectarian and universally valid body of fundamental truth.

The Preamble rests on the fact of human unity, on the reality, transcending every difference of nation, race or colour, creed or sex or condition, of the common humanity of man. This truth is the corollary of that proclaimed in the very ancient *Rig-Veda*: "That which

is one hath into all developed." That universal Divine Principle, whether we call it Spirit or Life, was conceived by the sages of antiquity as being also the mysterious power of involution and evolution which has produced the multiplicity of manifestation under the Law which is itself an aspect of that Principle.

Because every human being draws his sustenance from the same Universal Tree of Life, the sense of human brotherhood is natural to man, requiring only due encouragement for its conscious flowering, as Mo-Ti in ancient China recognized in the 5th century B.C. The United Nations, giving that encouragement, can help the peoples of the world to recognize all wars, whether on geographical or other lines as fratricidal struggle, satirized by Pascal thus: —

“Why kill me ? ”

“ 'Why kill me ?' Nay, do you not dwell across the river ? My friend, if your home was on this side I should be a murderer, and it would be wrong to kill you like that; but since you dwell on the other side, I am a hero, and it is quite fair.”

On what, moreover, do the first three of the above numbered assumptions of the Preamble rest if not on, besides the tacit recognition of human unity, the implied admission that man is more than his physical body, weak and often hereditarily diseased; that he is more than his personal characteristics, his impulses, his inclinations and avoidances, his feelings, good or bad; more even than his ratiocinative mind? That there is that in man, in other words, who transcends his limitations and his weaknesses, transcends his mortal part; something, in short, which is of the nature of that Divinity which is the impersonal and omnipresent principle of Life itself? When Aristotle's cramping definition of man as a political animal is rejected in favour of Plato's noble concept of man as an unfolding god, universal brotherhood will become a self-evident proposition and the appropriateness of the Preamble's demand for equal rights and privileges for all men and for all collectivities of human beings will be self-evident to all.

When people have learned to think and feel as truly human beings should. . .they will act humanely, and works of charity, justice, and generosity will be done spontaneously by all.

Meantime men, having free-will, can act in harmony with the unity that exists between them, or can flout it—and take the inevitable consequences.

Each man is his own absolute lawgiver, the dispenser of glory or gloom to himself ; the decider of his life, his reward, his punishment.

And this is no less true of nations. But, from the universal identity of essence, whether we call it God or Nature, and from the sleepless working of the Moral Law, it follows that nothing can affect one nation or one man without affecting all other nations and all other men. In a pool disturbed by the throwing in of a pebble will not every drop sooner or later feel the vibration set up by the disturbance of harmony and the gradual restoration of the troubled waters to equilibrium ? Convince men generally of that and brotherliness in feelings and conduct, as preached by Buddha and Jesus and all the great reformers, will be seen as dictated by self-interest no less than by altruism.

For if, as we have seen, the first three numbered assumptions of the Preamble imply the recognition of unity, the last two clearly accept the moral law of cause and effect, of action and reaction. Scientists have rendered a great service in demonstrating the working of the law of cause and effect on the material plane, as far as their observations and their knowledge have until now enabled them to go. The admission by many scientists of indeterminacy for atomic activity is to be taken, as more than one scientist has pointed out,

rather as a confession of present ignorance of all the factors involved, than as an exception to the otherwise universally conceded operation of law.

Viscount Cecil declared in his "Memorandum on World Settlement," already mentioned, that peace and economic and social reconstruction both depended "on the Supremacy of Law," explaining that this did not so much mean in this connection

obedience to particular rules governing international intercourse as the recognition that the sovereignty of nations should be limited by certain fundamental principles such as good-faith and justice and the rejection of force as the sole arbiter of international rights.

The moral law is no abstraction but represents the simple working on the planes of thought and feeling, as well as upon that of physical effects, of the same law of action and reaction which is the basic mode of, working of the universal Motion which is Life. All the great teachers of mankind have stressed that moral aspect of the law. Whatsoever a man or a nation sows, that and nothing other shall it reap.

That which the Greeks called Nemesis has been too much anthropomorphized by profane fancy to express the full idea of what the ancient Indian philosophers conveyed by the Law of Karma, the impersonal, undeviating and unerring tendency in the universe to restore equilibrium, wherever and by whomsoever disturbed.

Action and reaction, the ancients taught, were linked in an ineluctable causal sequence, however long the reaction might be delayed. Men pass from the scene at death, it is true, without discharging all their debts to the Law; but complement the concept of Karma, as the ancient Indian thinkers did, with its twin doctrine of reincarnation—today held, however distortedly in many cases, by more people in the world than reject it—the teaching that the Soul evolves through life after life in human form. Then the recognition that man is now helping to make the conditions to which he will inevitably return will give an added incentive to such conduct as shall maintain, or contribute to restoring, the universal harmony.

Paul Claudel once named the ancient injunction "Hinder not music" as "the crowning word of the moral law...which sums up all that is most exquisite and excellent in both sacred and profane wisdom," pointing out the obligation resting upon all so to act and think that the harmony in which each is an element is not disturbed. Harmony does not imply a featureless uniformity but a just balancing of diversities. "Harmony in the physical world is *justice* in the spiritual one. Justice produces harmony, and injustice, discord." And discord on an international scale means the chaos that has, alas, become the rule, rather than the exception. The ancient Indian lawgiver warns:—

Justice being preserved will preserve; being destroyed, will destroy. Take heed lest justice, being overthrown, overthrow thee and us all. (*The Laws of Manu*, VIII. 15)

Abraham Lincoln had a true insight when he declared: "Nothing is ever settled that is not settled right," a truth to which the Treaty of Versailles and its consequences bear eloquent testimony.

Another corollary of the Preamble of the United Nations Charter is that an integrated world demands integrated individuals. Increasingly men of insight are coming to put their faith, with Tagore, not

in any institution, but in the individuals all over the world who think clearly, feel nobly, and act rightly, thus becoming the channels of moral truth.

All international wars, all civil strife, all class struggles, creedal rivalries and family dissensions can in the last analysis be traced to the unresolved conflict between the

individual's divine part and his unregenerate personality. Is it conceivable that lasting political reforms can ever be achieved with the same selfish men at the head of affairs as of old? Confucius' answer was in the negative:—

The ancients who wished to illustrate illustrious virtue throughout the empire first ordered well their own States. Wishing to order well their States, they first regulated their families. Wishing to regulate their families they first cultivated their persons. Wishing to cultivate their persons they first rectified their hearts....

People deplore the lowering of moral standards in many parts of the world, the opportunism that has so largely usurped the role of principles in individual and national relations, the ineffectiveness of the social conscience to right obvious injustice to individuals or to groups, black-market practices, corruption, nepotism, cruelty. If it is true that, as Rabindranath Tagore wrote: "Liberty has a true foundation only in the moral worth of the individuals who compose the State," where lies the world's hope of liberty, to say nothing of the unity and peace which with it form the triad of mankind's collective aspiration, but in the strengthening' of moral character?

Implicit in the ideational basis of the United Nations is the recognition that mere physical amelioration, apart from the infusion of ennobling concepts and ideals of life into the minds of the masses, cannot get at the root of the troubles which afflict and threaten mankind today.

The gradual assimilation by mankind of great spiritual truths will alone revolutionize the face of civilization, and ultimately - result in a far more effective panacea for evil than the mere tinkering of superficial misery.

A new current of ideas and aspirations has, then, to be infused into modern thought to supply the logical basis for an elevated morality. "New," only in reference to the prevailing modes of thought, especially in the West, for where are safer guides to human happiness and enlightenment to be found than in those writings which have descended to us from the remotest antiquity? Where are nobler spiritual aspirations and a higher average morality to be found than where the people take their precepts as the rule of life?

Even if the desirability be granted of the general dissemination of universally valid precepts, that the number of dependable individuals may increase, the necessity remains of translating those precepts into the modern idiom and adapting them to modern conditions, a task deserving the best efforts of the practical idealists of our time. Clear and unequivocal conceptions have to be worked out of ethic ideas and duties, national and individual, such as shall best and most fully satisfy the right and altruistic feelings in men. The forms have to be ascertained in, which those conceptions can be applied, in social as in international relations, with the greatest equitableness.

Of course, as Prof. Gilbert Murray wrote in *From League to U. N.* (Oxford University Press, 1948), it is

no good pretending that economics are the whole of life. Beyond all material interests, behind all the clash, of creeds and the illusions of mass egoism, there is in most good men... Some sense of values, of obligations, of things of beauty, which are somehow beyond question and which, at whatever cost of endurance, humanity must not betray.

Nevertheless, economic amelioration is Very-necessary. To recognize that, "the Play's the thing," the drama of human life and development—social, Cultural, intellectual, moral—but lends the more importance to the provision of the proper settings that the drama may unfold, to best advantage.

That human development is. Stunted if not altogether arrested by the economic and

social condition of large masses of the people can hardly be denied. The mental and spiritual faculties of those living' in misery, poverty and disease are often almost dormant, while at the other end of the economic scale many are living in luxury and selfish indifference. "Life is built up by the sacrifice of the individual to the whole." What is disease of the very tissue of man's body but the "sin of separateness," brought about by a group of individual cells refusing to co-operate, using less or claiming more than their due share of food or energy and thereby setting up discordant action ? And is not the analogy perfect between the physical organism and the great body of collective humanity?

It is not only that epidemics arising in crowded and insanitary slums claim their victims also in homes of wealth and comfort. Recognizing the fact of universal brotherhood and failing to live accordingly, sensitive men and women are oppressed by the sense of inconsistency in themselves and of disharmony with their surroundings. There is a spiritual *malaise*, an almost subconscious, guilty feeling of responsibility evaded, from which the finer natures among those favored by circumstance must suffer until preventable misery is banished from every corner of the globe. But

it is not violence that can ever insure bread and comfort for all; nor is the kingdom of peace and love, of mutual help and charity and "food for all," to be conquered by a cold, reasoning, diplomatic policy. It is only by the close brotherly union of men's inner Selves, of soul-solidarity, of the growth and development of that feeling which makes one suffer when one thinks of the suffering of others, that the reign of Justice and equality for all can ever be inaugurated.

Even formal assent to an ideal, such as the nations gave by implication in signing the United Nations Charter, was a long step; but between intellectual acceptance by the Governments and implementation of an ideal in practice experience reveals a time-lag. This is always regrettable and, at a time like the present, when intellectual knowledge and the power for good or for evil which knowledge confers have so far outstripped the moral sensitiveness of the many, it holds the threat of chaos.

A great responsibility rests on the national United Nations Associations and their World Federation, to educate public opinion not only to recognize the achievements, past and potential, of collective effort but also to appreciate the ideals on which the United Nations concept rests. Such Teachers' Seminars as those sponsored by the World Federation of United Nations Associations in Teheran, Beirut and Delhi, on methods of teaching in the United Nations in schools, offer an immeasurable opportunity for spreading these ideas.. Non-Governmental Organizations generally, especially those affiliated with the United Nations, have also a responsibility for educating at least their own members in the United Nations concept.

The past temporary and partial alliances of nations were for the most part to meet external threats. There are no threats from without in a united world. The enemies of the United Nations are of its own household. They are not nations or individuals but ignorance and selfishness, with all their brood of superstitions, prejudices, fears. It may be some time before either the United Nations Assembly or its Security Council can achieve the *Samjnanam* (unanimity in assembly) of the *Rig-Veda's* injunction {Book X, Hymn CXCI):—

Ode and the same be your resolve, and be your minds of one accord.

United be the thoughts of all, that all may happily agree.

But agreement on courses of action must ultimately come if stress is consistently laid on the basic principles of the United Nations concept to which all have subscribed. The need for concerted action in many directions is great. The Central Opium Board of the United

Nations, for example, can elaborate in vain plans to restrict opium production to medical and scientific requirements so long as any government withholds its full co-operation from the control effort so obviously dictated by concern for the welfare of the race. The same need for mutual concord exists with respect to effective atomic energy control, in the absence of which millions are living in the shadow of constant fear; and to agreed disarmament, which would lift a crushing burden from the peoples of the world and free for constructive purposes the vast resources now enriching the armament makers. These consummations of such obvious desirability await the growth of mutual sympathy and trust with which will go the dropping of the pitiful pretence of separate interests and the jealous guarding of national dignity.

But even the renouncing of selfish ambition is not enough'. There cannot be a fully integrated world as long as any nation harbors prejudice or enmity, or hatred or suspicion of other nations. And how can the nation be free of such sentiments as long as its citizens entertain them?

That the moulds even of adult thinking are in most cases not too rigidly set for radical modification in the direction of greater mutual tolerance and sympathy is the faith in which the Indian Institute of Culture at Bangalore has for six years been carrying on its efforts to broaden the outlook and interests of men and women of average education, to deepen the sense of shared responsibility for world conditions. The response and the quickening of interest in the life and culture of peoples in different parts of the world, as in problems of common interest, is considered to have thoroughly justified the Institute's programme.

By education of the right type at every level the flowering of the nobility innate in every human soul can be encouraged. If man be admitted to be divine in origin, then the poet's intuition must be accepted, that nobility lies in every human heart, sleeping perhaps in many, but, even in those, awaiting only the challenge of nobility in another to "rise in majesty" to meet it.

The building up of mutual confidence between all nations, however, will call for Bronson Alcott's prescription of "time, tolerance and the long patience." For, unfortunately, past national performance has not always been such as to encourage reliance on all nations' *bona fides*, or to awaken the confident conviction, even among men of good-will and right resolve* that other men and nations will no more work to hurt- them than they would think of doing deliberate harm themselves.

The grievances are not, by any means, all imaginary ones, though in many cases there are just grievances on both sides. "Even the doing of belated justice, necessary though that is, will not of itself always suffice to restore good feeling. It is well for all concerned when it does, as when Britain's grant of freedom wiped out overnight the accumulated Indian bitterness of -long decades of subjection. Where it is otherwise, there must be also encouragement of the same determined effort to *forget* national injuries that the sensible individual makes in respect to personal grievances, in the interest of mental balance.

The acceptance of responsibility for the future progress of the race must be recognized as what is necessary, not the fixing of blame for past follies and sins. The weaknesses of human nature being what they still are, there must be not only the resolution to make a fresh start, but also preparedness to do so as many times as may be necessary. For, if the human family is one; if, therefore, it is true that, as Gandhiji believed, "if one man gains spiritually, the whole world gains with him," then the converse is equally true; the sin and shame of one are the sin and shame of each and all. The aggressive nation will have, in its own as well as

the common interest, to be restrained by the joint efforts of the rest until the madness passes, but signs of resipiscence in an erring nation should be met with a response as generous as that towards an erring and penitent brother. The Preamble of the Charter clearly implies that no. nation can be kept a pariah.

Dr. Ralph Bunche, Director of the United Nations Department of Trusteeship and Non-Self-Governing Territories and Nobel Peace Laureate, said in an interview published in *United Nations World* for November 1950:—

In the final analysis there is but one road to peace and that is the road of fellow-feeling and inflexible determination to achieve peaceful relations among men.... I am optimistic enough about my fellow-beings to believe that it is human *attitudes*, not human nature that roust be changed.. ..Every individual today has it in his power—in his daily living, in his attitudes and practices—to contribute greatly to the realization of that ideal.

Who can doubt that if even a few at first consecrated themselves to the determined effort to live as brothers and sisters in all relations with their fellow- men, the response would come, their example would spread? That glimpse of truth, translated into action, has been implicit in ail the world's great spiritual movements, giving them their early force and fire. That was the vision which the masses caught from the teachings of the Buddha and the Christ; that, the faith which in this age the philosophy of Gandhiji inspired in millions, including not a few beyond the shores of India.

Always, sooner or later, the waters of forgetfulness have risen, or the dry dust of creed and ritual has quenched the flame. Can it be kept alive in our day by the United Nations and its agencies, and their collaborators and well- wishers, stimulating and sustaining the zeal for unity and peace among individuals and nations of good-will throughout the world ? That is the hope which the philosophy of the United Nations can and must inspire and justify.

Lincon's exhortation to the espousers of the cause of union and of freedom in the American Civil War is most appropriate in the present context, for by our efforts, individual and national, "we shall nobly save or meanly lose the last best hope of earth."