



A regular bulletin highlighting the energy of goodwill in world affairs

FREEDOM AND SPIRITUAL SECURITY

Every year, World Goodwill holds a meeting in London, Geneva, and New York, to focus upon a topic of world interest. The aim is to attempt, as far as possible, to view this topic as the outer expression of inner causes, and to see how much light can be shed on the matter as it relates to the wider unfolding of the will-to-good within human affairs. As the higher correspondence of goodwill, the will-to-good is that dynamic loving purpose which energises all who serve humanity, inspiring and directing the application of goodwill in their work. Guest speakers involved in various initiatives are invited to share their thoughts and their experiences of service.

This year, "Freedom and Spiritual Security" provided a topic of significant depth and breadth, which inspired a wide range of contributions. World Goodwill was particularly fortunate to welcome to its London meeting Dr. Corinne Kumar, the Secretary General of the NGO El Taller International, based in Tunisia. She was therefore able to give a first-hand perspective on the Arab Spring, one of the most recent significant manifestations of humanity's ongoing struggle to understand the meaning of freedom. The other guest speaker in London, the Rev. Peter van Breda, reflected on the psychological and spiritual struggle for freedom undergone by modern man since the Renaissance, illustrating his thoughts by reference to Shakespeare, Copernicus and Machiavelli.

Seminar/Symposium report

IN THE OPENING ADDRESS IN LONDON, it was proposed that "spiritual security" means that the individual's highest vision of how to live – in political, religious and cultural terms – can be secured: in other words, that vision is, at least in principle, **possible**. However, it was noted that in **practice**, this vitally depends on the degree of freedom within the society where the individual lives. It is worth asking whether, in democratic countries, we take our freedom somewhat for granted. As Aung San Suu Kyi indicates, dissidents in Burma see freedom not as a

In Geneva, Dutch physicist Mintze van der Velde discussed the question of how free science is to help humanity. Rudolf Schneider, Secretary-General of the NGO the Institute for Planetary Synthesis, invited the audience to rearrange their lives in order to work for a world of expanding freedom. Some time was also devoted to small group discussions focusing on the theme and its relationship to President Roosevelt's famous Four Freedoms, and a number of insights were shared. In New York, Vanessa Tucker of the NGO Freedom House shared her thoughts on some of the institutional challenges which await the countries affected by the Arab Spring, and noted that the development of national identity is linked with each nation's particular blend of spirituality and psychology. Finally, a panel of three World Goodwill co-workers gave their perspectives on freedom, including the issue of how to give those who have committed crimes the opportunity to reintegrate into society, the importance of UN work on the prevention of genocide, and the inspiring vision of freedom offered by the Bhagavad Gita. And in all three centres, World Goodwill workers highlighted the importance of the cultivation of soul values and the significant impact which meditation can make in helping to implement the new emerging ideals which are needed to transition into a world where free citizens help to secure a spiritual future for humanity.

philosophical ideal, but as "something concrete that has to be gained through practical work".

The ideas of Benjamin Barber on strengthening democracy were then explored. Barber believes in the importance of active civic participation, and makes a number of significant recommendations for participative ways to strengthen democracy. So, for example, he is a strong believer in the importance of "common talk", which means structures and processes that allow all citizens to contribute their

In this issue

**Seminar/Symposium
Report**

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thoughts and listen to one another on important local and national issues. For Barber, the intention is that, out of this common listening and common talk will emerge a common **will**. This emphasis upon “will” in strong democracy underlines how important it is that this should be a **good will**, a will aimed at the **common good**. And this will towards the common good is grounded in common action. Alice Bailey echoes this thought in her suggestion that the Law of Group Endeavour will be an important factor in future.

In conclusion, the special obligation which the current democracies have towards those which are slowly emerging was noted.

THE FIRST GUEST SPEAKER, THE REV. PETER VAN BREDa, began by affirming “what is at stake today in the world is the whole future evolution of humanity. At the centre of this future stands the human being, and upon the shoulders of every one of us, the future rests.” So what is the human being, he asked: threefold in nature, he is born out of the Spirit, sent out of the world of Spirit down to this Earth. If we really look at the human being and we refrain from including his cosmic spiritual past, then we have lost the image, the model of what we can become. He suggested that the contemporary conflicting views about the human being are beautifully summed up in Hamlet’s soliloquy about man “What a piece of work is a man! How noble in reason . . . And yet, to me, what is this quintessence of dust?”

The Rev. van Breda noted that when we look at the world today, we find that there are many people who not only *wish* to do the good, but who actually *do* it: in the UK, especially, there are more charity organisations than anywhere else in the world. Yet despite this wonderful evidence of human goodness, we live in a world which is still plagued with violence, injustice, deprivation, crime, and much more. So any person wanting to become a modern good-doer needs to ask, with what consciousness has this to be carried out in the future?

And then, he noted, there is another problem that also meets us in modern times; what is the truth. We live in a world awash with conflicting points of view. How do we know that what we are doing is truly good? Is speaking the truth the same as doing the good? We can only do good when we recognise that there is something wrong in the world that we want to make better through the good.

Perhaps, he suggested, we can derive help from the discovery by Copernicus and Galileo that the earth was not the centre of the universe. This led people to regard themselves as spectators and not participants. Combine this with Machiavelli’s view that man is not to be trusted, and we can understand how the 21st century malady of separation and alienation has evolved. We have great difficulty in finding what “weaves between us” – the profound question that Jesus asked his mother at the wedding at Cana in Galilee.

Rev. van Breda proposed that one way to resolve this problem is through the sense of self, the sense of “I”, which is common

to all people everywhere in the world. Can we sensitise ourselves to the fact that every person we meet carries this very fragile, this very germ-like “I”? It is this which unites us.

He asserted that we are not fully incarnated yet, and that our conscience awakens us to what is good. The future of humanity can only come about through freedom. We cannot be free without responsibility. We have to change “freedom from” into “freedom for”. He cited the playwright Christopher Fry as someone who had real moral intuitions, and as an example quoted from his play, “A Sleep of Prisoners”. He concluded by suggesting that it is the power of hope within us which can connect us with the second coming of Christ, however we understand this, and will enable us together to create a new world.

THE SECOND GUEST SPEAKER, DR. CORINNE KUMAR, began her address by saying that she thought we are all on the same pilgrimage. She noted that politics is usually so devoid of care and compassion, so far away from ethics. She felt that we need to find another political vision, another ethic of care. She wanted to try to weave the context of the Arab Spring, especially Tunisia, with the work that she has been doing and more particularly with what she calls the ‘Courts of Women’. This work is in a very deep way listening to those knowledges and experiences that have been subjugated and silenced.

Mohamed Bouazizi’s self-immolation enabled the Tunisian people to cross the street of fear and to reject oppression. It was an insurrection of hope, which is something the world needed. And this hope has spread to the ‘Occupy’ movements.

She said that we live in the best of times and in the worst of times, for our community and collective memories are dying, and the safety nets of family and tribe are fragmenting. The many life visions are collapsing into a single cosmology. These are times when human rights have come to mean the rights of the privileged. For the masses to have their freedoms, their human rights, they must surrender their most fundamental human right of all, the *right to be human*. The world, she said, is at the end of its imagination. But, she asserted, perhaps it is at this moment that new meanings can be explored and revealed, that we can dream of a better world.

She suggested that only the imagination stands between us and fear. Fear makes us behave like sheep when we should be dreaming like poets. We cannot be indifferent observers, we must be “witnesses”. A witness is not a mere spectator, but looks and listens and remembers.

So now, she continued, we witness the south discovering new paradigms, creating alternative political and cultural imaginations, a new ethic of dialogue, a new understanding of equality – not as sameness but as difference. For to imagine is not simply to see what does not exist or what we want to exist; it is a profound act of creativity to see what is and this requires imaginative leaps.

She explained that the Courts of Women are an articulation of

this new 'imaginary', inviting us to think, to feel, to challenge, to connect, to dare, defining a new space for women. Here we can weave together the objective and the subjective, the rational with the intuitive, reason with compassion. The *Courts of Women* are public hearings: the Court is used in a symbolic way. In the Courts, the voices of the survivors are listened to; women bring their personal testimonies of violence, transforming private individual memory into shared public knowledge, giving what is seen as personal violence a public face, a political significance: the Courts are sacred spaces where women speaking in a language of suffering, name the crimes, seeking redress, even reparations and healing.

She noted that what is essential is not to develop new dogmas, but to suggest a new imaginative attitude, one that will be able to change the logic of our development. Perhaps, as the poet says, we should now break the routine, do an extravagant action that will change the course of history. What is essential is to go beyond the politics of violence and exclusion and develop an imaginary where people of the margins, of the *global south* write their own cultural narratives, offering new universals, imagining a world in more life enhancing terms, *constructing a new radical imaginary*.

In its search towards a new political imaginary, the Courts of Women work towards a politics with an ethic of care; for any theory of poverty that is disconnected from a theory of care and suffering will not listen to the voice of the other and will simply leave the poor out. The new political imaginary speaks to an ethic that will include compassion, connectedness, community, *conviviality* (that wonderful phrase of Ivan Illich). The discourse and praxis of rights cannot mean only economic and political emancipation, but must challenge the current paradigms of knowledge, thought and politics.

She suggested that what we need in the world today are new universalisms that will respect the plurality of the different societies, of their philosophy, their history, their traditions and cultures, and which will find a resonance in the different civilizations and cosmologies. It is here in the cosmologies and rootedness of cultures, here with people on the peripheries that we seek the deepening of an alternate discourse. It is here perhaps, that the notion of the sacred survives. She ended by asking the imperative question: "Can we return the spiritual to the material?"

IN THE CLOSING REMARKS, World Goodwill's approach to human welfare was described as one that views all world events as expressions of underlying energies and forces that are working their way into physical expression. This expression is therefore a science of social progress and evolution to which every interested person can usefully contribute. The subjective work of World Goodwill during this critical period is to help form a bridge between the spiritual and mundane worlds – to engage with this impulse and help express it in cooperation with the thinking of those who are active in constructive human development.

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It was suggested that, rather than thinking of freedom only as a state of release from captivity of some kind – be it physical or psychological – it can be regarded as the expression of a greater purpose. In connection with this, Alice Bailey described 'liberty' as "in reality the first revelation given to man of the nature of the Will of God". Liberty or Freedom therefore equates to the expression of divinity in human consciousness. And the closest we can come to understanding and demonstrating the force of liberation at present is through the energy of "goodwill" – for the Will is a dynamic power that, when fused with love and wisdom, dramatically furthers the spiritualisation of the human condition; but equally, when not in a symbiotic relationship with these qualities, becomes the tool of the despot.

It was noted that, while some parts of the world are still concerned with fundamental freedoms such as the struggle for basic human rights, others have achieved this to some degree, and a greater emphasis needs placing on the fact that true freedom brings with it certain sacrifices and responsibilities to others, demanding of us greater service and giving, and the relinquishing of the non-essentials in life in order to earnestly strive after greater truth. Behind the turbulence of the current world situation lies a subjective vision of unity and synthesis: by striving to maintain a stable and balanced perspective we can help implement the Divine Plan of love and light through meditation.

IN GENEVA, the afternoon began by introducing the idea of the higher and lower interludes of the year, with the Seminar, which takes place at the lower interlude, helping to anchor the spiritual energies contacted at the higher interlude. It was noted that this work is in support of the New Group of World Servers, and that the special Festival Week of the New Group is scheduled to take place next year, in December 2012.

THE FIRST PRESENTATION, FROM WORLD GOODWILL, focused on the idea of "conscious freedom", which encourages everyone to consider their individual responsibility to serve. Also highlighted were the Four Freedoms given by President Roosevelt in 1941: freedom of speech and expression; freedom of worship; freedom from want; and freedom from fear. There was then the opportunity for small group discussion of a number of questions. Among the reflections which were shared were: the thought that closed-mindedness in its various forms is the cause of a lack of freedom and that fear is what stops us feeling secure; the idea that overcoming selfishness leads to spirituality, and the nature of our paradigms and our sense of meaning change once we find our rightful place and attain group consciousness; the need to develop harmlessness of mind and of speech, inclusiveness, and a true alignment with the Source of all which in turn leads to respect for all beings; the need to cultivate a spirit of happiness based on the existence of the Divine Plan; the need to apply the Four Freedoms in daily life, and how freedom of speech asks us to be aligned and harmless, and free from blaming; how freedom from want may be experienced even with few physical resources; the idea

that perhaps freedom of movement and freedom of association could be added to the Four Freedoms; and how the Four Freedoms are synthesised in the idea of spiritual freedom.

THE FIRST GUEST SPEAKER, DUTCH PHYSICIST MINTZE VAN DER VELDE, reported on scientific research and its relationship to current needs. He noted that in our current civilisation, science has come to occupy an authoritative role akin to that of the Christian church in the Middle Ages, and that this fact presented its own dangers. Apparently, most scientists do not yet understand the new challenges humanity faces, or work in a way that is free from economic and institutional patterns. Their projects are mostly subject to the dictates of big companies that fund them. Which poses the question, Is this the end of human civilization? or is it that this crisis will be a great opportunity for a real change of human consciousness? As Alice Bailey remarked, the new group of world servers must bring humanity to the understanding of the fundamental ideals which will govern the new age. Thus, the new group has a huge task today.

THE SECOND GUEST SPEAKER, RUDOLF SCHNEIDER, leads the Institute for Planetary Synthesis (ISP), an NGO in Geneva. According to him, no peace is possible if it is not established within the individual. Peace requires sacrifice. He suggested that four steps are required to transform ourselves into peaceful world citizens: active goodwill; leading to right human relations; leading to peace; leading to "life more abundant".

Schneider offered some clear and simple diagrams to achieve this goal and to remain strong with a heartfelt spontaneity. He suggested that the chief attitude which traps people in the quest for personal power, sex and material wealth is the fear of loss. Among other ideas, he mentioned the law of polarity, i.e., where opposite poles are necessary and complementary, interpenetrating and mutually enriching. He invited the audience to rearrange their lives, to work towards a new global culture and a new civilization as part of the new group of world servers. Within that group he defined the seed groups as follows: telepathic communicators, trained observers, magnetic healers, the educators of the New Age, political organizers, the workers in the religious field, scientific servers, psychologists, financiers, and creatives.

Schneider reminded us to promote the values of the Golden Rule which is present in all major religions: "Do unto others as you would have them do to yourselves."

He ended his presentation by referring to his own experiences at the UN as head of the ISP and underlined the necessity of meditations as a powerful impetus, and the importance of forming Triangles as a global network.

IN THE CONCLUDING REMARKS, it was noted that each area of life is governed by a life cycle. Towards the end of a cycle, what were once positive values and qualities may become misused or overused. Our time is ripe to consider the direction of movement of life, and the power we have to think our way constructively out of dogmas and beliefs that are no longer

needed. We must ask ourselves, how do we welcome the unexpected? For those things which trip us up can also lead us to dance, just to be in life, and there, freedom, trust, and security emerge. If we encourage young people to stay connected with the Source of all life, they will be able to keep a clear mind, to remain optimistic and enthusiastic. They will be in balance, flexible, and they can reach and remain in a state of grace no matter what. Thus can the future be built in freedom.

IN THE OPENING ADDRESS IN NEW YORK, freedom was described as a leavening and expansive force. This can be seen in not just the human kingdom, for there is the stage in life in which the shell protects the egg, which could be likened to the way in which a mother protects the growing child, in which the unfolding consciousness has the opportunity to be protected and to evolve in life. Curiously, the narrowness of human ignorance is one form of protection. Freedom in the spiritual sense is more a state of consciousness, a state of being, and until sensitivity is developed, the individual lacks the capacity to break free of the boundaries which nature and culture create for protection.

And freedom can become encrusted by glamour – this is where the prison of ideas which obsess the individual makes the person believe he is right and others are wrong. Thus, the attainment of true freedom is the result of a whole series of liberations. In the U.S.A in particular, there is a tendency to worship the freedom of the individual. But it is possible to become somewhat englamoured by the way in which this great spiritual ideal of freedom is interpreted. In particular, materialism may block out the influence of the Soul of the United States, for money is one of the issues that interferes with freedom. Money is so often used to wield influence, to manipulate, to create divisions and a sense of entitlement. And selfishness pulls one deeper into the thrall of materialism.

Being free FROM is the next step for humanity; to have the capacity to pull away from that which imprisons us. It is not the existence of material things that is the problem but it is the love of money, as the Bible says. Is there a way of gaining a more detached freedom from this? If the human race is ever to do so, we must recognize the divine capacity we have within us.

All life on this planet is driven by a deep urge toward freedom. This quest for freedom does not stop at the material plane. And while the freedom of the soul is hard for us to imagine, yet even that level of freedom can be surpassed. Why wouldn't all of us yearn for this freedom? We should therefore extend our vision toward what lies ahead, and "let the revelation continue."

THE GUEST SPEAKER, VANESSA TUCKER FROM FREEDOM HOUSE, spoke next. Freedom House, which was founded by Wendell Wilke and Eleanor Roosevelt, celebrated its 70th anniversary this year. It supports freedom worldwide, through advocacy, direct action and research. It supports and promotes democratic change and civil society, and produces high quality research which exposes human rights abuses. Ms. Tucker's

portfolio included Libya and Egypt, and she presented some reflections on the Arab Spring, and the institutional challenges which new governments in the region may face.

She noted that, while in Syria, Libya, Yemen and Bahrain, citizens watched as their governments and status quo were shaken, Algeria and Morocco may have avoided the same kind of change. In Egypt, the crackdown and restriction against assembly and the complete marginalization of the opposition fuelled unprecedented violence, while Tunisia's rampant and centralized corruption was exposed. The recent October election there may actually have met international standards for free and fair elections. Yet their transition to democracy or a more transparent environment will be a process of incremental steps that will take years. In Libya there were no "Institutions" as such.

In all these countries, complicated challenges loom in the sphere of the rule of law, and the psychological distress of the social upheavals make reforms more difficult to implement. In this context, the potential for disillusionment is great, and there will be forces that blame "democracy" in these transitions. Finally, the development of national identity is interrelated with that nation's blend of spirituality and psychology.

In response to questions from the audience, Ms Tucker indicated that a range of private foundations, some corporations and also the National Endowment for Democracy all supported Freedom House. She noted that women's rights in emerging democracies and in transitional countries in the Arab world are still unfolding. Skill-building workshops in Afghanistan reveal the fact that savvy, creative women there are already skilled. She felt that this is really a nuanced issue that is much larger than just how many women are in Parliament. She said that the effect of spiritual lives, expectations and how people rebuild lives after trauma or chaos is an important issue, which speaks to the need for spiritual security.

One questioner inquired about the role of the internet. Ms Tucker noted that Tunisia's internet access was heavily monitored with a surveillance system that rivalled China's, and that computers and basic literacy also are issues.

FOLLOWING MS TUCKER, THERE WAS A PANEL PRESENTATION FROM THREE WORLD GOODWILL CO-WORKERS. The first speaker was an elected Judge, Clinton Canady III. Regarding criminals, he posed the question, "who were they before they committed crimes? What did they do before? What do they bring to this issue?" He noted that a judge never knows when someone will recognize the chance or importance of changing his or her behaviour. The role that alcohol and drugs play in criminal behaviour is significant, therefore finding freedom from the grip of these is vital. Freedom from addiction is one gift of Alcoholic Anonymous, and the AA book on the Twelve Steps, offers a spiritual approach to life and freedom.

He cited examples of Thoreau and Thoreau's inspiration from the *Bhagavad Gita*; Gandhi was inspired by Thoreau. Thoreau left Harvard; Gandhi left his law practice; and Dr. Martin Luther

King, Jr., left his ministerial post for a political role. All three of these men gained freedom from the expectations of their peers, families and in some sense their wider communities.

He pointed out the role of the spiritual awakening; and how many have this awakening within confinement, within prison, e.g. Nelson Mandela. He discussed the experience of imprisonment and the finding of spirituality as a means to open the door to freedom, which is none other than spiritual value(s).

Judge Canady works to communicate with the young people convicted of crimes – to speak in ways they will understand and yet to inspire them with this vision of a spiritual reality, a spiritual future, and a sense of possibility. He also works with the Michigan Department of Corrections and Corrections Officers. He came into the Judiciary after having served as an attorney, so he knows many of them. He can give people the opportunity and even several opportunities to learn, to grow, to advance. However, if someone's life or career is in crime, then it is his job to take them away from society in order to learn. On a local, national and global scale all these issues pave the way to spirituality.

The next panellist was Ms Jimena Leiva-Roesch. She noted that when the Polish lawyer Raphael Lemkin coined the word "genocide", he raised the level of human consciousness with the introduction of this new category and term. The prevention of genocide has now been institutionalized in the work of the U.N. She also highlighted the work of Senator William Proxmire, who spoke over 3,000 times in his 40 years in the Senate, requesting that the U.S. should ratify the Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide. It was finally ratified by the Senate in 1986.

The third panellist, Dr. Arthur Kubikian, had lived for 13 years in Communist Romania, then in the Lebanon; and then for the past 50 years in the U.S.A. He described his learning process regarding freedom. Thus, he learned the value of academic freedom, of free speech, and spirituality. By taking philosophy and ethics courses, he learned the values of basic human rights. He studied the philosophy of history and of science; and the history of ideas. He studied Buckminster Fuller and also Will and Ariel Durant's books on the Story of Civilization, which emphasise the values of cooperation over competition; and Franklin Roosevelt's Four Freedoms and the Atlantic Charter. He then spoke about Torkom Saraydarian and his translation from Sanskrit into English of the *Bhagavad Gita*. He said that the *Gita* offers us the ultimate view of freedom and techniques to promote freedom, and concluded that the future generation will tincture the world with increasing levels of both freedom and security.

FINALLY, IN THE CLOSING REMARKS, it was noted that freedom can only be truly practised in a group context, which connects the idea of freedom to the soul, which is ever group focused. At the same time, the path of spiritual progress must be trodden freely by each soul. It was proposed that we cannot think >>

HELPING TO BUILD RIGHT HUMAN RELATIONS

World Goodwill is an international movement helping to mobilise the energy of goodwill and to build right human relations. It was established in 1932 as a service activity of the Lucis Trust. The Lucis Trust is a registered educational charity in Great Britain. In the USA it is a non-profit tax-exempt educational corporation, and in Switzerland it is registered as a non-profit association. World Goodwill is recognised by the United Nations as a Non-Governmental Organisation and is represented at regular briefing sessions at UN Headquarters. The Lucis Trust is on the Roster of the United Nations Economic and Social Council.

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>> of freedom without acknowledging responsibility, for there is now a growing recognition that everyone is responsible to the whole, and in this modern and interdependent world, the rugged individualist model no longer stands. Freedom is a universal right with a global significance, and universal rights and the common good are both at issue.

In this modern concept of freedom, the welfare of a society depends equally on recognition of the individual citizen's rights and liberties, and his responsibility to the well being of the larger whole. Both are seen as mutually interdependent. Alice Bailey's writings support this vision from the spiritual angle, for while on the one hand standing really free is standing unimpeded in the light of the soul, on the other, there is in fact no real freedom from the soul law of serving the whole.

It was suggested that one of the most effective modes of service is meditation, which distributes spiritual energies as far as the consciousness can envision. And while meditation can present new ideals to receptive minds, it does this without infringing free will.

True freedom is a state of mind; yet our minds may not be as free as we think they are. As the Buddha said to his followers, we must not be sheep. Freedom is beyond dogmas, it is the path of "independent enlightenment", which can only be reached if we continuously seek to hold right views. That's a state of freedom to which we can all aspire. And, as Alice Bailey noted, one liberating idea which is now making an impact on human consciousness, and which we can help to share, is the thought that separation is a thing of the past, and unity is the goal of the immediate future.