

World Goodwill

THE PROBLEMS OF HUMANITY: BUILDING RIGHT HUMAN RELATIONS

Study Five

RACIAL MINORITIES

The Problems of Humanity Course consists of seven study sets. Each set is based upon the book *Problems of Humanity* by Alice Bailey.

General principles underlying this course of study are laid out in the Introductory Set to the Course, Study One. It is suggested that this Introductory Set be reviewed prior to study of each subsequent set and that the relevant chapter in *Problems of Humanity* be consulted.

In addition it is suggested that each study be combined with wide and diverse reading on the problem.

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KEY STATEMENTS

...any doctrine of superiority based on racial differentiation is scientifically false, morally condemnable, socially unjust and dangerous... there is no justification for racial discrimination, in theory or in practice, anywhere.

From the Preamble to the International Convention on the
Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination

The nature of all men is identical; what divides them is their customs.

Confucius (551-479 B.C.)

I ask you to drop your antagonisms and your antipathies, your hatreds and your racial differences, and attempt to think in terms of the one family, the one life, and the one humanity.

Alice Bailey

The beauty of the present situation is that even in the smallest community a practical expression of what is needed on a worldwide scale is offered to the inhabitants; differences in families, in churches, in municipalities, in cities, in nations, between races and internationally all call for the same objective and for the same process of adjustment: the establishing of right human relations. The technique or method to bring this about remains everywhere the same: the use of the spirit of goodwill.

Alice Bailey

SEED THOUGHT FOR MEDITATION

A solution to the problem of the minorities is essentially the finding of a solution to the great heresy of separateness.

INTRODUCTION

In this study we touch on several aspects of the question of race relations and minorities, with the objectives in mind of promoting understanding and inspiring the awareness that there is a contribution that every individual can make to the building of racial harmony. The person of goodwill rejects outright any obvious forms of prejudice but may still, even unconsciously, give support to ideas that impute superiority or inferiority. An intelligent and reflective understanding can free us from cultural conditioning that may have previously led us to hold such ideas.

Students of *The Problems of Humanity* course live in different countries and in a great variety of enviroing conditions. Some may have little experience of specific situations of racial tension but, via the media and everyday conversation, all will have experienced patterns of thought and speech that fuel prejudice. Some students will belong to a disadvantaged minority group and will approach the subject from this perspective.

Wherever we live, to a greater or lesser extent, we are all involved in this issue, contributing either to the problem or to its solution. Students of this course will often be people of influence, who speak their opinions forthrightly. It is important that we think through our ideas with honesty and daring, and be prepared to change when we find we have been influenced by cultural thoughtforms that have prejudiced our attitude towards those of different ethnic backgrounds to our own.

The challenge of establishing just and harmonious race relations confronts humanity with one of its most critical problems. No society is free of the problem of discrimination against its minorities. In some countries it manifests in persecution and hatred, while in others it is found in more subtle forms of disadvantage. The cost in human terms of the suffering and wasted potential caused by racial prejudice is incalculable: it is currently one of the major causes of social tension, violence and distrust. The danger it poses to society has been dramatically evidenced in recent years, with inner city riots and the rise of neo-Nazi organisations in rich Western countries, and with ethnic conflagrations erupting in Africa and in the heart of Europe. The shattering of former Yugoslavia along historical stress lines into warring tribes and bloody feuds brought with it the terrible concept of "ethnic cleansing", a sanitised phrase that sought to make genocide more acceptable.

There is urgent need for reforms to help alleviate the effects of racial disadvantage. This may call for legislation, special educational programmes and other actions

to protect minority rights, thus ensuring that ethnic groups are able to participate fully in all areas of the society in which they live. Men and women of goodwill have a critical role to play. Not only can they put needed pressure upon local and national governments to ensure that programmes are initiated, but they also feed the reservoir of goodwill in society as a whole which ensures that any reforms implemented can be of lasting benefit.

There is now a vast amount of literature on the theme of race relations and minorities. Within the scope and purpose of this brief study we can do no more than acknowledge this impressive body of material.

The inspiration for this course is the book *Problems of Humanity* written by Alice Bailey. A number of quotations are included from the chapter on racial minorities where the overall theme is considered under two main headings: nationalism and racial minorities. Whilst the spirit of nationalism has played a positive role in generating national unity, it has also fed the sense of separatism and superiority. In the modern world of complex international relationships, nationalism should be seen as a temporary stage on the path to mature global citizenship. It must be transcended by the sense of the one humanity, and concern for the planet as a whole. Only when national identity, purpose and unity are experienced in this way, as a means of benefiting the whole, can they be fully constructive.

At the heart of all work for racial justice and equality there is a vision of basic human rights, a vision of a better way of life based upon the values of sharing, co-operation and community. Racism reveals a crisis of the human spirit. It reveals the sense of separateness between individuals, groups and nations which allows barriers of prejudice to be erected. Full resolution of the crisis can only come with acceptance of the reality of the one human family, and with the decision to live by life-enhancing values.

We recommend that you read widely on this subject and then, through group and individual consideration of the suggested questions in the final section, seek to reach a level of understanding from which a wise perspective is possible.

We suggest, too, that you anchor your understanding through some form of goodwill action. And we also recommend that you participate in a meditation that focuses upon the healing and deeper bridging work

possible through the united thought and heart-felt aspiration of all who love humanity.

The intention to be of service to humanity is the essential motivation of all true creative meditation. Expansion of the human mind is based on the ability to love and serve others. The ultimate result in the consciousness of the individual is illumination, wisdom and the will-to-good, and an expanding ability to co-operate in the creative and redemptive purposes of our planetary life. Meditation as a planetary service is both practical and effective.

(adapted from *The Science of Meditation*
Arcane School booklet)



THE FORCES OF PREJUDICE

Modern science rejects the idea of race. Indeed, findings in genetics and biology demonstrate the unity of humanity as a species. Why then do strong racial prejudices persist?

There is no simple answer to this question. The different causes of racial prejudice and discrimination have been debated by social scientists for generations. In seeking to understand why racial prejudices persist, many causes need to be taken into account: economic and class factors; the balance of power; and cultural and religious differences.

It is necessary also to consider the basic contradictions in ethics and values within society that racism reflects. For example, in his classic text *An American Dilemma* (1944), Gunnar Myrdal stressed the discrepancy between the ideal of the American creed, based on the Bill of Rights, and the everyday practice of blatant discrimination in the relations which existed between black and white Americans. Other writers have explored the contradiction between religious ideals which advocate brotherhood, compassion and right action, and social norms which insist that the individual ought to be prejudiced because this has been the practice for generations.

One major field of research traces the causes of prejudice primarily to economic, class and political forces. In this approach it is argued that a minority group, disadvantaged by belonging to a different culture and by poverty, is unable to utilise the full resources of society. Those within the minority group are caught in a cycle of low expectations, low achievement levels, political powerlessness and alienation. Prejudice against a minority group is seen as both an intensification of existing prejudices against those who live in poverty and suffer deprivation, and a result of the dominant group's desire to retain their political and economic power.

Erich Fromm, in his book *The Fear of Freedom* (*Escape From Freedom* in the U.S.), developed a psychological approach to the causes of prejudice. He argued that a young person, on leaving the security of family ties, experienced a feeling of aloneness that produced anxiety and fear, which was then projected on another group. By projecting negative characteristics onto the group to which the individual did not belong, he or she automatically identified with a superior group. In this approach, prejudice is a result of an unconscious or misguided attempt to create individual identity and security.

Another potential cause of prejudice is the scapegoat theory, in which a particular group is blamed for all that seems to go wrong in the environment. This is a factor of special significance in times of economic difficulties, or when there are conditions of heightened social stress regarding such issues as housing, education or welfare services. Frustration and aggression are intensified under these conditions. Where there is no way of "hitting back" at the direct cause of the problem, a substitute is found on whom the aggression is vented, and this is often an easily identified minority group.

In addressing these economic, social and psychological causes of prejudice we shall find, inevitably, that we are challenging a much more basic problem – the existence of the sense of separateness in the human psyche. As long as the "small I", the will of the individual or of the group, continues to set itself apart from the good of the whole, then the problems of exploitation, the division of humanity into "haves" and "have nots", and the ethnocentric ideas that underlie the "them" versus "us" way of thinking, will continue.

Only through an inclusive and caring attitude to life, and a new allegiance to the human family as a whole, can this separateness be transcended, and the walls of prejudice be broken down.

TOWARDS SOLUTION OF THE PROBLEM

CHANGING VALUES

The problems humanity faces in race relations are complex and diverse. Yet they have their roots in a common cause. For these problems reflect the values by which we live.

Where the values that dominate decision-making, policies and action are materialistic – values of separateness and self-interest – then division, conflict and exploitation result. Where spiritual values determine action – values of community, cooperation and a sense of justice – it is possible to implement far-reaching reforms. The solution in any human crisis area depends upon such spiritual values gaining dominance. With all that is at stake in our troubled, interdependent world society, it is imperative that we choose to live by values that reflect a mature and compassionate humanity.

This change in values can be triggered by any experience which touches the heart and appeals to an innate and intelligent sense of what is right. The media, the churches, schools and political forces in society all powerfully influence social values, and people working in these fields bear much responsibility for the quality of race relations.

Progressive approaches in education, the work of individuals and groups for human rights and freedoms, and the activities of the United Nations are examples of contributions to the shaping of right values in human living that have particular relevance to the problems addressed in this study paper. Comments from servers in these areas of endeavour are included later in the text.

BRIDGING: FROM SEPARATENESS TO THE ONE HUMANITY

It is bridging work which has now to be done – bridging between what is today and what can be in the future. If, during the coming years, we develop this technique of bridging the many cleavages found in the human family and in offsetting the racial hatreds and the separative attitudes of nations and people, we shall have succeeded in constructing a world in which war will be impossible and humanity will be realizing itself as one human family and not as a fighting aggregate of many nations and peoples, competitively engaged in getting the best of each other and successfully fostering prejudices and hatred.

Alice Bailey, Problems of Humanity p.63

The guidelines for right human relationships have been given by the enlightened teachers of the world in the simplest of terms. We are to love one another, to practise right thoughts, words and deeds. These spiritual principles are the foundations of global cooperation, justice and security.

The social ills that blight contemporary human affairs evidence very different guidelines, working in opposition to these higher impulses. This opposition is rooted in separateness, in the sense of “them” versus “us” and in the urge to put “me” first.

Nowhere has the life-destroying effect of separateness been more clearly shown than in the field of race relations. Wherever it is found, racism creates deep and

crippling lines of cleavage.

Moulded by our historical backgrounds, the spirit of separateness still potently conditions our world-view. We are quick to criticise differences and slow to value healing and unifying influences at work in world affairs. Through mass literacy, the spread of education and the impact of such profound change agents as the media, the intellectual capacity of humanity is now developed to such an extent, that it is imperative that spiritual values are strengthened. If held in check by spiritual values, the intellect serves the greater good. However, if materialistic values hold sway, the line of least resistance for the intellect is that of critical, separative and self-centred thought.

In our world today spiritual values find expression in all that is being done to create a better world in every area of human endeavour. At the same time materialistic values flourish in myriad concerns that seek to benefit the part at the expense of the whole. The challenge is to see that spiritual values triumph.

The spiritual perspective is always characterised by inclusiveness, the striving towards unity-in-diversity, the values of co-operation and personal integrity. These qualities are the expression of the soul, that part of our nature known by many names: the Christ within, the higher faculties of mind and heart to which the pinnacle of creative human achievement bears witness, the true

Self. The soul illumines the mind, revealing its intuitive and abstract powers. It awakens the heart, releasing the energy of goodwill and unfolding the capacity to love and serve. In the light of the soul, the wholeness and synthesis of life is sensed. If this is the perspective held, the concern of the individual or group will be to promote justice, equality and respect for all cultures and peoples. The human race as a whole will be the significant factor.

A solution to separateness in race relations depends upon bringing the spiritual “down to earth”, thus increasing the influence of soul values in human affairs through their deliberate cultivation in the life of the individual.

The bridge-builders are the men and women of goodwill who, in their untold numbers, are committed to work for a better world. They are the global group of all who love humanity, and have responded to the inner soul impulse to serve. Working in every area of need, these bridge-builders give living expression to spiritual values. In

race relations they stand by the principles of human rights and unity-in-diversity, and they heal the cleavages that divide and separate.

The bridge that is being built incorporates ideas, aspirations, vision and actions. It unites in its common purpose all individual servers who pioneer the new in the place where they live and work. It affirms the fact of the One Humanity throughout the fabric of society. Through this network of all people of goodwill, the values and principles upon which a new world order must be based are being anchored in everyday life.

The extraordinary progress being made in bringing spiritual values “down to earth” is reflected in the vast planetary network of service that seeks to meet real human and world need. It is reflected in the way in which such real issues as poverty, injustice and pollution are now subject to ceaseless debate on the world stage. And it is reflected in the many initiatives to create more healthy approaches to this contentious issue of race relations.

SHAPING ATTITUDES EARLY ON: THE SPECIAL RESPONSIBILITIES OF SCHOOLS

Attitudes towards other cultures held by children and teenagers primarily reflect the attitudes which they meet in their homes, among their peers, and in their schools.

On the “race” question, schools face the responsibility that, in many ways, education itself has become another area of inequality. Children of disadvantaged minority groups are often significantly less successful in the school system. This lack of achievement can be attributed to a number of factors, some directly the responsibility of the schools. The curriculum may be based upon the priorities and values of the dominant culture in such a way that children of minority groups feel alienated from the outset of their school life. Teachers often reflect the prejudices of society at large, and may therefore reinforce racial stereotypes, or hold low expectations for children of different ethnic groups. The education system may be missing the opportunity to meet the genuine and legitimate needs of these pupils – for instance, the need for additional help in language and related areas of the syllabus, the need to build respect and appreciation for minority cultures so that the children of these cultures gain in self-esteem and relate to the whole educational process more fully, and the need for a fair representation of teachers from minority groups.

Research suggests that children are exposed to the forces of prejudice at a very young age. There is strong evidence that even before the age of five, racial stereotypes are already found among children. Throughout the

whole of the schooling process, attitudes and values in race are being moulded, for better or worse, in the classroom. Schools, therefore, need to find a positive role in shaping these attitudes and values. Many are endeavouring to meet this responsibility by adopting programmes that promote a sense of “inter-cultural awareness” – respect for and tolerance of the values, beliefs and lifestyles of other cultures. These programmes encourage discussions and research on the special problems faced by ethnic minorities, help children to respect and value their own heritage, and provide additional help for children of ethnic minorities to aid in overcoming language difficulties or other related disadvantages.

This new focus in education belongs within the broad field of *values education*. It reflects the realisation that schools must find better ways to meet the psychological needs of young people, directing them towards a healthy and balanced personality expression, and a constructive role within the community as a whole.

Schools can greatly off-set “exclusiveness” by taking a positive leadership role in the promotion of life-enhancing values. They can cultivate attitudes and values which are evocative of right relationships and understanding between young people of different cultures.

How can we simply and clearly express the goal of [the] hoped-for new world order and word briefly the objective which each person and nation should hold before itself... It is surely that every nation, great and small (with the minorities given equal and proportionate rights) should pursue its own individual culture and work out its own salvation as seems best to it, but that each and all should develop the realisation that they are organic parts of one corporate whole and that they must contribute to that whole all they have and are. This concept... carries with it great responsibility. These realisations, when intelligently developed and wisely handled, will lead to right human relations, economic stability (based on the spirit of sharing) and to a fresh orientation of man to man, of nation to nation, and of all to that supreme power to which we give the name "God."

Alice Bailey, *The Externalisation of the Hierarchy* p. 377

CONSTRUCTIVE ACTIVITIES

Constructive action in the task of eradicating racial prejudice and discrimination from both thought and practice is grounded in the recognition that "separation is a thing of the past and that unity is the goal of the immediate future; that hatred is retro-active and undesirable and that goodwill is the touchstone which will transform the world". Activities evoked by this recognition in the field of race relations are being directed along many lines, of which the following are the most important:

1. Emphasis upon the principle of unity-in-diversity. (This is a theme of many of the UNESCO publications on race). Promoting awareness that racial prejudice and discrimination are immoral; that racism has no basis in science; that the problem of race is one of the great moral issues of our time.
2. Educational programmes to see that men, women and children throughout the world are given the facts of race – scientific, historical, cultural, religious and philosophical.
3. Strenuous efforts to eliminate the social and economic conditions in which racial problems flourish. These include poverty, unemployment, inadequate housing, and lack of access to education and medical facilities.
4. Legal measures, nationally and internationally, to outlaw racist practices.

There are now vast numbers of groups and organisations throughout the world dedicated to eliminating racial and minority injustice. Some of the most influential of these organisations are government funded, while others may be affiliated to religious bodies, to major service organisations or they may be the result of initiatives by individual citizens of concern. These efforts are promoting community and government awareness of

the causes of racial discord, and of the need for skilled action and adequate resources in the field of race relations.

Examples of some of the activities of these groups and organisations include:

- providing information about other cultures, countries and languages
- organising social events on an inter-community basis
- helping children with pre-school education
- running youth programmes for study, community service and vocational training
- helping individuals from minority communities to learn the language of the dominant culture, and encouraging the study of minority languages by individuals of the dominant culture
- legal and welfare aid for minorities
- promoting anti-discrimination legislation
- focusing attention upon the enrichment that peoples from other cultures bring to a community
- developing resources and programmes suitable for multi-racial primary and secondary schools and teacher training colleges
- alerting public awareness to human rights abuses, which often have a racial component.

You can obtain details of such groups and their projects by contacting the local or national Citizens' Advice Bureau or its equivalent.

Values to Live By

A Love of Truth — essential for a just, inclusive and progressive society

A Sense of Justice — recognition of the rights and needs of all

A Spirit of Cooperation — based on active goodwill and the principles of right human relationships

A Sense of Personal Responsibility — for group, community and national affairs

Serving the Common Good — through the sacrifice of selfishness. Only what is good for all is good for each one

These are spiritual values, inspiring the conscience and the consciousness of those who serve to create a better way of life.

(copies of the 'Values to Live By' card are available
on request from World Goodwill)

FOUR FREEDOMS AND THE UNIVERSAL DECLARATION OF HUMAN RIGHTS

The broad movement working to establish harmonious race relations can be seen, to a great extent, as an effect of the impact of two ideas: freedom and human rights. These ideas, which have powerfully influenced humanity throughout this century, have been enunciated in various key statements, with perhaps the most important being the *Four Freedoms* and the *Universal Declaration of Human Rights*. Both documents set the goal for a level of responsible and right human relations that is yet to be achieved in any country.

In their simplicity, the *Four Freedoms* embrace the basic needs of each and every person.

- Freedom of speech and expression, everywhere in the world;
- Freedom of each person to worship God in his own way, everywhere in the world;
- Freedom from want, everywhere in the world;
- Freedom from fear, everywhere in the world.

Implicit in these four freedoms is the need for freedom from prejudice, for only then can there be the freedom for minorities to live without the harassment, indignity and often violence, inflicted by racial discrimination.

The scriptures of the world's major religions affirm the oneness of the human family. This same principle is embodied in the *Universal Declaration of Human Rights*. If you have not already done so, we recommend a reflective study of the Preamble and 30 articles of this Declaration, for it stands as a milestone of vision and new values in the life of humanity. We have included the Preamble and two articles from the *Universal Declaration of Human Rights*.

Preamble

WHEREAS recognition of the inherent dignity and of the equal and inalienable rights of all members of the human family is the foundation of freedom, justice and peace in the world, whereas disregard and contempt for human rights have resulted in barbarous acts which have outraged the conscience of mankind, and the advent of a world in which human beings shall enjoy freedom of speech and belief and freedom from fear and want has been proclaimed as the highest aspiration of the common people,

WHEREAS it is essential, if man is not to be compelled to have recourse, as a last resort, to rebellion against tyranny and oppression, that human rights should be protected by the rule of law,

WHEREAS it is essential to promote the development of friendly relations between nations,

WHEREAS the peoples of the United Nations have in the Charter reaffirmed their faith in fundamental human rights, in the dignity and worth of the human person and in the equal rights of men and women and have determined to promote social progress and better standards of life in larger freedom,

WHEREAS Member-States have pledged themselves to achieve, in co-operation with the United Nations, the promotion of universal respect for and observance of human rights and fundamental freedoms,

WHEREAS a common understanding of these rights and freedoms is of the greatest importance for the full realization of this pledge.

Now, therefore, THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY proclaims

this Universal Declaration of Human Rights as a common standard of achievement for all peoples and all nations, to the end that every individual and every organ of society, keeping this Declaration constantly in mind, shall strive by teaching and education to promote respect for these rights and freedoms and by progressive measures, national and international, to secure their universal and effective recognition and observance, both among the peoples of Member-States themselves and among the peoples of territories under their jurisdiction.

Article 1. All human beings are born free and equal in dignity and rights. They are endowed with reason and conscience and should act towards one another in a spirit of brotherhood.

Article 7. All are equal before the law and are entitled without any discrimination to equal protection of the law. All are entitled to equal protection against any discrimination in violation of this Declaration and against any incitement to such discrimination.

(Copies of the *Universal Declaration of Human Rights* are available from World Goodwill).

UNITED NATIONS ACTION

The work of the United Nations is conditioning international thought concerning the ideals upon which a solution to the problems of race depend. Its Charter pledges member states to take joint and separate action in co-operation with the UN for the achievement of “universal respect for an observance of human rights and fundamental freedoms for all without distinction as to race, sex, language or religion”.

There are many United Nations’ initiatives dealing with race and the rights of minorities. They make a potent contribution towards the goal of justice and equality for all people everywhere. The combined effect of the different declarations, conventions and official commemorative days constitutes an international approach to the question of race, and generates world-wide pressure for the adoption of basic human rights.

In 1963 the General Assembly of the United Nations adopted unanimously the United Nations *Declaration on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination**. This declaration affirms the necessity for national and international measures in such areas as law, teaching, education and information, in order to eliminate racial discrimination. Two of the ten articles of this declaration are as follows:

Article 1. Discrimination between human beings on the grounds of race, colour or ethnic origin is an offence to human dignity and shall be condemned as a denial of the principles of the Charter of the United Nations, as a violation of the human rights and fundamental freedoms proclaimed in the *Universal Declaration of Human Rights*, as an obstacle to friendly and peaceful relations among nations and as a fact capable of disturbing peace and security among peoples.

Article 9. (1) All propaganda and organizations based on ideas or theories of the superiority of one race or group of persons of one colour or ethnic origin with a view to justifying or promoting racial discrimination in any form shall be severely condemned.

(2) All incitement to or acts of violence, whether by individuals or organizations against any race or group of persons of another colour or ethnic origin shall be considered an offence against society and punishable under law.

(3) In order to put into effect the purposes and principles of the present Declaration, all States shall take immediate and positive measures, including legisla-

tive and other measures, to prosecute and or outlaw organizations which promote or incite to racial discrimination, or incite to or use violence for purposes of discrimination based on race, colour or ethnic origin.

Countries that have ratified the *International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination* are pledged to pursue, by all appropriate means and without delay, a policy of eliminating racial discrimination in all its forms and of promoting racial understanding among all races. The Convention states that legal measures be taken to make it a punishable offence to incite racial hatred, and to declare illegal acts which promote racial discrimination. It details many specific actions that signatory nations are committed to undertake. By June 1996 this Convention had been ratified by 150 countries.

(* A copy of this Declaration can be obtained from the United Nations Department of Public Information, United Nations Headquarters, NY 10017, USA.)

UNITED NATIONS DATES RELATING TO RACE

Third Decade to Combat Racism and Racial Discrimination (1993-2003)

On 20 December 1993, the UN General Assembly proclaimed the Third Decade to Combat Racism and Racial Discrimination, beginning in 1993, and adopted the *Programme of Action* for it. The Assembly urged governments to take measures to combat new forms of racism, in particular by adapting constantly the methods to combat them. The Secretary-General was requested to continue the study of the effects of racial discrimination on the children of minorities, particularly those of migrant workers, and to submit recommendations for combating those effects. He was also requested to finalize the draft model legislation for combating racial discrimination, and to ensure that the necessary financial resources be provided for the activities of the Decade.

International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination (21 March)

The International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination is observed annually on 21 March – the anniversary of the day in 1960 when at a peaceful

demonstration against the apartheid “pass laws” in Sharpeville, South Africa, police opened fire, killing 69 blacks. Proclaiming the International Day in 1966, the General Assembly called on the international community to redouble its efforts to eliminate all forms of racial discrimination.

**Week of Solidarity with the Peoples Struggling
against Racism and Racial Discrimination
(Beginning on 21 March)**

As part of its programme for the first Decade for Action to Combat Racism and Racial Discrimination, the General Assembly in 1979 called for the observance by all States of a Week of Solidarity with the Peoples Struggling against Racism and Racial Discrimination, beginning on 21 March.

Human Rights Day (10 December)

All States and interested organizations were invited by the General Assembly in 1950 to observe 10 December as Human Rights Day. The Day marks the anniversary of the Assembly’s adoption of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights in 1948.

**International Decade of the World’s Indigenous
People (1994-2004)**

On 18 December 1990, the General Assembly proclaimed the International Year of the World’s

Indigenous People. The Year, with its theme *Indigenous People – A New Partnership*, helped focus world attention on the problems faced by indigenous communities.

Subsequently, on the recommendation of the Vienna World Conference on Human Rights (1993), the General Assembly proclaimed on 21 December 1993 the International Decade of the World’s Indigenous People, starting on 10 December 1994.... The goal of the Decade was the strengthening of international cooperation to resolve problems faced by indigenous people in such areas as human rights, the environment, development, education and health.

Adapted from UN Press Release,
Ref. Paper No. 33, February 1994

States shall protect the existence and the national or ethnic, cultural, religious and linguistic identity of minorities within their respective territories, and shall encourage conditions for the promotion of that identity.

Article 1, point 1 from the *Declaration on the Rights of
Persons Belonging to National or Ethnic, Religious and Linguistic
Minorities*

(unanimously adopted by the General Assembly on 18 Dec. 1992)

KARI-OCA VILLAGE DECLARATION

The World Conference of Indigenous Peoples on Territory, Environment and Development took place in Rio de Janeiro (May 25-30, 1992) at the UN Earth Summit. Indigenous peoples of the Americas, Asia, Africa, Australia, Europe and the Pacific participated. Together they endorsed what is known as the Kari-Oca Village Declaration “as our collective responsibility to carry our Indigenous minds and voices into the future”:

We, the Indigenous Peoples, walk to the future in the footprints of our ancestors.

From the smallest to the largest living being, from the four directions, from the air, the land and the mountains, the creator has placed us, the Indigenous Peoples upon our Mother Earth.

The footprints of our ancestors are permanently etched upon the lands of our peoples.

We, the Indigenous Peoples, maintain our inherent rights to self-determination. We have always had the right to decide our own forms of government, to use our own laws, to raise and educate our children, to our own cultural identity without interference.

We continue to maintain our rights as peoples despite centuries of deprivation, assimilation and genocide.

We maintain our inalienable rights to our lands and territories, to all our resources — above and below — and to our waters. We assert our ongoing responsibility to pass these on to the future generations. We cannot be removed from our lands.

We, the Indigenous Peoples, are connected by the circle of life to our lands and environments.

We, the Indigenous Peoples, walk to the future in the footprints of our ancestors.

REFLECTIONS ON RACE

RECOGNISING THE HUMANITY IN OTHERS

Unless we can transcend the limiting concept of race we cannot understand what it means to be fully human. In the quest to realize who we are we cannot hold to the concept of race and embrace the Universal at the same time. Those who try are living a delusion. Black men and women will find their true place in the world, not through seeking greater cultural identity with Africa, but in the way all humankind must, by passing through the barrier of our sentient nature to embrace the God within. Then truth will be experienced. The journey starts with loving ourselves.... When a human begins the spiritual journey, the concept of race must be burnt to ashes. Race has no value to God.

Vernon Kitabu Turner, *The Way Ahead* (ed. Eddie and Debbie Shapiro), pp. 82-83

Racial discrimination will not disappear because it is morally wrong. Racial discrimination will only disappear in the face of full equality of opportunity, and through the conscious efforts of persons of goodwill who strive to achieve a broad respect for human rights.

Wade Henderson, Hearing before the Committee on Foreign Relations, United States Senate (May 11, 1994), p.51

In these downbeat times, we need as much hope and courage as we do vision and analysis; we must accent the best of each other even as we point out the vicious effects of our racial divide and the pernicious consequences of our maldistribution of wealth and power. We simply cannot enter the twenty-first century at each other's throats, even as we acknowledge the weighty forces of racism, patriarchy, economic inequality, homophobia, and ecological abuse on our necks. We are at a crucial crossroad... and we either hang together by combating these forces that divide and degrade us or we hang separately. Do we have the intelligence, humour, imagination, courage, tolerance, love, respect, and will to meet the challenge? Time will tell. None of us alone

can save the nation or world. But each of us can make a positive difference if we commit ourselves to do so.

Cornel West, foreword, *Race Matters* (1994)

In recognising the humanity of our fellow beings, we pay ourselves the highest tribute.

Thurgood Marshall, *Time* (February 8th 1993), p.32

Let all of us who want to stand up against racism do our part to roll back the divide. Begin by seeking out people in the workplace, the classroom, the community, the neighbourhood across town, the places of worship to actually sit down and have those honest conversations... where we speak openly and listen and understand how others view this world of ours. Make no mistake about it, we can bridge this great divide.

President Clinton, from an address to the "Liz Sutherland Carpenter Distinguished Lectureship in the Humanities and Sciences", October 16th 1995

Every nation must now develop an overriding loyalty to mankind as a whole in order to preserve the best in their individual societies.

This call for a world-wide fellowship that lifts neighbourly concern beyond one's tribe, race, class and nation is in reality a call for an all-embracing and unconditional love for all men. This oft misunderstood and misinterpreted concept... has now become an absolute necessity for the survival of man. When I speak of love I am not speaking of some sentimental and weak response. I am speaking of that force which all of the great religions have seen as the supreme unifying principle of life. Love is somehow the key that unlocks the door which leads to ultimate reality.

Martin Luther King, from: *The Wisdom of Martin Luther King – In His Own Words* (Lancer Books)

MINORITIES TODAY

The context in which the issue of minorities arises today is indeed very closely related to the general characteristics of the age. It is no longer a context of sealed frontiers and isolated regions but one of an integrated global system in which the links of interdependence in finance, technology and communications are growing

closer each day. Political, industrial or military decisions made at one end of the world very rapidly have an impact at the other. Because of the scale of production units and the pressures of international competition, regional economic groupings are imposing increasing constraints upon individual countries, to the

detriment of their national preferences. Certain role models, symbols and tastes in clothing and food are being propagated worldwide by the mass media.

As a reaction against this trend towards globalization – which is accompanied by growing inequalities between the different world regions – people everywhere are seeking to defend themselves against encroaching uniformity and dehumanization. Individuals and communities alike are thereby voicing their desire to exist, to use their powers of creation, to play an active part in national and international life. Where there is no peaceful and democratic context in which these aspirations can find an effective outlet, extremist, demagogic, xenophobic and even racist ideas begin to spread, transforming the legitimate desire to affirm identity into an aggressive attitude, tending towards isolationism and exclusion and accompanied by a rejection of universal values, disregard for the rights and liberties of the person, and a refusal to seek common ground or to teach the values of tolerance.

The problem of minorities today is a specific instance of this general phenomenon: the globalization not only of economic networks but also of humanist values means that no feasible solution can be based on the establishment of ethnic, national or religious frontiers. Minorities – whether they be cultural communities within a nation or entire regions confronting a centre of industrially developed power – are destined to achieve fulfilment as part of a general democratization of public life, both within each state and worldwide.

Federico Mayor, *Unesco Courier* (June 1993), p.9

What are the usual criteria by which a minority group can be identified? In the case of ethnic or cultural minorities, the first criterion is that of language....

The linguistic criterion is far from conclusive, however. A variety of identity “tags”, such as religion, or cultural factors such as tradition, can also help to give people a sense of identity as members of a minority.

We shall therefore adopt a definition that is more subjective than objective and say that a group constitutes a minority when it feels from experience that it is in a minority in relation to the environment in which it lives. Account must therefore be taken of its culture, language, traditions or religion.

The first and probably most obvious category of minority is that based on religious affiliation. This is more than just a statistical phenomenon. The fact that there may be more Protestants than Catholics in, say,

Germany or the United States does not mean that the Catholics can be said to be a minority. For a religious group to be in a minority situation, this situation must be conspicuous enough for it to give rise to a sense of vulnerability or even inferiority. By this criterion, the Bahá’ís of Iran, the Copts of Egypt and the Mennonites of Russia are minorities. The same criterion has applied for some years now to the Muslims in India and the Hindus in Pakistan and Bangladesh.

So-called “cultural” minorities constitute another important category, although one that is mentioned less often and is sometimes questioned. Their “difference” is not, strictly speaking, one of language or religion. One such case is that of the Jews who in some countries speak different languages from most of the population, even though some of these languages, such as Ladino or Yiddish, could be described as “ethnic languages”. Here, religious affiliation often only represents a symbolic form of loyalty to an identity that has another set of defining features, such as dietary practices, humour and a long tradition of persecution. A similar situation is found among the Gypsies, who show an awareness of their identity that goes beyond differences of language and religion.

When we come to the third category – the ethnic or national minorities which account for by far the largest number of minority situations – we enter a problem area in which a distinction has to be made between several sub-categories.

The first of these sub-categories is that of aboriginal or tribal populations who live outside the mainstream of present-day society and continue to practise their ancestral customs. These groups, which are often almost on the verge of extinction because their way of life is out of step with the modern world, include ethnic groups as different as the Pygmies of Cameroon, the Aborigines of Australia, the Miao of central Vietnam or the Indians of the Mato Grosso in Brazil. Their situation is in many respects different from that of the other groups. They are specifically considered as “indigenous peoples” by the United Nations.

Another sub-category consists of those peoples who are widely scattered and who, although speaking a common language, do not have a country of origin or attachment. This is the case of the Assyro-Chaldeans, or Assyrians, in the Middle East and of the Vlachs in Europe. These groups, which tend not to be numerous, are particularly vulnerable.

There are also relatively rare cases of what might be termed “majority” minorities, peoples which comprise the majority of the population in terms of numbers but

are relegated to *de facto* “minority” status in the country in which they live. Among these peoples are the Quechua Indians in Ecuador....

Another category is that of the “territorial” minorities, which have traditionally occupied a specific area which they regard as their “ethnic” or national territory. Members of this category include the Berbers, the Kurds, the Catalans, the German-speakers of the South Tyrol, and the Maris (people of Finno-Ugric stock living in the Urals), all of whom have long occupied regions which they regard as their “homeland”, to which they are bound by collective memories that form the bedrock of their “systems of symbols”.

In many cases, they owe their situation as minorities to border changes, particularly as a result of the creation of new states. These changes suddenly put them on the other side of a border, along with other minority peoples from different ethnic groups. The partition of Czechoslovakia in 1993, which has left some Slovaks in “Czechia” and some Czechs in Slovakia, is one such problem area. These “contingent minorities”, as they are sometimes called, can be contrasted with other minorities whose status might be said to be their “essence”. The latter traditionally regard themselves as minorities and belong to two types, “colonies” deliberately settled by a ruling power for military or economic purposes, and “landless nations”, like the Gypsies.

The sense of identity varies significantly between different groups, regardless of their size. The factors that determine the extent of a people’s resistance to assimilation are still not fully understood. Our own time, when “progress” and “consumerist” standardization are undermining identities and differences almost everywhere, also happens to coincide with a juncture when those identities and differences are being strongly asserted. When peoples are sucked into processes of levelling down and standardization, they seem to generate “differentiating antibodies” that intensify their sense of identity and prompt them to seek greater autonomy.

Whatever the cause and significance of this paradox may be, it is certain that people cannot be robbed with impunity of the stabilizing and comforting ethos of an identity fully accepted and expressed. To uproot people and repress their identity is to breed anxiety among them and destroy their sense of community.

Yves Plasseraud, *Unesco Courier* (June 1993), pp. 36-38

...Implicit in such slogans as “Georgia for the Georgians”, “Sri Lanka for the Sinhalese” or “India for the Hindus” is the denial of the hallowed notion that the test of a democracy lies in its treatment of minorities.

Nowhere in the world does territorial sovereignty

coincide with ethnic identity. The boundaries of the successor states of the Austro-Hungarian, Ottoman and Soviet empires are no less artificial than the lines drawn by European colonizers around their imperial domains in the last century. Even in the case of so-called “ethnic cleansing”, new patterns of fragmentation are bound to emerge behind the façade of shared cultural commonalities.

“Ethnic cleansing”: what the horribly antiseptic metaphor conveys is a definition of the “other” as a vector of social contamination. The intent, in short, is to give moral justification to the physical suppression of culturally distinct communities. Whether defined in terms of religion, language or other cultural traits, real or assumed, ethnic minorities often end up being the prime targets of ethnic cleansing. The most important point, however, is that in almost every instance the “other” is being redefined, recontextualized, and in the process almost dehumanized. The Holocaust is an extreme example of how the dehumanization of an entire group of people helps justify its physical annihilation. A strikingly similar phenomenon lies behind the genocidal killings in Bosnia, where Muslims are now being reduced to a sub-human category by certain ideologues, and treated as such.

Politicized ethnicity does not invariably translate into genocidal violence; yet it always involves a measure of political manipulation. Contrary to what is often assumed, ethnic nationalism does not just emerge full-blown from the mist of history. It is the product of complex social and economic forces often set in motion under the aegis of the colonial state. The critical factor, however, is the part played by ethnic entrepreneurs in stimulating the awakening of a collective self-awareness.

If ethno-nationalism is first and foremost manipulated nationalism, in this process historical memory plays a crucial role. It mixes facts with fiction, it squeezes reality into symbolic frames and invests the past with new meanings. “Imagined communities” thus take on a reality of their own. The ties that bind are not blood ties or kinship ties but what Paul Veyne calls “*l’imagination constituante*”. It is sadly ironic that some of the worst examples of ethnic killings should have happened among communities that are culturally almost indistinguishable, and which for centuries had lived in peace with each other.

The devastating effects of selective memory as a form of political manipulation are nowhere more evident than in the exalted brand of ethnic chauvinism exhibited by the extremists who set themselves the task of “cleansing” Bosnia of Muslim and Croat elements. While the first are seen as a living reminder of Turkish domination, and are collectively referred to as Turks even

though none are able to speak a word of Turkish, the second are collectively identified with the horrors of the Nazi-installed Croatian fascist state during the Second World War. Totally obliterated from the collective consciousness is the fact that Serbs, Croats and Muslims lived at peace with each other for centuries prior to the Second World War...

To recognize the primacy of ethnic particularity is to acknowledge the rights of minorities. In looking for ways of protecting these rights we need to rethink the responsibilities of the international community. As has now become dramatically clear, the threats posed to minorities through the "excesses of self-determination" carry implications that go far beyond the boundaries of existing state systems. The massive exodus of refugee populations into neighbouring areas imperils their political stability, generates fresh outbursts of xenophobic violence and imposes insuperable burdens on their economies. Although the tasks ahead are daunting, the time has come to invest the United Nations security system with a new mandate, one that would not simply reaffirm the rights of minorities but stipulate the rules and criteria under which the use of force can be internationally sanctioned and brought into effect.

René Lemarchand, *Unesco Courier* (June 1993), pp.30-32

Ethnicity, it was once thought, was a stage of socio-political evolution which would be superseded by the allegiance to modern, democratic institutions. In the harsh dichotomy of the developed/underdeveloped scheme, countries of the South were considered to be bound by ethnicity: communalism in India, tribalism in Africa, indianism in Latin America, hence the temporary difficulties they would have in building strong nation-states. Countries in the North, by contrast, had evolved democratic systems of checks and balances between rival "ethnic" or "regional" groups which ensured political stability. And, in theory, in socialist countries in Eastern Europe and Asia such forms of association had virtually disappeared.

Today, quite to the contrary, we find that ethnicity is at the heart of major political conflicts: the civil war between Croats, Serbs, Muslims and Bosnians; the guerrilla war of Sendero Luminoso in Peru; the protracted conflict between Sikhs and Hindus. But it is also present in ethnic rivalries in Belgium, in the call for regional autonomy in Spain, and in the new political idiom of "second-generation ethnic...", "double-heritage", and the new caucuses of Afro-Americans and Hispanics in the United States.

Ethnicity as a system of allegiances

The evolutionary scheme that considered ethnicity as a previous stage to modern democracy was wrong

because, following its positivistic outlook, it focuses exclusively on ethnicity as a "factor" in the public arena of societies. Anthropology, it must be said, has been insisting for many years that *ethnicity is the inherent capacity of any human society to create symbolic, linguistic and social codes to bind its members together*. It is a system of codes that give meaning, identity and a sense of belonging, creating boundaries that distinguish one group from another....

In this sense, there are no societies, modern or traditional, that do not have this "ethnic" boundary, except that in industrialised societies, the words used are different. They may be couched in the idiom of political theory, each having additional codes, such as "nation", or "class" or "race". In this case, ethnicity works differently because it is managed in a different political, cultural and economic setting.

However, this ethnicity can become activated when the group sees the need to enforce internal discipline, or to present a common front in opposition to other groups or institutions. Then it becomes *ethnicism*. That is, the deliberate use of ethnic symbols and codes of conduct to rally round, to defend or to attack others, in pursuit of what are perceived as the group's aims.

What is interesting is that such "ethnic" allegiances come to the fore mainly when the groups in question feel they have been shortchanged by another dominant group, by the government or by other groups. It is no coincidence that, as Western Europe and the US enjoyed the longest historical period of economic expansion and affluence during this century, ethnic strife between internal groups was practically non-existent. Every generation of citizens, or immigrants enjoyed social and economic mobility.

Since the sixties, this began to change and as jobs and opportunities came to a standstill, competition for them grew. Immediately, the "comparative advantages" of each "ethnic" group began to be perceived as an unfair advantage over the others, and, more gravely, as a betrayal of the democratic ideal of equal opportunity. Whether they were French speaking Belgians as opposed to the Flemish and Walloons, or WASPS – white, anglo-saxon, protestants – in the US, or Castilians in Spain, the cracks in the democratic discourse let through glimmers of privilege.

In countries with incomparably fewer resources to go around, the same kind of rivalry has easily led to violence, for example: against the Kikuyu in Kenya, or the Brahmin in India, or the "ladinos" in Indian regions of Latin American countries.

Lourdes Arizpe, *Development* 1992:4 - *Journal of SID*, p. 6

HUMAN RIGHTS AND FREEDOMS

All human rights are universal, indivisible and interdependent and interrelated. The international community must treat human rights globally in a fair and equal manner, on the same footing, and with the same emphasis. While the significance of national and regional particularities and various historical, cultural and religious backgrounds must be borne in mind, it is the duty of States, regardless of their political, economic and cultural systems, to promote and protect all human rights and fundamental freedoms.

Declaration and Programme of Action, para. 5
of the Vienna World Conference on Human Rights (1993)

No matter what country or continent we come from we are all basically the same human beings. We have common human needs and concerns. We all seek happiness and try to avoid suffering, regardless of our race, religion, sex or political status. Human beings, indeed all sentient beings, have the right to pursue happiness and live in peace and freedom....

All human beings, whatever their cultural or historical background, suffer when they are intimidated, imprisoned or tortured. The question of human rights is so fundamentally important that we must insist on a global consensus not only on the need to respect human rights worldwide but, more importantly, on the definition of these rights....

I believe that to meet the challenge of our times, human beings will have to develop a greater sense of universal responsibility. Each of us must learn to work not just for oneself, one's own family or one's nation, but for the benefit of all humankind. Universal responsibility is the best foundation for world peace.

H.H. the Dalai Lama; extract from an address to the UN World Conference on Human Rights in Vienna, 15 June 1993

It was [the] desire for the freedom of my people to live their lives with dignity and self-respect that animated my life, that transformed a frightened young man into a bold one, that drove a law-abiding attorney to become a criminal, that turned a family-loving husband into a man without a home, that forced a life-loving man to live like a monk. I am no more virtuous or self-sacrificing than the next man, but I found that I could not even enjoy the poor and limited freedoms I was allowed when I knew my people were not free. Freedom is indivisible; the chains on any one of my people were the chains on all of them, the chains on all of my people were the chains on me.

Nelson Mandela, *Long Walk to Freedom*, pp. 616-617

It is freedom of expression that guarantees the rights of individuals, minorities, the collective and the community. Any suggestion that freedom of expression is a luxury of the West insults the historic struggles of individuals and communities all over the world for the dignity and well-being of their kind, for social fulfilment, equality of opportunity, equitable sharing of resources, access to shelter, nourishment and health. Such claims are an attempt to diminish our humanity, to reduce us to marginal existence even within our own societies.

Wole Soyinka, *Unesco Courier* (March 1994), p. 20

Violence committed against the humblest member of the human race affects the whole of humanity. We must all take an interest in oppressed innocents, or else be victims in our turn, when somebody stronger comes to enslave us. One man's freedom is part and parcel of universal freedom. You cannot touch one without at the same time jeopardizing the other.

Victor Schoelcher, *Unesco Courier* (October 1994), p.28

A NEW TYPE OF EDUCATION

It can be more clearly seen today that we shall solve none of the world's profound and serious problems without the full participation of indigenous people, ethnic minorities, victims of arbitrary acts and repression, women, widows, children, displaced persons and other vulnerable elements, of all those who comprise the vast majority of the poor of our societies and whose experiences and demands must be taken into account.

It is essential, for the future of humanity, to envisage a new type of education which conveys the message that indigenous people and minorities in general demand co-

operation from all sectors of society so as to avoid confrontations, racism and discrimination and so that their struggle to achieve full respect for their rights and their identity may be crowned with success.

Recognition and respect for cultural pluralism are key factors in the construction of new relations based on equality and peaceful co-existence between our peoples and the nations of the world.

Rigoberta Menchú, *Unesco Courier* (March 1994), p. 30

Only education brings freedom. It alone nourishes the roots of behaviour and shapes attitudes of tolerance and solidarity. Only education in the love of others will one day lead to dialogue between cultures and enable all the people of the Earth to live together in peace. May that day come soon.

Federico Mayor, *Unesco Courier* (February 1992), pp. 14-15

The only way of permanently settling the conflicts still rife throughout the world is by tackling the main causes

of human rights violations. Ethnic wars, growing militarism, racial, religious, cultural and ideological hostility, and the denial of social justice will come to an end if all individuals are brought up, educated and trained in a spirit of tolerance based on respect for human rights in accordance with the various instruments relating to human rights adopted by the United Nations system.

Alois Mock, *Unesco Courier* (March 1994), p. 39

RACISM HAS NO SCIENTIFIC BASIS

When one is up to no good, it is useful to have an excuse. Ideologies often look for their excuses in 'science'. But they pay little heed to science's underlying values, or to the caveats with which scientists surround their arguments. Ideology's only interest in science is the arguments it can furnish in support of its own case. To obtain these, it does not hesitate to distort and pervert scientific argument.

In science, as elsewhere, some concepts are vague, while others are clear. In the field of biology, for example, a domain of classification and evolution, the concept of species is clear, whereas that of race is vague. The former is precise; it rests on clear criteria; it is necessary. The latter concept is vague without any defined criterion; it has proved useful in zoology, palaeontology and anthropology but is falling increasingly into disuse.

The application of the clear concept to mankind is straightforward: humanity consists of one single species. The concept of race, however, can mean virtually anything: depending on the author one reads, there may be four human races or fifteen, or twenty-eight or even forty-three. More and more, biologists are replacing the idea of race by the concept of population. When a whole range of biological characteristics is considered, it becomes apparent that two populations that belong to the same 'race', two white populations, for example, may in fact differ more than two populations that belong to different 'races', for example one black and one white.

Political decisions fall outside the scope of science. It is not scientific data, but ideologies that have led some people to conclude that human freedom should depend on skin colour. To claim a scientific basis for racism is simply imposture.

François Jacob, from foreword of the Unesco publication *Racism, science and pseudo-science* (1981)

What racism expresses is essentially contempt – contempt for other people that is motivated not by their characteristics as such but by the fact that they belong to a group. Hence remarks such as "All...are...". What

prompts such contempt is a lack of self-confidence, and its end-product is self-destruction.

What are human beings if not animals whose peculiar characteristic is to be able to construct themselves with the help of others? My "I" has emerged from the "yous" that have been addressed to me. "I" is made up of a web of links I weave with others.

But the weaving of those links cannot take place unless efforts are made and fears quelled. Other people are a source of both riches and risks. We have to confront them, that is to say tackle them head on and set intelligence against intelligence. The exchange will be fruitful only if a modicum of confidence exists – both self-confidence and confidence in others.

Racists are people who have no self-confidence. To disguise their fear, they puff themselves up and claim to be superior. Their contempt for others only serves to mask the panic their own inner emptiness inspires in them.

It is easy to prove that the notion of race in the case of human beings is virtually impossible to define, or that the concept of hierarchy cannot be used in a global way. But the most useful contribution science can make to the fight against racism lies elsewhere – in a greater awareness of what a human being is: a wonderful thing which each individual builds with the help of others.

Albert Jacquard, *Unesco Courier* (March 1996), p.25

DIFFERING PERCEPTIONS

An important element in the emergence of conflicts (be they interpersonal, inter-group, inter-ethnic, international or inter-religious) is the differing perceptions people have of situations. Interculturalists believe that these differing perceptions arise because of different mind-sets.... It is important for decision-makers to anticipate the way those involved in conflict are culturally programmed to perceive the issues at hand. We have to realize that all people are not necessarily led by the same evidence to the same conclusions. Naïveté often makes politicians and diplomats over-confident about their ability to understand people from other cultures. They often fail to realize that unquantifiable elements like values, emotions and embedded antagonisms may cause far more destruction than other factors like the number of weapons a country has.

Let us consider another manifestation of culture in one of the major areas of conflict in today's world – inter-ethnic conflict. We will define ethnicity as “belief in a shared heritage and common ancestors”, creating a group identity. Cultural groups struggle with issues of majority and minority status and power. Some ethnic groups find themselves in a disrespected or subservient position in the larger political state. They perceive that their heritage is not respected or affirmed. Horowitz describes this as a struggle for ‘relative group worth’....

The most powerful diplomat, negotiator or mediator is one who can accurately see things through the eyes of the other, one who understands how others see the world and how they interpret events. Different ways of processing information and pre-existing images people have need to be understood and reflected on. Since images, once formed, are hard to dislodge then it is very pertinent to understand how they are formed. Mutually exclusive values by themselves are not necessarily conflictual. But when they affect perceptual differences and cause misunderstandings then they are. The concept of fairness and the just outcome of a dispute differs according to culture, but might only cause conflict when two such cultures clash.

Dr. Zareen Karani Lam, UN NGO
Conference, 10th September 1992

As we move into the mid-1990s, some 75 years after the birth of broadcasting in several countries, mainstream, majority-culture-dominated radio and television still prevails over all forms of minority-culture broadcasting by a very wide margin, and many minority cultures remain totally ignored by the electronic media. It is rare to find a country where any minority group receives coverage that is even remotely close to its numerical representation; it is not uncommon to find countries

where quite sizable minority groups are virtually invisible. There is still a dominant assumption that one side in a conflict – usually the majority culture's side – is either more in the right or totally right. Alternative viewpoints either receive little attention or come from unlicensed (illegal) or foreign-based broadcast outlets, or possibly through audio-cassettes distributed en masse, as happened in Iran in 1980 and in Saudi Arabia in the early 1990s. The consequences of under-representation of ethnic minority viewpoints for society as a whole may be uncertain and unpredictable, but few doubt that, on the whole, they will be more negative than positive.

D.R. Browne, C. M. Firestone and E. Mickiewicz,
Television/Radio News and Minorities,
publ. Aspen Institute & The Carter Center of
Emory University, pp. 16-17

Faced with the two temptations of condemning things which are offensive to him emotionally or of denying differences which are beyond his intellectual grasp, modern man has launched out on countless lines of philosophical and sociological speculation in a vain attempt to achieve a compromise between these two contradictory poles, and to account for the diversity of cultures while seeking, at the same time, to eradicate what still shocks and offends him in that diversity.

Claude Levi-Strauss, *Race and History*, p.14

Institutionalized rejection of *difference* is an absolute necessity in a profit economy which needs outsiders as surplus people.

As members of such an economy, we have *all* been programmed to respond to the human differences between us with fear and loathing and to handle that difference in one of three ways: ignore it, and if that is not possible, copy it if we think it is dominant, or destroy it if we think it is subordinate.

But we have no patterns for relating across our human differences as equals. As a result, those differences have been misnamed and misused in the service of separation and confusion.

Audre Lorde, *Sister Outsider* (1984)

All individuals and groups have the right to be different, to consider themselves as different and to be regarded as such....

Declaration on Race and Racial Prejudice, Article 1, point 2.
(UNESCO, 1978)

PREJUDICE AND DISCRIMINATION

The problem of the twentieth century is the problem of the colour line.

W.E.B Du Bois, *Race Matters* by Cornel West (1994)

We must remain on the alert, for racial discrimination in various forms has spread everywhere, like gangrene. The persistence of assaults against human dignity and of racist and xenophobic acts and the rise of intolerance are among indications that we cannot relax our vigilance.

These phenomena are intolerable, and we must constantly learn to unmask them, for it is still the old demons of exclusivity and hatred which lurk behind the new forms they may take.

For the United Nations, the elimination of racial discrimination remains a long and exacting task that requires constantly renewed action.

Former UN Secretary-General, Boutros Boutros-Ghali, from statement made at International Day for Elimination of Racial Discrimination (March 1994)

...skin colour and physical features have no meaning in themselves. They gain importance when society loads them with social and cultural significance. The idea of race has always been a social construct. Once it takes root it permeates not just into our minds but into our governments, judiciaries, economies, media and education systems. It carries on relentlessly trailing disadvantage in its wake...

All too often in the name of integration minorities are required to deny their entire way of life and conform to the majority culture. They are browbeaten for not trying hard enough. They are told to 'fit into' a society that may be openly hostile to them and gives them scant respect. Such 'integration' is like trying to press rocks through a sieve.

If we are to talk of integration we must recognise that the race problem is created and maintained by those privileged by racism even though the disadvantaged are usually blamed. The challenge then is to look squarely at this unfair privilege – especially if it benefits us – and to make the effort to understand how it affects people across the divides of colour, culture, language and religion. This means tackling not only racist inequalities within societies but also those between countries, for economic colonialism today carries on the racist traditions of imperial colonialism, binding people of the majority world with the shackles of unfair trade and debt extraction.

Only then can we start unlocking the device that does us all such physical, emotional, social and moral damage.

Dinyar Godrej, *New Internationalist* (October 1994), p.7

...The forms of racial discrimination which in the 1960s were regarded as most abhorrent were those of discrimination by whites against blacks. Racial discrimination was frequently described as caused by the dissemination of doctrines of racial superiority by the institutions of colonial rule and by the policies of racist regimes. The international community could counter these abuses by political means and in this way racial discrimination could be eliminated.

...We contemplate the success of policies initiated in the 1960s. The struggle against colonial rule and racist regimes has been successful even if the consequences of apartheid will continue to give trouble for a long time. New challenges started to emerge at the end of the 1980s with the disintegration of some of the larger political structures, particularly in eastern Europe, and the weakening of some structures in other regions. It is worth recalling that in the last census in the former Yugoslavia over 1 million persons did not register their membership in any national minority but counted themselves as simply Yugoslavs. Since that time, many of them have been forced by considerations of personal security to align themselves ethnically.

With the dissolution of the Soviet Union and other structures, some wider solidarities have been gravely weakened, exposing *ethnic minorities* to pressure from narrow *nationalistic campaigns*. Political movements have revived old claims to territory and incited *ethnic hatred* against persons of different origin. Rapid population growth, coinciding with a recession in world trade and the introduction of new technology, has changed the balance between the supply of labour and the demand for it. Increased competition for employment generates ethnic tensions in some regions, while elsewhere the weakening of public order has had comparable effects. As a result, *racial or ethnic conflicts are appearing in areas previously characterized by tolerance. These forms of discrimination spring not from any belief in racial superiority but from a sense of difference*. When a conflict becomes acute it is only with members of their own ethnic group that people feel secure.

Luis Valencia Rodriguez, from letter to UN Secretary-General, 20th August 1993

Racial discrimination is, without a doubt, one of the greatest challenges facing the international community at this time. Unfortunately, racial discrimination is a widespread phenomenon in which too many groups are suffering from expulsion and mass displacements, constant harassment, or the outright physical elimination of their members because they are different. This difference is the source of a vicious circle which leads to misunderstanding, which in turn leads to insecurity.

As time goes on, cultural diversity is becoming a characteristic of our societies and unfortunately, the evil of racism remains widespread. As a result, in recent years, many countries – including western ones – have seen an intensification of racial tension. Every society... has some cases of discrimination and rejection of individuals or groups on the basis of colour, ethnicity or socio-cultural traits.

M. Claude Baillargeon, from statement by the Delegation of Canada to the *UN General Assembly*, 14th October 1992

Because the origins of racial friction lie so deep, because prejudice and the discrimination resulting from it have such irrational forces mixed up with them, we dare not examine them honestly.

Archbishop Trevor Huddleston, from
Five views of Multi-racial Britain.

TOLERANCE & UNITY IN DIVERSITY

...The true contribution of a culture consists, not in the list of inventions which it has personally produced, but in its difference from others. The sense of gratitude and respect which each single member of a given culture can and should feel towards all others can be based on the conviction that the other cultures differ from his own in countless ways....

We have taken the notion of world civilization as a sort of limiting concept or as an epitome of a highly complex process. If our arguments are valid, there is not, and never can be, a world civilization in the absolute sense in which that term is often used, since civilization implies, and indeed consists in, the co-existence of culture exhibiting the maximum possible diversities. A world civilization could, in fact, represent no more than a worldwide coalition of cultures, each of which would preserve its own originality.

Claude Lévi-Strauss, *Unesco Courier* (March 1996)

People need their beliefs. But today a new form of solidarity is required, a life more closely bound up with others, and we must therefore take greater care than ever before to ensure that our convictions do not lead to patterns of behaviour which exclude others. It is essential to understand that while all are equal in dignity, all are different in terms of talents, convictions and beliefs, and these differences are a factor of enrichment for every individual and for civilisation as a whole....

There is no alternative to tolerance, which, while by no means solving all the problems, can enable us to tackle them in a spirit of open-mindedness, progress and peace.

Tolerance on the part of each and every one means an attitude devoid of arrogance in relations between the generations, the sexes, individuals and communities, and between the human race and nature. Educational programmes and systems must be developed in order to prepare future generations for life in our changing multicultural societies.

Extracts from the *UN Declaration on Tolerance*

I shall never forget the hours I spent with strangers during my childhood. Some of them told me happy or sad stories, and that is how I learned that the distance between true happiness and profound sadness is not so great. Others told me about far-away countries, inspired Sages or adventurers looking to put themselves to some sacred test. In my head I followed them, spellbound. Often I envied them. Their lives were so much more exciting than mine. I would have given anything to be like them, free as the wind and the night shadows. Yet most of them were beggars with no name and nowhere to go. What attracted me was that they came from somewhere else.

This is because, in the Jewish tradition from which I draw my inspiration, any foreigner might be a Sage in disguise, perhaps even the prophet Elijah himself (as in Elie). To offend him would be to risk damnation. That used to be my attitude towards foreigners. And now? I am older now. Am I any less romantic? Less optimistic perhaps. If I still respect foreigners, it is for more concrete reasons. It is to let them know my solidarity with them as human beings, and my good faith as a human being. Torn apart from their families, environment and ethnic or national culture, they have rights over me, for legally they have no rights. I am their hope. To refuse them this hope would be to shirk my obligations as a man.

That is why I am in favour of a policy of welcoming as many foreigners as possible. Whoever needs a refuge must feel welcome wherever I am. If he or she is a foreigner in my country, then I will be one too.

Elie Wiesel, *The Guardian* (June 14th 1991)

The need to preserve the diversity of cultures in a world which is threatened by monotony and uniformity has surely not escaped our international institutions. They must also be aware that it is not enough to nurture local traditions and to save the past for a short period longer. It is diversity itself which must be saved, not the

outward and visible form in which each period has clothed that diversity, and which can never be preserved beyond the period which gave it birth. We must therefore hearken for the stirrings of new life, foster latent potentialities, and encourage every natural inclination for collaboration which the future history of the world may hold; we must also be prepared to view without surprise, repugnance or revolt whatever may strike us as strange in the many new forms of social expression. Tolerance is not a contemplative attitude, dispensing indulgence to what has been or what is still in being. It is a dynamic attitude, consisting in the anticipation, understanding and promotion of what is struggling into being. We can see the diversity of human cultures behind us, around us, and before us. The only demand that we can justly make (entailing corresponding duties for every individual) is that all forms this diversity may take may be so many contributions to the fullness of all the others.

Claude Lévi-Strauss, *Race and History*, p. 46

Tolerance is indispensable for peaceful relations in any society. When it is transmuted into the more active attribute of mutual respect, the quality of relationships is distinctly raised. Mutual respect therefore offers a basis for making a plural society – which is what the global neighbourhood is – not only stable but one that values and is enriched by its diversity....

The world community should reassert the importance of tolerance and respect for ‘the other’: respect for other people, other races, other beliefs, other sexual orientations, other cultures. It must be resolute in upholding these values and offering protection against the actions of those who would trample them. The guiding principle should be that all groups and individuals have a right to live as they see fit so long as they do not violate the coequal rights and liberties of others.

From: *Our Global Neighbourhood: The Report of the Commission on Global Governance*.

EXTRACTS FROM THE BOOKS OF ALICE A. BAILEY

[The problem of the racial minorities] is largely the problem of the relation of the weaker to the stronger, of the few to the many, of the undeveloped to the developed, or of one religious faith to another more powerful and controlling; it is closely tied up with the problem of nationalism, of colour, of historical process and of future purpose. It is a major and most critical problem in every part of the world today.

Problems of Humanity, p. 89

[The spirit of nationalism] in its worst aspect, sets one nation against another, fosters a sense of national superiority and leads the citizens of a nation to regard themselves and their institutions as superior to those of another nation; it cultivates pride of race, of history, of possessions and of cultural progress and breeds an arrogance, a boastfulness and a contempt of other civilizations and cultures which is evil and degenerating; it engenders also a willingness to sacrifice other people's interests to one's own and a basic failure to admit that "God hath made all men equal". This type of nationalism is universal and everywhere to be found and no nation is free from it; it indicates a blindness, a cruelty and a lack of proportion for which mankind is already paying a terrible price and which will bring humanity down in ruins if persisted in.

There is, needless to say, an ideal nationalism which is the reverse of all this; it exists as yet only in the minds of an enlightened few in every nation, but it is not yet an effective and constructive aspect of any nation anywhere; it remains still a dream, a hope and, let us believe, a fixed intention. This type of nationalism rightly fosters its individual civilization but as a national contribution to the general good of the comity of nations and not as a means of self-glorification; it defends its constitution, its lands and its people through the rectitude of its living expression, the beauty of its mode of life and the selflessness of its attitudes; it does not infringe, for any reason, the rights of other people or nations. It aims to improve and perfect its own mode of life so that all in the world may benefit. It is a living, vital, spiritual organism and not a selfish, material organization.

Ibid., pp. 88-89

The racial problem is badly obscured by its historical retrospect and presentation, much of which is unsound and untrue; it is obscured also by ancient hatreds and national jealousies. These are inherent in human nature but are fed and fostered by prejudice and those who are animated by ulterior and selfish intentions. New and rapidly arising ambitions are also fomenting the difficulty... These ambitions are often exploited and distorted by selfish political interests and trouble-making

agencies. Still other factors conditioning the racial problem are the economic distress under which so many labour today, the imperialistic control of certain nations, the lack of educational attainments, or a civilisation so ancient that it is showing signs of degeneration. These and many other factors are everywhere present, conditioning human thinking, deluding the many affected by the problem and greatly handicapping the efforts of those who are seeking to bring about right action and develop a more balanced and constructive attitude among these minorities. Minorities, along with the rest of mankind, are subject to the unerring forces of evolution and are struggling towards a higher and better existence, towards more wholesome living conditions, towards more individual and racial freedom and a much higher level of right human relations.

Ibid., p. 85

Unity will not be the distinctive characteristic of mankind until men have themselves pulled down the separating walls, and have removed the barriers between race and race, between nation and nation, between religion and religion and between man and man.

The wonder of the present situation and its outstanding opportunity is that for the first time, and on a planetary scale, men are aware of the evil which must be eliminated; everywhere there is discussion and planning; there are meetings and forums, and conferences and committees, ranging all the way from the great deliberations of the United Nations down to the tiny meetings held in some remote village.

The beauty of the present situation is that even in the smallest community a practical expression of what is needed on a worldwide scale is offered to the inhabitants; differences in families, in churches, in municipalities, in cities, in nations, between races and internationally all call for the same objective and for the same process of adjustment: *the establishing of right human relations*. The technique or method to bring this about remains everywhere the same: *the use of the spirit of goodwill*.

Goodwill is the simplest expression of true love and the one most easily understood. The use of goodwill in connection with the problems with which humanity is faced releases the intelligence along constructive lines; where goodwill is present, the walls of separation and of misunderstanding fall.

Love and understanding will eventually follow upon a practical expression of goodwill as a factor in every type of human relation and as a mode of contact between groups, between nations and their minorities,

between nation and nation and also in the field of international politics and religions. The expression of true love as a factor in the life of our planet may lie very far ahead, but goodwill is a present possibility and the organising of goodwill an outstanding necessity.

Ibid., pp. 117-118

The coming in of the Aquarian age also stimulates in man a spirit of universality and a tendency towards fusion. This can be seen working out in the present trend towards synthesis in business, in religion and in politics. It produces an urge towards union, and among other unions, towards religious understanding and tolerance.

A Treatise on the Seven Rays, Vol. 1, p. 280

Freedom is the keynote for the world disciple today, and it is freedom to live, freedom to think and freedom to know and plan, which humanity demands at this time.

A Treatise on the Seven Rays, Vol. 5, p. 684

One interesting aspect of goodwill is that, as it develops in the human consciousness, it first of all brings a revelation of the existent *cleavages* which distinguish the political, the religious, the social and the economic life of people everywhere. The revelation of a cleavage is ever accompanied (for such is the beauty of the human spirit) by efforts along all possible lines to bridge or heal the cleavage. This is testified to by the thousands of groups and organisations working to end cleavages and to pull down the barriers to right human relationships.... Modern psychology is an evidence of this, dealing as it does with the problem of the integration of the human being and the healing of the cleavages of his nature. One of the first things to be done is to educate the individual in the necessity to have goodwill not only to his fellowmen but also to himself.

Ibid., p. 750

There is absolutely no reason to believe that the growth of goodwill in the world need be a slow and gradual affair. The reverse can be the case if the men and women who today feel within themselves a genuine goodwill and who are free from prejudice will seek each

other out and work together to spread goodwill. A prejudiced person, a religious fanatic, or a staunch nationalist have a hard task in developing true goodwill within themselves. They can accomplish it if they care enough for their fellowman, and seek to leave him free, but they will have to seek for the dark area in their own minds where a wall of separativeness exists and tear it down. They will have to develop (with deliberation) true goodwill (*not* tolerance) towards the object of their prejudice, towards the man of an alien religion and towards the nation or race to which they feel antagonistic or upon which they look down. A prejudice is a first brick in a separating wall.

Problems of Humanity, pp. 119-120

The next race will be a fusion of the whole, and a world-wide recognition of the One Humanity is an essential prerequisite....

A Treatise on the Seven Rays, Vol. 5, p. 659

The one thing which humanity needs today is the realisation that there IS a Plan which is definitely working out through all world happenings, and that all that has occurred in man's historical past, and all that has happened lately, is assuredly in line with that Plan. Necessarily also, if such a plan exists, it pre-supposes Those Who are responsible for the originating of the Plan and for its successful carrying forward. From the standpoint of average humanity, who think in terms of earthly happiness, the Plan should be something joyful and something which would make material life easier. To the Spiritual Hierarchy, the Plan involves those arrangements or circumstances which will raise and expand the consciousness of mankind and enable men, therefore, to discover the spiritual values *for themselves* and make the needed changes *of their own free will*, and thus produce the demanded betterment of the environment, consistent with the unfolding spiritual recognition.

The Externalisation of the Hierarchy p. 670

MEDITATION

PRACTICAL POINTS

1. Sit in a comfortable position, erect but not tense or strained. Relax. See that the breathing is even and quiet.
2. To meditate always in the same place is helpful.
3. 15 to 30 minutes daily is suggested. 5 minutes every day done regularly is of far more value than 30 minutes done irregularly.
4. If you have not had previous experience of meditation, difficulty in concentration is to be expected. Perseverance is needed. If necessary bring the mind back to the required work every time it wanders. Patient practice brings ever increasing skill.

ATTITUDE TO BE ASSUMED

1. Remember we are sharing our effort with a dedicated company of men and women of goodwill.
2. Realise that essentially you are a soul and as such have rapport with all souls.
3. Be conscious that meditation is not a passive, reflective form of devotion but a positive creative use of mind, actively linking the inner and the outer worlds.
4. Use the creative imagination to see yourself at one with all humanity and with all that is new, progressive and spiritual.
5. Adopt a confident attitude which evokes spiritual illumination. This 'as if' attitude can have magical results.

MEDITATION

STAGE I

1. Reflect upon the fact of relationship. You are related to:
 - (a) your family
 - (b) your community
 - (c) your nation
 - (d) the world of nations
 - (e) the One Humanity made up of all races and nations
2. Use this mantram of unification:

**The souls of men are one and I am one with them.
I seek to love, not hate.
I seek to serve and not exact due service.
I seek to heal, not hurt.**

STAGE II

1. Dwell upon the theme of service, your links with service groups and how, with your fellow servers, you can help the divine Plan.
2. Reflect upon the Problem which you are studying and know that goodwill can bring solution. Include the Seed Thought:

**A solution to the problem of the minorities
is essentially the finding of a solution to the
great heresy of separateness.**

3. Invoke the spiritual inspiration in finding solution to the problem by using the final stanza of the mantram of unification:

**Let vision come and insight.
Let the future stand revealed.
Let inner union demonstrate and outer cleavages be gone.
Let love prevail.
Let all men love.**

STAGE III

1. Realise that you are contributing to the building of a bridge between the Kingdom of Heaven and earth. Think about this bridge of communication.

STAGE IV

1. Having built the bridge, visualise light, love and blessing descending over the bridge to humanity.

2. Use the Great Invocation. Say it with deliberation and full commitment to its meaning:

**From the point of Light within the Mind of God
Let light stream forth into the minds of men.
Let light descend on Earth.**

**From the point of Love within the Heart of God
Let Love stream forth into the hearts of men.
May Christ return to Earth.**

**From the centre where the Will of God is known
Let purpose guide the little wills of men –
The purpose which the Masters know and serve.**

**From the centre which we call the race of men
Let the Plan of Love and Light work out
And may it seal the door where evil dwells.**

Let Light and Love and Power restore the Plan on Earth.

OM

OM

OM

WORK PROPOSALS

Continue with the daily meditation work.

Read widely from any other contemporary materials on the subject.

QUESTIONS FOR REFLECTION AND DISCUSSION

1. How can we abolish the great lines of demarcation between races, nations, groups, and heal the cleavages that are to be found everywhere, working in such a manner that the “one humanity” emerges on the arena of world affairs?
2. Choose one of the minority problems, consider its essential factors. Can you see any positive trends towards its solution?
3. Take any minority problem which exists within your own community or environment and consider its essential factors. Consider in what ways you can aid its solution and with what groups you might co-operate.
4. Consider the various ways in which your attitude to the problem does or can manifest itself, e.g. in conversation, by demonstration or in practical help to alleviate the conditions surrounding it. What is the most effective aid you can give which will bring about the requisite goodwill leading to the right relationships?

The World Goodwill course on the Problems of Humanity is not intended to be didactic. Some statements may be new or unfamiliar. We suggest that these be neither accepted on authority nor lightly cast aside, but instead that they be deeply explored. The questions above are to help stimulate this deeper exploration. This can be done by individual thinking on the questions. They could also form the subject for discussion in a group. We suggest that you try to interest others in the issues raised in this course and form a discussion group.

SUGGESTED READING LIST

Please note that this brief list is only intended as a stimulus to further investigation and is in no way comprehensive. World Goodwill would very much appreciate it if students of this set who discover other good sources of material could let us know for possible future inclusion in this list.

Bailey, Alice A. *Education in the New Age*, Lucis Press.

Problems of Humanity, Lucis Press.

Fanon, Franz *The Wretched of the Earth*, Grove.

Filipovic, Zlata (transl. Zoric, Christina Pribicevic) *Zlata's Diary: A Child's Life in Sarajevo*, Penguin.

Frank, Anne *Diary of Anne Frank*, Pan.

Fromm, Erich *The Anatomy of Human Destructiveness*, Penguin.

The Fear of Freedom, (Escape From Freedom, in U. S.), Henry Holt.

Ignatieff, Michael *Blood and Belonging: Journeys into the New Nationalism*, Vintage Books.

King, Martin Luther *Strength to Love*, Fortress Press.

Levi-Strauss, Claude *Race and History*, UNESCO.

Lorde, Audre *Sister Outsider*, Crossing Press.

Mandela, Nelson *Long Walk to Freedom*, Little, Brown and Co.

Montague, Ashley *Statement on Race*, Greenwood Press.

Nerburn, Kent *Neither Wolf Nor Dog*, New World Library.

Van der Post, L. *The Heart of the Hunter*, Penguin

West, Cornel *Race Matters*, Vintage Books.

and Gates Jr, Henry Louis *The Future of the Race*, Vintage Books.

Wicker, Tom *Tragic Failure: Racial Integration in America*, William Morrow and Co.

X, Malcolm *The Autobiography of Malcolm X*, Penguin.

The following specialist areas will prove invaluable in researching the Racial Problem:

United Nations:

There are many excellent publications available from the United Nations Information Centres around the world. The publications are extensive and include, for example, the **Universal Declaration of Human Rights** and the **United Nations Declaration and International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination**. The latter Declaration was adopted by the General Assembly in 1965 and entered into force in 1969. There is a committee – the Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination (CERD) – consisting of 18 “experts of high moral standing and acknowledged impartiality elected by states parties from amongst their nationals, who shall serve in their personal capacity, consideration being given to equitable geographical distribution and to the

representation of the different forms of civilisation as well as of the principal legal systems”. This Committee normally holds two three-week sessions each year. Other examples of information related to race available from the UN are the **Vienna Declaration and Programme of Action**, adopted by the World Conference on Human Rights in June 1993; and **Model National Legislation for the Guidance of Governments in the Enactment of Further Legislation against Racial Discrimination**, prepared for the Third Decade to combat Racism and Racial Discrimination (1993-2003).

UNESCO

In 1983 the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation, published a book – *Racism, science and pseudo-science*. This is a useful source book from the scientific angle.

Minority Rights Group International

This group produces reports, books and education materials on race and other issues. For example, there is the booklet *The UN Minority Rights Declaration*, edited by Alan Phillips and Allan Rosas, Institute for Human Rights/Minority Rights Group.

Commission For Racial Equality (UK)

The Commission was set up by the Race Relations Act 1976, and a wealth of material is available. Other countries may have similar official bodies.

Periodicals

There are useful articles appearing in the following publications, from time to time.

The New Courier (UNESCO).

New Internationalist.

WORLD GOODWILL

Suite 54
3 Whitehall Court
London SW1A 2EF
UK
worldgoodwill.uk@lucistrust.org

WORLD GOODWILL

120 Wall Street
24th Floor
New York NY 10005
USA
worldgoodwill.us@lucistrust.org

BONNE VOLONTE MONDIALE

1 Rue de Varembe
Case Postale 26
CH-1211 Geneva 20
Switzerland
geneva@lucistrust.org