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### **MS-4787: Abba Hillel Silver Papers, 1902-1989.**

Series V: Writings, 1909-1963, undated.

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Man's hopes in the atomic age, 1955.



## MAN'S HOPES IN THE ATOMIC AGE

### Faith For the Century Ahead.

This age in which we live is a truly great age, one of the greatest in human history. We are too near our times properly to appraise them. One requires distance in order to see great objects in their proper perspective. We ourselves are too much involved in the turmoil, the fears, and the conflicts of our day to see objectively the amazing new patterns of life which are emerging.

Great and historic things are coming to pass in our day. I am not thinking at the moment of the new worlds which science is continually disclosing, the new insights into the nature of matter and energy, the new sources of power and wealth, the new methods of production, ~~distribution~~, transportation and communication. I am not referring to the amazing progress in the medical sciences nor to the marvels of engineering and the miracles of construction all over the globe. / Inventions and discoveries come in such rapid succession in our day that they no longer excite any unusual comment. We take it all in our stride - the flying age, the television age, the atomic age - and now the inter-planetary age.

-- Darwin - Charles Darwin - "Origin of Species by Natural Selection"



In characterizing our age as great, I am thinking in terms of social progress and welfare, in terms of human advancement and civilization. More is being done in our day for the improvement of the conditions of the life of the common man, for the raising of his standard of living, his health, his education, and for his protection against the disabilities of sickness, unemployment and old age, than in any generation - than in any five generations in the past. Never were peoples and governments so much concerned with the improvement of the lives of the men, who had lived in unrelieved poverty, ignorance and disease through the long and weary centuries. Never were more determined efforts made to bring about a fairer sharing of the wealth produced and a better way of life for all.

Never have the submerged races and peoples of the earth, who for centuries groaned under foreign or native tyranny, risen as they have risen in our day to demand and to achieve, as they have to a large measure achieved, <sup>national</sup> freedom and self-determination. Imperialism and colonialism are in their death-throes. Backward peoples are



pressing forward into the light of a new day, and the exploitation of the dark races of the earth is rapidly drawing to a close.

What we are witnessing in our day, if we have eyes not only to see things but to see into the heart of things, is not social disintegration, but a radical new reintegration of humanity, a profound change in the social evolution of man, a change not free, of course, from dangers, but one of boundless and immeasurable potentialities.

I do not wish to overdraw the picture. I am not suggesting that the millenium is just around the corner. There is not a spot on the face of the globe today where social wrongs and injustices do not still exist, and where the masses of mankind are not, to a greater or lesser degree, still under-privileged and disadvantaged. There is not country on earth, including our own, which is altogether free from class conflict, from bigotry, intolerance, slums and privation.

The important thing to consider, however, is not whether we are on the eve of the millenium, but whether the major trends of our age are in the direction of the hoped-



for good society, or away from it. Is our age purposefully trying to eradicate poverty and illiteracy and to raise the standard of living of all peoples, regardless of race or color or creed? Is it trying to satisfy the legitimate aspirations of peoples to national freedom and independence? Is it trying to organize the world for peace and for international cooperation? I believe that in all these major trends, <sup>and our country</sup> our age has given welcome evidence of great determination and of considerable progress. <sup>they are</sup> ~~It is~~ moving purposefully in the right direction - the abolition of war, the reduction of poverty, and the elimination of racial barriers and inequalities. These are the three major trends of our century. And because they are the major trends of our day - there is great hope for man in this atomic age.

What we need is a strong faith which will serve us best in the great, critical and challenging days which lie ahead, a faith which will sustain us in the long, hard struggle to establish this good society towards which we all wish to move.

We have a great future, but that future is neither assured nor automatic. No one has forecast our ~~future~~ certain or uninterupted progress. Our age, like similar great ages in the past, may lead in exhaustion or sudden catastrophe.



Such a faith, in my judgment, is built upon three postulates: the reality of purpose in the universe, the significance of the individual, and the sanctity of method. Within such a faith man will find that measure of dignity, confidence and courage without which the struggle for social progress cannot long be maintained and the promise of human life must be abandoned to defeat.

As man develops in awareness of himself and of the world about him, and gains in sensitiveness and comprehension, he acquires also glimpses of purpose in the universe. He comes to sense what the Prophet Isaiah sensed when he declared: "He is a God Who created the world not for chaos, and formed it to be inhabited."

Like all human insights into fundamentals, this one, too, of purpose and meaning, is not clear beyond any peradventure of doubt. It is seen as through a glass darkly, but it is sufficiently persuasive and responsive to basic human needs to be enheartening and strengthening.



Addressing the Harvard Law School Association of New York back in 1913, Justice Oliver Wendell Holmes gave expression to just such a strong, mystic, conviction: "I think it is not improbable that man, like the grub that prepares a chamber for the winged thing it never has been but is to be - that man may have cosmic destinies that he does not understand. And so beyond the vision of battling races and an impoverished earth, I catch a dreaming glimpse of peace." And he voiced his faith "in a universe not measured by our fears", but one "that has thought and more thought inside of it". A confident faith in a controlling and beneficent purpose, unfolding in the universe, of which we and our struggles and our aspirations are an integral part is, in my judgment, an essential ingredient of that faith which will serve us best in the long struggle for the building of the good society and the attainment of man's hopes. Without this faith, man will fall victim to one or another form of moral nihilism as his mind comes to the edge of



the wilderness. Atheism has never built any great civilization. It has been responsible for <sup>many</sup> ~~breakdowns~~, <sup>but</sup> not for <sup>any</sup> ~~break-throughs~~.

*Step* Belief in the significance of the individual is another essential element of that faith which will serve us best in our propulsive age.

In one of his published "Unpopular Essays", Bertrand Russell writes: "The importance of Man, which is the one indispensable dogma of the theologians, receives no support from a scientific view of the future of the solar system." To which one is prompted to reply, so much the worse for the so-called scientific view, which doubtless will go through many revisions and corrections in the future, as it has in the past. Time and again science has been tardy in arriving at conclusions which the intuitive religious genius of mankind postulated long before.

But Bertrand Russell is entirely correct when he states that "the importance of Man is the one indispensable dogma of the theologians". It is also the one indispensable dogma of democracy; and it is at the heart of the terrible crisis which is tearing our world apart today.



To the great religions of the Western world, <sup>and to democracy</sup> man has immense significance in the scheme of things. Man is very important to God in the unfoldment of His purposes - each man, every man, rich or poor, wise or simple, black or white, saint or sinner. The black evil of sin is <sup>voluntary abandonment of state self-</sup> that it is a degradation, descent into unworthiness and the lower life <sup>from</sup> which Man has emerged. Religion challenges Man to live and act always as if his life were tremendously significant and endlessly ascendant.

Religion demands much of man in terms of duty and sacrifice, but it also gives much to him in terms of high and independent status, dignity and inherent rights. "Every man has the right to say," declared an ancient teacher of Israel, "for my sake was the whole world created", and another teacher declared that "man is a co-worker of God in creation".

Religion has endeavored to give man a sense of greatness in a universe in which he physically is very small.

No moral aspiration is possible and can be looked for in man as long as he regards himself as of little account. No



moral aspiration ever springs from the soil of <sup>self-</sup>belittlement and disesteem.

Because the religious basis of our society has been widely denied, and materialistic theories of life and history have taken hold of the thoughts and actions of many men and governments, the stature of the individual, and with it, his rights and inherent dignity have suffered tragic abatement and diminution in our day. Every precinct of his life is invaded and violated. Having denied man the image of God, he is being given the mask of the robot.

*ahead* The third element in the faith which will serve us best in our exciting new <sup>century</sup> ~~age~~ is faith in the sanctity of method - the method of human progress.

Spiritual religion defined a method by which men might attain morally desirable ends, a method worthy of such ends. It outlawed the notion that moral ends justify immoral means. Each single step on the way toward the realization of a worthy objective, must, as far as is humanly possible, be a worthy objective in itself. To establish justice or freedom or peace, men must employ the ways of justice, freedom and peace.



For, The more exalted human goals are,  
the less likelihood there is of their early  
or complete attainment. Accordingly, when  
ruthless, brutal, impatient and desperate  
measures are employed, they not only make  
the attainment of these goals impossible;  
they also turn man's long journey towards  
them into one of unmitigated misery and hor-  
ror. In the coming years and before very long, our beloved country and  
the communist world - will have to search for a method in regulating their

It is clearly the part of sound method  
in our atomic age to look for a workable  
formula which will regulate the difference  
between the East and the West and discover  
a "modus vivendi" for the two great sections  
of humanity which are now so dangerously  
riven and separated by seemingly irrecon-  
cilable ideologies.

It is clear that the rivalry between  
these ideologies cannot be decided on the  
battlefield. Both power-blocs are in pos-  
session of the globe-destroying power of the  
A-bomb and the H-bomb. Neither will be  
intimidated by the preponderance of arms  
on the part of the other. It is incon-  
ceivable that the statesmen of the world will  
be so made as to try to win a decision




through atomic warfare. The alternative confronting mankind today is co-existence or non-existence, *co-survival is no survival*

In the field of religious controversy it was once thought that the existing differences were irreconcilable and that opposing religious persuasions could not live on the same earth, not to speak of the same country or city. During the seventeenth century Europe was drenched in blood by religious wars. The stakes then were even higher than in our day, for it was not only this world that was involved, but the next world as well. / And yet after much bloodshed and the ruin of towns and provinces, it was found necessary at long last to work out ways of toleration and co-existence, leaving the ideologies to take care of themselves. No religion abandoned its position, <sup>or</sup> its claims to being the sole repository of true religion, or of its missionary activity, but somehow ways were found for all to live together. Today in many parts of Europe and America they have learned not only to live together but to



work together in amity and friendship for the paramount objectives common to them all.

There is no other solution to the political and economic differences which are now tearing our world apart. The dread alternative is universal destruction.

For our civilization to survive, it is clearly necessary to revise the mood and thought pattern of our age, and to recharge our world culture with a new devotion to the sanctity of method in human progress. *and* 

With ~~such~~ a faith, built upon the reality of purpose in the universe, *and* the significance of the individual, ~~and the sanctity of method,~~ *With such a faith,* we can spread wide our adventuring sails and plow resolutely into the surge and thunder of our unpredictable odyssey, confident that our high hopes will, from time to time, find their blessed anchorage in some harbor of our hearts' desire.

The next 100 years will ~~see~~ *see* our beloved country enriched with ~~greater material~~ *even greater material*, DR. ABBA HILLEL SILVER intellectual, ~~and~~ *artistic and spiritual* NOVEMBER - 1959 blessedness - and mankind generally - if we do not lose the ~~vision~~ *vision*, or sacrifice the ~~own true method~~ *own true method* of human progress.



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MAN'S HOPES IN THE ATOMIC AGE

by  
DR. ABBA HILLEL SILVER

THE TEMPLE  
CLEVELAND, OHIO

~~My dear friends:~~ This age in which we live is a truly great age, one of the greatest in human history. We are too near our times properly to appraise them. One requires distance in order to see great objects in their proper perspective. We ourselves are too much involved in the turmoil, the fears, and the conflicts of our day to see objectively the amazing new patterns of life which are emerging. In a generation or two, when mankind will have entered quieter waters and a period of consolidation will have followed this explosive and revolutionary age of ours, men will be able to look back upon it and evaluate it properly.

Many people today are filled with dark forebodings and are quite pessimistic about our times. They are quick to describe them as materialistic, as lacking in idealism, in aim and purpose, and as drifting helplessly to disaster in a flaming sea of atomic horror.

~~I am persuaded that ours is truly a great age.~~ Great and historic things are coming to pass in our day. I am not thinking at the moment of the new worlds which science is continually disclosing, the new insights into the nature of matter and energy, the new sources of power and wealth, the new methods of production, distribution, transportation and communication. I am not referring to the amazing progress in the medical sciences ~~which has so~~ markedly improved the health of the human race and increased the average length of life, nor to the marvels of engineering and the miracles of construction all over the globe. Inventions and discoveries come in such rapid succession in our day that they no longer excite any unusual comment. We take it all in our stride - the flying age, the television age, the atomic age - and ~~what is our~~ next? ~~The inter-planetary age, perhaps. Certainly, man is achieving in our~~



day in the scientific fields more in one decade than in ten heretofore.

In characterizing our age as great, I am thinking in terms of social progress and welfare, in terms of human advancement and civilization. More is being done in our day for the improvement of the conditions of the life of the common man, for the raising of his standard of living, his health, his education, and for his protection against the disabilities of sickness, unemployment and old age, than in any generation - than in any five generations in the past. Never were peoples and governments so much concerned with the improvement of the lives of the men, who had lived in unrelieved poverty, ignorance and disease through the long and weary centuries. Never were more determined efforts made to bring about a fairer sharing of the wealth produced and a better way of life for all.

Never have the submerged races and peoples of the earth, who for centuries groaned under foreign or native tyranny, risen as they have risen in our day to demand and to achieve, as they have to a large measure achieved, freedom and self-determination. Within the last fifteen years one-fourth of the earth's population - more than five hundred million non-self-governing people - have obtained sovereignty and self-government. Imperialism and colonialism are in their death-throes. Backward peoples are pressing forward into the light of a new day, and the exploitation of the dark races of the earth is rapidly drawing to a close.

What we are witnessing in our day, if we have eyes not only to see things but to see into the heart of things, is not social disintegration, but a radical new reintegration of humanity, a profound change in the social evolution of man, a change not free, of course, from dangers, but one of boundless and immeasurable potentialities.



I do not wish to overdraw the picture. I am not suggesting that the millenium is just around the corner. There is not a spot on the face of the globe today where social wrongs and injustices do not still exist, and where the masses of mankind are not, to a greater or lesser degree, still under-privileged and disadvantaged. There is no country on earth, including our own, which is altogether free from class conflict, from bigotry, intolerance, slums and privation. It will take centuries, not decades or generations, before all the peoples of the world will possess even that measure of well-being, far from the optimum, which some of the most favored peoples of the world already possess.

The important thing to consider, however, is not whether we are on the eve of the millenium, but whether the major trends of our age are in the direction of the hoped-for good society, or away from it. Is our age purposefully trying to eradicate poverty and illiteracy and to raise the standard of living of all peoples, regardless of race or color or creed? Is it trying to satisfy the legitimate aspirations of peoples to national freedom and independence? Is it trying to organize the world for peace and for international cooperation? I believe that in all these major trends, our age has given welcome evidence of great determination and of considerable progress. It is moving purposefully in the right direction - the abolition of war, the reduction of poverty, and the elimination of racial barriers and inequalities. These are the three major trends of our century. And because they are the major trends of our day - there is great hope for man in this atomic age.

What we need is a strong faith which will serve us best in the great, critical and challenging days which lie ahead, a faith which will sustain us in the long, hard struggle to establish this good society towards which we all wish to move.



Such a faith, in my judgment, is built upon three postulates: the reality of purpose in the universe, the significance of the individual, and the sanctity of method. Within such a faith man will find that measure of dignity, confidence and courage without which the struggle for social progress cannot long be maintained and the promise of human life must be abandoned to defeat.

Somewhere Professor Einstein writes: "What is the meaning of human life or of organic life altogether? To answer this question at all implies a religion. Is there any sense, then, you ask, in putting it? I answer, the man who regards his own life and that of his fellow creatures as meaningless is not merely unfortunate, but almost disqualified for life."

As man develops in awareness of himself and of the world about him, and gains in sensitiveness and comprehension, he acquires also glimpses of purpose in the universe. He comes to sense what the Prophet Isaiah sensed when he declared: "He is a God who created the world not for chaos, and formed it to be inhabited." Like all human insights into fundamentals, this one, too, of purpose and meaning is not clear beyond any peradventure of doubt. It is seen as through a glass darkly, but it is sufficiently persuasive and responsive to basic human needs to be enheartening and strengthening.

Addressing the Harvard Law School Association of New York back in 1913, Justice Oliver Wendell Holmes gave expression to just such a strong, mystic, conviction: "I think it is not improbable that man, like the grub that prepares a chamber for the winged thing it never has been but is to be - that man may have cosmic destinies that he does not understand. And so beyond the vision of battling races and an impoverished earth, I catch a dreaming glimpse of peace." And he voiced his faith "in a universe not measured by our fears," but one "that has thought and more than thought inside of it."



A confident faith in a controlling and beneficent purpose, unfolding in the universe, of which we and our struggles and our aspirations are an integral part is, in my judgment, an essential ingredient of that faith which will serve us best in the long struggle for the building of the good society and the attainment of man's hopes. It is the conviction of purpose which alone can bridge for man the gulf between his isolated and homeless self and the apparently alien and indifferent world about him. Man will feel at home in the cosmos only if he believes that it is his Father's house. "Lord, Thou hast been our dwelling place. . . ." Without this faith, <sup>man</sup> he will fall victim to one or another form of moral nihilism as his mind comes to the edge of the wilderness. Atheism has never built any great civilization. It has been responsible for breakdowns, not for break-throughs.

Belief in the significance of the individual is another essential element of that faith which will serve us best in our propulsive age.

In one of his published "Unpopular Essays", Bertrand Russell writes: "The importance of Man, which is the one indispensable dogma of the theologians, receives no support from a scientific view of the future of the solar system." To which one is prompted to reply, so much the worse for the so-called scientific view, which doubtless will go through many revisions and corrections in the future, as it has in the past. Time and again science has been tardy in arriving at conclusions which the intuitive religious genius of mankind postulated long before.

But Bertrand Russell is entirely correct when he states that "the importance of Man is the one indispensable dogma of the theologians." It is also the one indispensable dogma of democracy; and it is at the heart of the terrible crisis which is tearing our world apart today.



To the great religions of the Western world, man has immense significance in the scheme of things. Man is very important to God in the unfoldment of His purposes - each man, every man, rich or poor, wise or simple, black or white, saint or sinner. *The black evil of sin is that it is a* ~~Sin is~~ voluntary abandonment of status, self-degradation, descent into unworthiness and the lower life from which ~~Man~~ <sup>Man</sup> has emerged. Religion challenges Man to live and act always as if his life were tremendously significant and endlessly ascendant.

Religion demands much of man in terms of duty and sacrifice, but it also gives much to him in terms of high and independent status, dignity and inherent rights. "Every man has the right to say," declared an ancient teacher of Israel, "for my sake was the whole world created," and another teacher declared that "man is a co-worker of God in creation."

Religion has endeavored to give man a sense of greatness in a universe in which he physically is very small. The world of the ancients was, of course, far smaller in scale than our world of expanding immensities - "one hundred thousand million galaxies in space and each galaxy containing on an average of on hundred thousand million stars," wherein man's racial history is less than a moment in geologic time. Yet, even in relation to their vastly smaller universe, man appeared pitifully puny, lost and unimportant. "When I look at Thy heavens," declared the Psalmist, "the work of Thy fingers, the moon and the stars which Thou hast established - What is man that Thou art mindful of him, and the son of man that Thou dost care for him?"

~~But~~ <sup>No</sup> moral aspiration is possible and can be looked for in man as long as he regards himself as of little account. No moral aspiration ever springs from the soil of belittlement and disesteem. Hence, the Psalmist climaxes his hymn with an apostrophe to man's unique distinction and the assurance of his worth in the world which God created for him. "Yet hast Thou



made him little less than God, and hast crowned him with glory and honor. Thou hast given him dominion over the works of Thy hands; Thou hast put all things under his feet." Man's high and noble estate imposes upon him the obligations of aspiration. "Be ye holy for I, the Lord your God, am holy!"

In primitive society the individual counted for very little. But as life moved on, the despotism of the organized group was slowly attenuated. The individual began to discover his own private life. As against his heritage of mass tradition, he became aware of personal sources of judgment and sanction.

But man's hard-won victories against corporate authority are never permanently secure. We witnessed in our life-time the most massive and ruthless onslaught of "Gleichschaltung", of "Vermassung" and of totalitarianism every experienced by man within historic times. Fascism and Naziism scored terrifying victories before they were broken on the battlefield, but their ideologies are not dead. And Communist dictatorship is today established in a fourth of the globe.

Men are being handled in many parts of the world and in many departments of life impersonally in the mass. Increasingly they are becoming statistics in the hands of a predatory collectivism. They are shunted about like herds of cattle. They are coordinated and subjugated to the state until the last vestige of their freedom and their rights vanishes. Because the religious basis of our society has been <sup>widely</sup> denied, and materialistic theories of life and history have taken hold of the thoughts and actions of many men and governments, the stature of the individual, and with it, his rights and inherent dignity have suffered tragic abatement and diminution in our day. Every precinct of his life is invaded and violated. Having denied man the image of God, he is being given the mask of the robot.



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There are very few people who see this age of ours as a great age. I am persuaded that it is truly a great age. Great and historic things are coming to pass in our day. I am not thinking at the moment of the new worlds which science is continually disclosing, the new insights into the nature of matter and energy, the new sources of power and wealth, the new methods of production, distribution, transportation and communication. I am not referring to the amazing progress in the medical sciences which has so markedly improved the health of the human race and increased the average length of life, nor to the marvels of engineering and the miracles of construction all over the globe. Inventions and discoveries come in such rapid succession in our day that they no longer excite any unusual comment. We take it all in our stride - the flying age, the television age, the atomic age - and what next? The inter-planetary age, perhaps. Certainly, man is achieving in our day in the scientific fields more in a decade than in a hundred years heretofore.



In characterizing our age as great, I am thinking in terms of social progress and welfare, in terms of human advancement and civilization. More is being done in our day for the improvement of the conditions of the life of the common man, for the raising of his standard of living, his health, his education, and for his protection against the disabilities of sickness, unemployment and old age, than in any generation - than in any five generations in the past. Never were peoples and governments so much concerned with the improvement of the lives of the forgotten men, who had lived in unrelieved and unspeakable poverty, ignorance and disease through the long and weary centuries. Never were more determined efforts made to bring about a fairer sharing of the wealth that is produced and a better way of life for all.

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unfortunate, but almost disqualified for life."

As man develops in awareness of himself, of his society and of the material world about him, and gains in sensitiveness and comprehension, he acquires also glimpses into the unfoldment of purpose in the universe. He comes to sense what the Prophet Isaiah sensed when he declared: "He is a God Who created the world not for chaos, and formed it to be inhabited." The order of nature is purposive! Like all human insights into fundamentals, this conviction of purpose and meaning is not clear beyond any peradventure of doubt. It is seen as through a glass darkly, but it is sufficiently persuasive and responsive to basic human needs to be enheartening and strengthening.

Addressing the Harvard Law School Association of New York back in 1913, Justice Oliver Wendell Holmes gave expression to just such a strong, mystic, albeit indeterminate conviction: "I think it is not improbable that man, like the grub that prepares a chamber for the winged thing it never has been but is to be - that man may have cosmic destinies that he does not understand. And so beyond the vision of battling races and an impoverished earth, I catch a dreaming glimpse of peace." And he voiced his faith "in a universe not measured by our fears," but one "that has thought and more than thought inside of it."

All mechanical interpretations of the universe break down in the presence of "this thought and more than thought", and the phenomena of order, life, mind, and the evolution of man and the mounting quality of his ideals and values. Even dead matter itself defies such a cramped interpretation. Science seems to have abandoned in our day all purely mechanistic explanations of the universe. A confident faith in a controlling and beneficent purpose, unfolding in the universe, of which we and our struggles and our aspirations are an integral part is, in my judgment, an essential ingredient of that faith which will serve us best in the long struggle for the building of the good society and the attainment of man's hopes. It is the conviction of purpose which alone can bridge for man the gulf between his isolated and homeless self and the apparently alien and indifferent



world about him. Man will feel at home in the cosmos only if he believes that it is his Father's house. "Lord, Thou hast been our dwelling place. . ." Without this faith, he will fall victim to one or another form of moral nihilism as his mind comes to the edge of the wilderness. Atheism has never built any great civilization. It can only lead to pessimism and breakdown.

Belief in the worth of the individual and of human personality is another essential element of that faith which will serve us best.

In one of his recently published "Unpopular Essays", Bertrand Russell writes: "The importance of Man, which is the one indispensable dogma of the theologians, receives no support from a scientific view of the future of the solar system." To which one is prompted to reply, so much the worse for the so-called scientific view, which doubtless will go through many revisions and corrections in the future, as it has in the past. Time and again science has been tardy in arriving at conclusions which the intuitive religious genius of mankind postulated long before.

But Bertrand Russell is entirely correct when he states that "the importance of Man is the one indispensable dogma of the theologians." It is also the one indispensable dogma of democracy; and it is at the heart of the terrible crisis which is tearing our world apart today.

To the great religions of the Western world, man has immense significance in the scheme of things. Man is very important to God in the unfoldment of His purposes - each man, every man, rich or poor, wise or simple, black or white, saint or sinner. Sin is voluntary abandonment of status, degradation, descent into unworthiness and paltriness and the beast life from which he emerged. Man must live and act always as if his life were tremendously significant and ascendant.

Religion demands much of man in terms of duty and sacrifice, but it gives much to him in terms of high and independent status, dignity and inalienable rights. "Every man has the right to say," declared an ancient teacher of Israel,



"for my sake was the whole world created," and another teacher declared that "man is a co-worker of God in creation."

Religion has endeavored to give man a sense of greatness in a universe in which he is very small. The world of the ancients was, of course, far smaller in scale than our world of expanding immensities - "one hundred thousand million galaxies in space and each galaxy containing on an average of one hundred thousand million stars," wherein man's racial history is less than a moment in geologic time. Yet, even in relation to their vastly smaller universe, man appeared pitifully puny, lost and unimportant. "When I look at Thy heavens," declared the Psalmist, "the work of Thy fingers, the moon and the stars which Thou hast established - What is man that Thou art mindful of him, and the son of man that Thou dost care for him?"

But no moral aspiration is possible and can be looked for in man as long as he regards himself as insignificant and of little account. No moral aspiration ever springs from the soil of belittlement and disesteem. Hence, the Psalmist climaxes his hymn with an apostrophe to man's unique distinction and to his inherent sovereignty and the assurance of his worth in the world which God created for him. "Yet hast Thou made him little less than God, and hast crowned him with glory and honor. Thou hast given him dominion over the works of Thy hands; Thou hast put all things under his feet." Man's nobility derives from kinship with God, and it is high and noble estate which imposes upon him the obligations of ceaseless aspiring. "Be ye holy for I, the Lord your God, am holy!" "Think not meanly of yourself," declared the famous philosopher Maimonides, "and despair not of perfection."

In primitive society the individual counted for very little. The tribe was monolithic. Its solidarity was paramount. The individual was absorbed. His actions were rigidly regulated by the tribal code and taboos. There was little room in this compact world of mass structure and corporate action for the individualist, the rebel, the non-conformist.



Life moved on. The despotism of the organized group was slowly attenuated. The individual began to discover his own private life. Within himself he had come upon a world distinct in many ways from the world about him. As against his heritage of mass tradition, he became aware of personal sources of judgment and sanction.

But man's hard-won victories against the usurping corporate authority are not permanently secure. We witnessed in our life-time the most massive and ruthless onslaught of "Gleichschaltung", of "Vermassung" and of totalitarianism ever experienced by man within historic times. Fascism and Nazism scored terrifying victories before they were broken on the battlefield, but their ideologies are not dead. And Communist dictatorship is today established in a fourth of the globe.

Men are being handled in many parts of the world and in many departments of life impersonally in the mass. Increasingly they are becoming statistics in the hands of a predatory collectivism. They are shunted about like herds of cattle. They are coordinated and subjugated to the state until the last vestige of their freedom and their rights vanishes. Because the religious basis of our society has been denied, and materialistic theories of life and history have taken hold of the thoughts and actions of many men and governments, the stature of the individual, and with it, his rights and inherent dignity have suffered tragic abatement and diminution in our day. Every precinct of his life is invaded and violated. Having denied man the image of God, he is being given the mask of the robot.

The faith that will serve us best, as free men in this great age, is faith in the worth and significance of the individual, his inviolate personality, and his inalienable rights. Without such faith which was written as a dogma into the heart of our Declaration of Independence and our Constitution - "We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal and that



they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable rights" - man's stature will be progressively reduced, the free domains of his mind and spirit will speedily come under iron-clad controls, accelerated by the organizational efficiency of our technological age, and man's dignity will be dragged into the dust. With such a faith, we will be strong enough to accept all necessary social and economic controls and still remain a free society. It will help us to set our course by a dependable compass.

There are two forces at work in the world today which tend to undermine the individual and destroy his intellectual integrity. One is the force of organized propaganda whose objective is to stampede men to think uncritically and emotionally in the way some special interest wants them to think. It is the force which, through slogans and catch-words and cliches and cleverly coined half-truths, drives men or panics them into attitudes and actions which these men would not take if they were given accurate facts and information upon which to base their judgments and their attitudes. Propaganda in our day has been developed into a dangerous pseudo-science, and through the readily available mass media channels of communication, can undo overnight, as it were, the slow, patient, and faithful work of education in our schools and colleges. Our greatest danger today is not illiteracy. The overwhelming majority of our people knows how to read and write. The great menace of our day is propaganda, whose aim is to confound and to confuse by misinformation our literate population.

The second force in our midst which is threatening the spiritual intellectual status of the individual is the attacks which are made from time to time in the name of democracy and Americanism upon the basic rights and institutions of American democracy. In times of great stress and tension, demagoguery in one form or another raises its head and by shrieking aloud "The Philistines are upon thee," aims to stampede our people into acts of violent intolerance, terrorizing our legislators and our educators, and branding every dissident



and every man of independent judgment as unpatriotic and suspect. This is a degradation of the high status of the American citizen and part of the Fascistic technique to destroy free government in the free society.

The third element in the faith which will serve us best in faith in the sanctity of method - the method of human progress.

Spiritual religion defined a method by which men might attain morally desirable ends, a method worthy of such ends. It outlawed the notion that moral ends justify immoral means. Each single step on the way toward the realization of a worthy objective must, as far as is humanly possible, be a worthy objective in itself. Means have a way of inserting and of integrating themselves into ends, and of determining their ultimate pattern. Therefore, to establish justice or freedom or peace, men must employ the ways of justice, freedom and peace.

The more exalted human goals are, the less likelihood there is of their early or complete attainment. Accordingly, when ruthless, brutal and desperate measures are employed, they not only make the attainment of these goals impossible; they also turn man's long journey towards them into one of unmitigated misery and horror.

The classic way of religion has never been fully tried in the world. Today in an evolving atomic age wherein man's power will be vastly augmented, including the power of self-destruction, it is being ignored more thoroughly than at any time in human history. State and class autocracies have proceeded on the theory that there is no law superior to theirs, and that their brutal methods are justified by their results.

The shame of our age is that men are committing the most shameless acts of immorality in the name of high morality. Methods which are abhorred and denounced in one's opponents are rationalized and justified as moral imperatives when employed by oneself. Men talk of justice and brotherhood, of a classless



society and universal peace, but they act as if these ideals were demons out of hell, lashing them on to the most horrible acts of injustice, hatred and violence.

It is clearly the part of sound method in our advancing atomic age to look for the formula which will adjust the differences between the East and the West and to discover a "modus vivendi" for the two great sections of humanity which are now so dangerously riven and separated by seemingly irreconcilable ideologies.

It is clear that the rivalry between these ideologies cannot be decided on the battlefield. Both groups are in possession of the globe-destroying power of the A-bomb and the H-bomb. Neither will be intimidated by the preponderance of arms on the part of the other. It is inconceivable that the statesmen of the world will be so mad as to try to win a decision through atomic warfare. The alternative confronting mankind today is co-existence or non-existence. This being the case, it is clearly the part of patriotism, of enlightened self-interest, and of altruism to seek ways of living together on this one earth in spite of the opposing and irreconcilable ideologies.

In the field of religious controversy it was once thought that the differences were irreconcilable and that different religious persuasions could not live on the same earth, not to speak of the same country or city. During the seventeenth century Europe was drenched in blood by religious wars. The stakes then were even higher than the stakes today, for it was not only this world that was involved, but the next world. And yet after frightful bloodshed and the ruin of towns and provinces, it was found necessary at long last to work out ways of toleration and co-existence, leaving the ideologies to take care of themselves in the hands of the faithful. No religion abandoned its position, its belief in being the sole repository of religious truth<sup>of</sup> its missionary activity, but somehow ways were found for them to live together. Today in many parts of



Europe and America they have learned not only to live together but to work together in amity and friendship for the great moral objectives which are common to them all.

There ~~will be~~<sup>is</sup> no other solution for the political and economic differences which are now tearing our world apart. ~~to be resolved~~. The dread alternative is universal destruction.

For our civilization to survive, it is clearly necessary to revise this mood and thought pattern of our age, and to recharge our world culture with a new devotion to the sanctity of the only true method of human progress.

What I have said concerning the kind of faith which will serve us best in this great age of vast unfolding promise may be re-stated in more familiar terms. But I believe that they all add up to the same thing. The faith that will serve us best is the belief that there is a God indwelling in all nature, and yet transcending it, near to man in all his needs and yet beyond man's comprehension; that man is fashioned out of the earth but is nevertheless made in the spiritual image of God; that bound as he is by his physical and mental limitations, he is nevertheless boundless in his moral aspirations and is free to determine his own spiritual progress; that all men are equal in their essential humanity and that there is but one moral law for rich and poor, ruler and subject, native-born and stranger; that life is good and is a gracious gift of God; and that the moral evil which exists in the world can be overcome and in the overcoming of it lies the very meaning and adventure of human life; that progress is real even if not uninterrupted; that a golden age of universal justice, brotherhood and peace awaits the human race and can be hastened by the efforts of the human race.

With such a faith we can spread wide our adventuring sails and plow resolutely into the surge and thunder of our unpredictable odyssey, confident that our high hopes will, from time to time, find their blessed anchorage in some harbor of our hearts' desire.



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Recognizing this interest the 1955 Northwest Builders Show is bringing in for short addresses three of the most noted authorities in the world today.

On the opening day, Saturday, March 12th at 9:30 p.m. on Main Stage General Carlos P. Romulo of the Philippines will speak on the subject, "America's Stake in Asia." He is the Philippine Ambassador to the United States and to the United Nations. He is a former President of the General Assembly of the United Nations. He is a Pulitzer Prize-winning journalist and one of the most brilliant orators in the world today. He was the right hand man and aide-de-camp to General Douglas MacArthur during the dark days of Bataan. This

is the chance of a lifetime to hear and see him.

On the second day, Sunday, March 13th, at 9:30 p.m., Rabbi Abba Hillel Silver of Cleveland, Ohio, will speak on "Man's Hopes in the Atomic Age." Philosopher, author and student of human relations there is no one living today better qualified to answer that question.

On Tuesday evening, March 15, at 9:30 p.m. Miss Dorothy Thompson will speak on the subject, "The Crisis of the West." John Gunther says of Dorothy Thompson that she is "The greatest living American reporter, male or female." Winston Churchill once remarked that "her advocacy is worth a regiment of soldiers."



**DOROTHY THOMPSON**