

The New World Order: Warwick Leaflets

In world politics frequent reference is now made to a New World Order. Bahá'ís are among those who very much welcome this development. In the latter half of the nineteenth century, Bahá'u'lláh, the Founder of the Bahá'í Faith, set out a clear framework for a new world order, and communicated this in writing to the rulers of the time. In 1985 the Universal House of Justice, the world body of the Bahá'í community, in its statement entitled, "The Promise of World Peace", analysed the current state of the world and restated Bahá'u'lláh's plan, laying out a possible path towards world peace and world order.

A World Peace Conference

First of all the nations must come together to establish peace. Achieving a new world order requires the involvement of the representatives of the entire world in this process. 'Abdu'l-Bahá, the son of Bahá'u'lláh, wrote of this meeting:

"They must make the Cause of Peace the object of general consultation, and seek by every means in their power to establish a Union of the nations of the world... In this all-embracing pact the limits and frontiers of each and every nation should be clearly fixed... the size of the armaments of every government should be strictly limited... if any government later violate any one of its provisions, all the governments on earth should arise to reduce it to utter submission..."

Political Peace and Real Peace

When this peace treaty is signed, it will bring in a political peace - the end to outright war. At the same time there will be a realisation that we must co-operate, however unwillingly, in order to survive. This must gradually evolve into a real positive peace brought about by a fundamental change in attitude towards our fellow human beings who share this planet.

"The well-being of mankind, its peace and security, are unattainable unless and until its unity is firmly established."

The new world order which we so desperately need can only be founded on the recognition of the fundamental principle of the oneness of mankind. All the human sciences agree that there is only one human species. All religions teach that we should treat other people in the same way as we would like to be treated. The logic of both science and religion, then, requires abandonment of every kind of prejudice.

The social development of mankind has always involved the creation of units to which the individual can relate. In the late twentieth century, we increasingly have world-wide trade patterns, news facilities, political links, and also world-wide problems of pollution and international crime, which require world solutions. The time has now arrived for the world to become one unit of government, with national and local units subsidiary to it.

World Institutions

To develop a genuine world order there needs to be:

- A World Government: to enact the laws required to satisfy the needs of all peoples. It will have at its disposal the combined forces of the world in order to maintain peace.

- A World Parliament: The members of this should be elected by the people in each country, and their election should be confirmed by their respective governments.
- A World Code Of Law: based on justice for individuals and for nations.
- A World Tribunal: Its decision will be binding on all parties.
- World Police Force: An international police force must be created, dedicated to upholding justice with complete impartiality.
- Universal Equality: Everyone must have the right to education and to be equal before the law. There must be a universal bill of human rights.
- A World Language: A world language will be either chosen or invented. This will be taught in all the schools of each country, in addition to the mother tongue of the region.

Our Economic Future

No genuine solution to economic or political problems can be found unless society recognises the need to harmonise human activity with the underlying spiritual truths governing life. The economic resources of the world will have to be used more responsibly, and organised more fairly.

A world currency is necessary to stabilise the world economy. A universal system of weights and measures is required to improve trade and communications. A world economic community needs to be created where all economic barriers will be removed, and a world free trade area established.

For this new world order to become a positive reality, attitudes must change. Spiritual principles must guide the decision-making process. Justice rather than greed or self-interest must be the criterion. Religion has always been a strong unifying force, but religious intolerance causes conflict and disintegration. Bahá'u'lláh urges us to:

"consort with the followers of all religions with joy and fragrance."

Only when individuals regard themselves as citizens of the world will the Golden Age of humanity come into being.

A Model for the Future

The Bahá'í administrative structure already exists at a local, national and international level and can be taken as a model for future society. People are elected to the Bahá'í bodies solely on merit, without any nominations or canvassing. In the Bahá'í system, power is devolved to the lowest possible level, and is given to groups, not to individuals.

Consultation at all levels is a key part of Bahá'í administration. The main local community meeting consists of prayer, consultation and social interaction, designed to foster a spirit of unity and co-operation. Bahá'u'lláh's call, more than 100 years ago, is still waiting to be answered by the world at large. The beginning of the new world order is within our reach.