

## *Let's Talk Sense to the American People*

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July 16, 1991

LET'S TALK SENSE TO THE AMERICAN PEOPLE

*Speeches I Would Make If I Were  
A Candidate for President, Which I'm Not*

*by Howard W. Hallman*

*6508 Wilmett Road  
Bethesda, MD 20817*

*(301) 897-3668*

"Let's talk sense to the American people. Let's tell them the truth, that there are no gains without pains."

-- Adlai E. Stevenson in his "Speech of Acceptance" at Democratic National Convention in Chicago, Illinois on July 26, 1952.

in *Major Campaign Speeches of Adlai E. Stevenson, 1952*. New York: Random House, 1953. p. 10

[July 16, 1991]

## REGAINING OUR SENSE OF COMMUNITY

*My fellow Americans. We are a nation groping for its future. It's as if we've lost our way. We don't know where we are heading because we're not certain where we want to go.*

*The Cold War is over. This global encounter with the Soviet Union was the principal focus of U.S. foreign policy for 45 years. Now with the Soviet threat vastly diminished, the course of U.S. foreign policy in the 1990s is ill-defined. We lack an affirmative vision of the world we want.*

*International economic competition has become a greater danger to our national well-being than any foreseeable military threat. The greatest challenge comes from Japan, but the emerging European Community is also a strong competitor. Furthermore, millions of U.S. manufacturing jobs have shifted to low-wage countries. But we are uncertain about what policies best respond to global economic challenges.*

*At home divisive forces are apparent. During the 1980s the rich got richer, the poor became poorer, and those in the middle have struggled to maintain economic viability. Racial strife, which we thought we had put behind us, is on the rise, driven partly by competition for jobs in a stagnant economy. Public display of bigotry is increasing. Hate groups are on the rise.*

*We are having difficulty responding to urgent human needs, such as health care, because powerful interests are insisting on their own way. Lacking consensus on the broader public interest, we are unable to agree on best course of action to pursue. Social issues where strongly held, opposing viewpoints reign, such as the abortion, divide us further.*

*During the 1980s overemphasis on "me-ism" eroded our national character. People turned inward. Many became cynical about public life. In the process a strong commitment to the common good has severely lessened.*

*Now is the time to reverse this trend. Now is the time to renew the sense of community that is the foundation of a successful democracy. As we achieve a stronger sense of the community, we will be able to come to grips with the challenging problems that confront America.*

*In its essence community is a "we-feeling" instead of a "me-feeling." In this sense, a healthy family functions as a small community in which each member contributes to the good of the whole. Residential blocks, garden apartments, and neighborhoods are communities when neighbors know one another, are mutually supportive, and work together on common endeavors.*

*Members of a church or synagogue usually have a sense of community. So do people of particular racial and ethnic groups. So, too, persons sharing the same enthusiasm, such as working on*

a special cause, participating  
things and pursuing other hobbies together.

in arts and sports, collecting

This sense of community is achieved more readily in more intimate circumstances than in a wider arena. More in neighborhoods than the metropolis as a whole. More in a city than in the entire nation. Nevertheless, we can and should achieve a greater sense of our national community. This we should strive to do throughout the 1990s.

In the founding days of our nation we had a stronger sense of community than we do now. First, we united to achieve our independence from the British crown. Second, we struggled to find the right form of government for the liberated colonies. To be sure, there was not one hundred percent consensus on the best course of action, but a substantial majority supported independence and the formation of the Union. Prominent citizens declared that "we pledge to each other our Lives, our Fortunes and our sacred Honor."

These are the concluding words of the Declaration of Independence, adopted unanimously by the Continental Congress on July 4, 1776. The Declaration stated:

"We hold these truths to be self-evident,"

Not "I" but "we". What truths?

"That all men are created equal."

Today we would use "all people" instead of "all men".

"That they are endowed by their Creator  
with certain inalienable Rights,  
That among these are Life, Liberty,  
and the pursuit of Happiness."

Previous writers had used the phrase "life, liberty, and property", but Thomas Jefferson and his colleagues emphasized deeper fulfillment than possessions.

"That to secure these rights,  
Governments are instituted among Men."

And "women" we would add.

"Deriving their just powers

*from the consent of the governed."*

*Here is the common purpose that provided the sense of community for the founders. It can fulfill the same function for us. We give our consent to government formed to secure our basic rights. This government is just only as we give our consent.*

*With liberty won the next task was to establish a effective government. Thirteen years later the Preamble to the Constitution elaborated the purposes of government to which we give our consent.*

*"We the People of the United States..."*

*Again, "we".*

*"...do ordain and establish this Constitution of the United States"*

*In order to:*

*"form a more perfect Union,"*

*This is the basis for our national community, recognizing that localities and the states are perfected by joining together in national unity.*

*"establish Justice,  
insure domestic Tranquility,  
provide for the common defense,  
promote the general Welfare, and  
secure the Blessings of Liberty  
to ourselves and our Posterity."*

*The latter extends the "we" to future generations. With these words the Preamble established a common purpose for the newly united states.*

*I don't want to over-romanticize by claiming that all was unity in the founding days. Tories opposed independence. A strong states-rights contingent opposed the new Constitution. In President George Washington's first cabinet, Secretary of State Thomas Jefferson and Secretary of the Treasurer Alexander Hamilton engaged in vigorous policy disputes. After Jefferson became president, newspapers printed scurrilous editorials against him. Nevertheless, there was an overarching sense of common purpose. "E pluribus unum" became the motto: "one out of many". The "we-feeling" held competing faction together.*

*Today the "we-feeling" is fractured in our national life. It is found more in neighborhoods, in ethnic, racial and religious communities, among groups united around particular interests. But in the nation as a whole, the commitment to common purposes is relatively weak.*

*The best way to achieve a strong "we-feeling" in our national life is to identify important goals we seek to attain, to pull ourselves and work together in common tasks that fulfill these goals.*

## REGAINING OUR SENSE OF COMMUNITY

*My fellow Americans. We are a nation groping for its future. It's as if we've lost our way. We don't know where we are heading because we're not certain where we want to go. We can't agree on where we want to go because as a nation we are divided on many issues.*

*The Cold War is over. This global encounter with the Soviet Union was the principal focus of U.S. foreign policy for 45 years. Now with the Soviet threat vastly diminished, the course of U.S. foreign policy in the 1990s is ill-defined. We lack an affirmative vision of the world we want.*

*We have a grave feeling of unease about our economy. During the 1980s the rich got richer, the poor became poorer, and those in the middle have struggled to maintain economic viability. We have seen millions of U.S. manufacturing jobs shift to low-wage countries. We have witnessed Japan's success in many fields where we were once dominant. We view with apprehension the emerging European Community as another strong economic competitor. Yet we are uncertain about what policies respond best to global economic challenges.*

*Throughout America divisive forces are apparent. Racial strife, which we thought we had put behind us, is on the rise, driven partly by intense competition for jobs in a stagnant economy. Public display of bigotry is increasing. Hate groups are on the rise.*

*We are having difficulty responding to urgent human needs. The plight of children is becoming increasingly severe. We recognize inadequacies of health care for millions of Americans, but we can't work out solutions because powerful interests are insisting on their own way. Social issues such as the abortion, on which strongly-held, opposing viewpoints reign, divide us further.*

*Being divided on so many issues, we have lost our sense of community as a nation. Over-emphasis on "me-ism" has eroded our national character. People have turned inward. Many have become cynical about public life. In the process a firm commitment to the common good has severely weakened.*

*Now is the time to reverse this trend. Now is the time to renew the sense of community that is the foundation of a successful democracy. As we achieve a stronger sense of the community, we will be able to come to grips with the challenging problems that confront America.*

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*What is this sense of community? In its essence it is a "we-feeling" instead of a "me-feeling." A healthy family has it and functions as a small community in which each member contributes to the good of the whole. Residential blocks, garden apartments,*



and neighborhoods have it when neighbors know one another, are mutually supportive, and work together on common endeavors.

Members of a church or synagogue usually have a sense of community. So do people of particular racial and ethnic groups. So, too, do persons sharing the same enthusiasm, such as working on a special cause, participating in arts and sports, collecting things and pursuing other hobbies together.

This sense of community is achieved more readily in more intimate circumstances than in a wider arena. More in neighborhoods than the metropolis as a whole. More in a city than in the entire nation. Nevertheless, we can and should achieve a greater sense of our national community. This we should strive to do throughout the 1990s.

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In the founding days of our nation we had a stronger sense of community than we do now. We had a common purpose that united us.

First we united to achieve our independence from the British crown. This was a risky task. Prominent citizens declared that "we pledge to each other our Lives, our Fortunes and our sacred Honor." These are the concluding words of the Declaration of Independence, adopted unanimously by the Continental Congress on July 4, 1776.

After gaining independence we struggled to find the right form of government for the liberated colonies. We got off to a false start with the Articles of Confederation. Then the founders developed the Constitution of the United States, creating a system that has endured for 200 years.

In those days a substantial majority of Americans supported independence and the formation of the Union. The common purpose that united them gained powerful articulation in the two main founding documents -- the Declaration of Independence and the U.S. Constitution, especially its Preamble. The documents put into writing the ideals that underlay the widely-felt sense of a national community.

As we now grapple to restore our own sense of community, these noble documents are worth reviewing once again. We can start with the words of the Declaration.

*We hold these truths to be self-evident,*

Not "I" but "we" acknowledge truths so apparent that they require no justification.

*That all men are created equal.*

Today we would use "all people" instead of "all men".

Abraham Lincoln, using the founder's language, spoke with understanding when he said that

*"the authors ...did not intend to declare all men equal in all respects. They did not mean to say all were equal in color, size, intellect, moral developments, or social capacity. They defined tolerable distinctness in what respects they did consider all men equal -- equal in 'certain inalienable rights'."*<sup>1</sup>

People are equally "endowed by their Creator" with these rights.

*That among these are Life, Liberty,  
and the pursuit of Happiness.*

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<sup>1</sup> Speech at Springfield, Illinois, June 26, 1957 in *The Life and Writings of Abraham Lincoln*. Edited by Philip Van Doren Stern. New York: The Modern Library, 1940. p. 422

Previous writers had used the phrase "life, liberty, and property", but Thomas Jefferson and his colleagues emphasized deeper fulfillment than mere possession of property.

*That to secure these rights,  
Governments are instituted among Men.*

And "women" we would add.

*Deriving their just powers  
from the consent of the governed.*

Here is the common purpose that provided the sense of community for the founders: forming a government in order to secure basic human rights. This government would be just only as the people give their consent.

How to establish such a government became the next task of the American founders. Those of us who are so impatient with our inability to find quick solutions should recall that thirteen years elapsed from July 4, 1776 until the U.S. Constitution was written and ratified.

In the Preamble the drafters clarified the purposes of government to which the people give their consent.

*We the People of the United States...*

Again, "we".

*...do ordain and establish this Constitution of the United States*

In order to:

*form a more perfect Union*

This is the basis for our national community, recognizing that localities and the states are perfected by joining together in national unity.

*establish Justice,  
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Today the "we-feeling" is fractured in our national life. It is found more in neighborhoods, in ethnic, racial and religious communities, among groups united around particular interests than in the nation as a whole. In our national life the commitment to common purposes is relatively weak.

Once upon a time we had celebrations and commemorations that were observed across the land on the same day: Independence Day with parades, celebrative oratory, then fireworks; Memorial Day, started to commemorate the Civil War dead, evolving into Decoration Day to place flowers on graves of loved ones, both war veterans and others; Labor Day with parades featuring crafts and trades.

Today we have fireworks on the Fourth of July without much thought of the day's significance, though in 1991 there was some war-induced feeling of renewed patriotism. Memorial Day has become one of the three-day weekends for family leisure. Labor Day is another. Parades and oratory are a rarity on all three, except in small towns. The main national events that draw together millions of Americans are an occasional spectacular occurrence like the moon landing, the quadrennial inauguration of the president of the United States, the annual Superbowl, and the last episode of popular television shows (M.A.S.H., Dallas, and soon the Cosby show). In these our participation is passive and mostly homebound.

What we need are some active events to unite us. Rather than seeking to restore the holiday observances that took place in the earlier pre-television, pre-automobile, pre-metropolitan era, let's find events responsive to our contemporary needs. Let's come together in events that seem natural to us, that build upon our existing strengths, that elevate our sense of common purpose, that achieves widespread participation.

As one possibility, let me suggest a springtime event. Traditionally this is a time for cleanup and beautification. We give our houses their spring housecleaning. We remove the winter grime and

debris from the yard. We plant flowers and vegetables. We put in new trees, a task once widely observed on Arbor Day in the treeless Plains.

Around the country today many neighborhoods organize cleanup days. Residents rake their yards, prepare flower beds, and dig up vegetable gardens. They plant street trees. They carry out accumulated junk from cellars, garages, and apartment house storage bins. Often neighbors help one another. City and county government provides special trash pickup. And then the neighbors have a party late in the afternoon.

Let's build upon this experience and have a national Neighborhood Day each year on a Saturday in spring. We can pick a day that doesn't conflict with special religious days. The date could be worked out by the president of the United States and the Congress, in consultation with national neighborhood associations. It doesn't even have to be the same day every place around the nation because spring comes earlier in the South than in the North, so that the time of cleanup and planting varies. Even spread out over several weeks participants would have the feeling of involvement in an important national event.

Although the president and Congress might have a role in picking the date for Neighborhood Day, it should not be considered a new federal program with staff and guidelines. Rather selection of a common date would be merely catalytic, leaving it up to neighborhoods, cities, and counties to make their own plans. Cleanup, beautification, and a celebrative party would be common elements. Residents of apartment buildings where management takes care of all maintenance could use the day to get better acquainted with one another.

National television would be encouraged to offer composite coverage of national Neighborhood Day. Sunday newspapers could include both local and national stories. This would let millions of neighborhood participants realize that their local activities are part of a grand, national event. In this manner the sense of community that neighborhoods possess would gain national extension.

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Children and youth. City, metro, commissions & assemblies: inter-community, interracial/ethnic, class. Youth assemblies. What we can do.

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Resource conservation and restoration. We've already made a good beginning. A lot now underway. Needs focus of executive leadership.

## Diversity within Unity

My fellow Americans. One of the great features of the United States of America is the diversity of its people. This is trait to cherish and honor because diversity recognizes and accepts human differences. It provides myriad opportunities for people to seek fulfillment in ways suitable to their needs and personal disposition. It makes life more interesting, more enriching.

Diversity has always been a hallmark of people living on this continent. The first settlers, coming from Asia over a land or ice bridge from Siberia to Alaska approximately 20,000 years ago, were quite diverse. By 1500 when European explorers and settlers began to arrive, an estimated xx million people lived in what later became the 48 contiguous states. Scholars have identified 240 different tribal groupings, speaking xxx distinct languages.<sup>1</sup>

Among them were Mohawk, Mohican, Shawnee, Cherokee, Muskogee, Seminole, Choctaw, Osage, Dakota, Shoshone, Cheyenne, Commanche, Navajo, Hopi, Apache, Palute. Because the land itself is diverse -- deciduous woodland in the East, pine forests and swamps in the South, grassy plains in mid-continent, arid terrain in the Mountain West, and ancient evergreens on the Pacific Coast -- their life styles and cultures displayed considerable variation.

The next wave of settlers who arrived in the next 500 years were equally diverse. The *Ballad for Americans*, popular in the 1940s, sang of the composite American from this migration:

Am I an American?  
I'm just an Irish, Negro, Jewish, Italian,  
French and English, Spanish, Russian,  
Chinese, Polish, Scotch, Hungarian,  
Litvak, Swedish, Finnish, Canadian,  
Greek and Turk, and Czech, and double Czech American!<sup>2</sup>

Walt Whitman's poem, "Song of Myself", published in 1855 in *Leaves of Grass*, caught the same spirit:

I am of old and young, of the foolish  
as much as the wise;...  
One of the Great Nation, the nation of many nations,

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<sup>1</sup> William Booth, "Indians as Diverse as Their `Discoverers'", *The Washington Post*, June 23, 1991, p. A23.

<sup>2</sup> John Latouche and Earl Robinson, *Ballad for American*. Robbins Music Corp., 1944.

*the smallest the same, and the largest the same;...*

*Of every hue and caste am I, of every rank and religion;  
A farmer, mechanic, artist, gentleman, sailor, quaker;  
A prisoner, fancy-man, rowdy, lawyer, physician, priest.*

*I resist anything better than my own diversity;  
I breathe the air, but leave plenty after me,  
And am not stuck up, and am in my place.<sup>3</sup>*

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<sup>3</sup> *The Portable Whitman.* New York: Viking Press, 1945. pp. 80-81

Likewise John Wayne celebrated America's occupational diversity in a 1973 recording. After mentioning names of entertainers, sports figures, and other celebrities, he added:

Then there are those, unheralded, whose dedication  
to our country is strong and true.

The builders of America --  
those who make her factories hum,  
the loggers of her great forests,  
the men who labor deep in her mines  
and the man who works with his hands.

The farmer who toils from dawn to dusk,  
and those who carry her bountiful yield  
to all the states of our Union.

The railroaders, our merchant sailors, the airline pilots,  
and those modern knights of the road -- the truck drivers.<sup>4</sup>

[A feminine ode.]

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The down side, though, is the risk that diversity can be exploited to promote divisiveness, pitting white against black, Gentile against Jew, poor against rich. Thus, we are challenged to seek sufficient unity within our diversity to maintain a society that is workable and a society that is just for all its members.

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<sup>4</sup> John Mitchum and Howard Barnes, *The People*. Devere Music Corporation, 1973.



## *.12A In Praise of Diversity*

*My fellow Americans. Forces of divisiveness and disunity are abroad in our land. In various locales there is suspicion and contention between whites and blacks, Anglos and Latinos, African-Americans and Hispanics, Gentiles and Jews, Protestants and Catholics, women and men, the poor and the rich, the First Settlers and the Second Settlers. The situation is compounded by politicians who exploit fears arising from intergroup rivalry. Some community activists add heat to the cauldron of discontent to gain a following.*

*Efforts to create greater inclusiveness and more equal opportunity in employment, at universities, and in other institutions have come under attack. "Quotas" has become a tar-and-feather word. Seeking "diversity" has garnered the accusation of racial, ethnic, and gender favoritism.*

*Such tumult is nothing new for American democracy. We have often experienced social conflict, even deadly strife much worse than today's clashes. And no wonder. We are a diverse people with widely varying outlooks. Our society has many centrifugal forces that threaten to cast us apart. Only through continuous effort can we maintain social harmony and a workable unity.*

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*Our founders faced a similar challenge. Their great task was to achieve one nation out of thirteen separate colonies. The same Continental Congress that adopted the Declaration of Independence appointed a committee to design a national seal which would be a symbol national unity. And what a committee! It's members were Benjamin Franklin, John Adams, and Thomas Jefferson. As a national motto for the Great Seal, they chose a Latin phrase, "E Pluribus Unum". "Out of many, one."*

*The motto, though, couldn't do it alone. To achieve political unity the Constitutional Convention compromised on a basic issue of human rights, allowing slavery to continue in the South. Even with this concession the Southern states eventually seceded over the slavery issue, with some economic concerns thrown in. The national government insisted on preserving the Union and prevailed in the costly Civil War*

*Today the issue of Union is fundamentally settled, though continuous adjustments are made in roles, responsibilities, and relationships of the states and the national government. Our big issue is social conflict. Our "pluribus" are racial, ethnic, religious, and economic groups. Our challenge is to achieve social unity while maintaining diversity.*

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Diversity has always been a hallmark of people living on this continent. The First Settlers, coming from Asia over a land or ice bridge from Siberia to Alaska approximately 20,000 years ago, were quite diverse. An estimated xx million people lived in what later became the 48 contiguous states by 1500 when European explorers and the Second Settlers began to arrive. Scholars have identified 240 different tribal groupings, speaking xxx distinct languages.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> William Booth, "Indians as Diverse as Their 'Discoverers'", *The Washington Post*, June 23, 1991, p. A23.

Among them were Mohawk, Mohican, Shawnee, Cherokee, Muskogee, Seminole, Choctaw, Osage, Dakota, Shoshone, Cheyenne, Comanche, Navajo, Hopi, Apache, Palute. Because the continent itself is diverse -- deciduous woodland in the East, pine forests and swamps in the South, grassy plains in mid-continent, arid terrain in the Mountain West, and ancient evergreens on the Pacific Coast -- their life styles and cultures displayed considerable variation. Mostly these people lived a peaceful coexistence, but some intertribal fighting did occur.

The wave of Second Settlers, arriving in the 500 years after Columbus reached this hemisphere, were also diverse. Attracted to the "sweet land of liberty", they came seeking opportunity for jobs, trade, land, adventure. A grave exception were the enslaved Africans, brought for forced labor and denied their freedom.

In the mid-19th century Walt Whitman caught the spirit of American diversity in his poem, "Song of Myself", as a short excerpt reveals.

I am of old and young, of the foolish  
as much as the wise;...  
Maternal as well as paternal, a child as well as a man...;  
One of the Great Nation, the nation of many nations,  
the smallest the same, and the largest the same;...  
  
Of every hue and caste am I, of every rank and religion;  
A farmer, mechanic, artist, gentleman, sailor, quaker;  
A prisoner, fancy-man, rowdy, lawyer, physician, priest.  
  
I resist anything better than my own diversity;  
I breathe the air, but leave plenty after me,  
And am not stuck up, and am in my place.<sup>2</sup>

This heritage gained restatement in the *Ballad for Americans* that gained popularity during World War II. When asked by the chorus "Are you an American?", the lead singer replies:

Am I an American?  
I'm just an Irish, Negro, Jewish, Italian,  
French and English, Spanish, Russian,  
Chinese, Polish, Scotch, Hungarian,  
Litvak, Swedish, Finnish, Canadian,

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<sup>2</sup> *The Portable Whitman*. New York: Viking Press, 1945. pp. 80-81

*Greek and Turk, and Czech, and double Czech American!*<sup>3</sup>

*And he could have added many other emigrant groups and also numerous tribal names of the First Settlers, originally misidentified as Indians and more recently referred to as Native Americans or the Indigenous People.*

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<sup>3</sup> John Latouche and Earl Robinson, *Ballad for American*. Robbins Music Corp., 1944.

Indeed, we are a diverse people. This is a reality, not a matter of choice. Variations in the continental habitat yielded diversity among the First Settlers in their 20,000 year history. The Second Settlers came from many different lands so that diversity was inherent in their immigration.

Even in limited geographic areas, homogeneity has been the exception. Some of the New England colonies tried to maintain a homogeneous population, but it didn't last. In intentional communities of the 19th century, such as ....., American individualism soon assert itself. Likewise in the idealistic communes of the 1960s.

The exceptional, long-lasting homogeneous communities tend to have a strong religious base, such as the Amish and Mennonites of rural Pennsylvania and the Hasidic Jews in New York City. A strong ethnic identity can also produce a fairly homogenous rural district or urban neighborhood at least until third and fourth generation mobility causes dispersion. But even in these cases the inhabitants of homogeneous communities find themselves mingling with diverse people from the larger community: for trade in rural areas, for jobs in the metropolis.

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Yes, we are diverse, but we are also separated in many of our associations, particularly family, neighboring, friendship, informal social relations, and worship. Lines of separation are demarcated by race, ethnicity, religion, and social class. In these distinctions, birds of a feather tend to flock together. This is partly natural, partly forced.

The natural explanation is our inclination toward comfort. We feel most comfortable associating with people similar to ourselves. We find that when we are with people having a background like our own, we don't have to explain who we are. We can relax and be ourselves. Our common tracts might encompass race, religion, our family's country of national origin or region of the United States, occupation, income level, perception of social class (though perhaps not openly stated). This is more a tendency than an absolute phenomenon. Moreover, some persons want to escape their background and seek a new identity, as uncomfortable as that task may be.

Separation can also be forced. The clearest case occurs through deliberate discrimination by law and custom to keep particular racial or religious groups out of certain neighborhoods and jobs. Although this practice is now unlawful throughout the United States, it still occurs through subtle means, such as steering toward or away from particular neighborhoods and jobs, and through not-so-subtle means, such as intimidation and outright violation of nondiscrimination laws. Economic methods are also used to keep socio-economic classes apart, such as zoning and other land use regulations that determine type and price of housing in different sections of the metropolis.

In urban housing patterns the natural and the forced interact. Historically segregated districts

tend to expand. African-Americans, Hispanics, Asians, and European ethnics with rising incomes tend to seek more expensive housing along the same axis away from downtown or in the same quadrant of the metropolis. That's because their new neighborhood has or is close to the churches, shops, and other facilities with which they are familiar. Their new neighbors are similar to themselves. In short, it is more comfortable than moving to the other side of the city or further out where people have more dissimilarities. This is not universal, for some prefer to break out of the mold, but it is a general tendency.

At school and at work a considerable amount of self-segregation occurs. New entrants breaking barriers of homogeneity tend to socialize and have lunch together, partly for mutual support and protection from hostility and slights, partly for comfort by being with persons like themselves. Long-dominant racial and gender groups at these places also tend to stick together out of habit and perhaps to maintain their dominance.

Groupings of other types also occur. At colleges: eggheads, jocks, party animals, political activists (conservative, radical, party affiliated). At work: sports aficionados, feminists, college networks, occupational specialties. Almost always there are exceptions of people from both sides of past barriers who seek cross-racial, cross-ethnic, cross-cultural contacts. And there are loners who don't belong to any particular groups. Yet, there is a tendency for clusters of similar people to form.

Several things can be said about the islands of similarity within the ocean of diversity.

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First, as we have observed, some separatism occurs voluntarily through a natural inclination toward comfort in associating with persons like ourselves. However, a considerable amount of separateness in contemporary American society exists because of historical practices of forced segregation. The legal barriers are down but custom, inertia, and occasionally coercion maintain the patterns of separation.

The First Settlers were herded into reservations, often with less productive land than they previously occupied. African-Americans lived in slave quarters, and when freed they were restricted to certain sections of the city. Land covenants, though now unenforceable, excluded Negroes, Jews, Asians, and sometimes Catholics from owning or renting housing in particular neighborhoods. Many realtors and landlords were practitioners of exclusion. Employers refused to hire various minority groups or kept them in low-paying jobs. Women also suffered job discrimination through custom and intent.

To the extent that these practices still prevail, we must determinedly eliminate them. Basic

fairness requires this, as I have said on another occasion.<sup>4</sup>

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Second, some persons within our society, by their attitudes and conduct, treat persons from specific groups unfairly and sometimes quite harshly. They use coercion to sustain separation. Victims vary around the country but are most likely to be African-Americans, Native Americans, Hispanics, Asians, Pacific Islanders, that is, non-Anglo, non-whites. Jews and Catholics are also victims, and women, too, especially in the commercial world of jobs, credit, and housing. Except for women, these tend to be minority groups in their communities, though in some places African-Americans, even Hispanics, may hold a majority and still suffer from discrimination and abuse.

Such bigotry, racism, and sexism is unacceptable in a democratic society. When it reaches the stages of outright hatred, it is absolutely intolerable. While we can and should safeguard minority groups from effects of bigotry by equal opportunity laws and regulations and by legal protection from abuse, we also need to deal with underlying attitudes. This we can do in several ways.

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<sup>4</sup> See chapter .13.

We need to understand the sources of personal bigotry. For persons on the margin in gaining an adequate livelihood, economic insecurity may be a contributing factor. We see this happening today as manufacturing jobs disappear and promotional opportunities diminish. Persons competing for a declining number of jobs find it to their advantage to exclude whole groups of competitors by race or ethnicity. Achieving more widespread economic security can mitigate this source of racism.

Psychologically many persons have a need to feel superior to others in order to have an adequate sense of self-esteem. This occurs throughout the range of the economic scale. Poor whites want to keep blacks "in their place." Middle income homeowners, who have scrimped and saved to buy a home in "a good neighborhood", don't want persons considered undesirable to live nearby. This may be whites wanting to keep out blacks, and it can be middle class blacks wanting to keep out poor blacks. It's prestige as well as a concern for housing value. Some upper income persons have the same psychological need even though they are more able to insulate themselves from direct contact and threat.

Part of the remedy enters the realm of values, especially religious values. Because all persons are equal in the sight of God, one cannot claim superiority over other persons and be true to the highest precepts of religion. In secular society democratic values contain this same basic teachings. Self-worth is an inherent quality for each of us and should not depend upon putting down other persons.

Part of the remedy can come through practical experience of associating with people who are different than oneself. This can occur at school, at work, in civic life, at church, in recreational activities. When people do things together, they begin to see good qualities in individuals whom they previously saw only as persons defined by such characteristics as skin coloration, ethnic background, and religious adherence. They may learn that some persons' undesirable qualities stem from personal traits, not group identity.

In this manner integration of schools, the workplace, and other arenas of society has the dual purpose of providing equal opportunity and changing attitudes from bigotry to acceptance.

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Third, in a democratic society diversity has an intrinsic value. Clearly this is the case with schools, universities, all three branches of government, and in civic endeavors.

Because American society is highly diverse young people can benefit by knowing persons their own age from different backgrounds. It gives them a much better understanding of the society in which they live. Particularly for youth who will later play civic and governmental roles, this first hand knowledge is essential preparation for the service they will render as adults. It is highly useful for persons who will become employers and supervisors of a diverse work force, and also for those who will



work beside people from different backgrounds.

This is not merely being at the same school or university but while there separated (even voluntarily) into racial, ethnic, or other identity groups, but rather there is a strong need to be engaged in positive interaction with diverse people. Such interaction should occur not just for its own sake but rather in meaningful activities with broader purposes.

The legislative, executive, and judicial branches of government can all benefit by achieving broad diversity. In this manner office holders will have varied backgrounds that enable them to know first hand the needs of various segments of the population they are serving. They will also have clearer insights on the effects of governmental policies on various people.

For the legislative branch the manner of districting affects diversity. In cities and urban counties, small compact districts are more likely to achieve greater variety than at-large election. State legislative and congressional districts can also be defined to offer fair opportunity for diversity of membership. Where elections to the executive branch have several offices to fill (mayor, vice mayor, city attorney; governor, lieutenant governor, other state offices; president, vice president), the states can provide diversity. Likewise executive and judicial appointments can purposefully seek diversity.

The same concept applies to officers of civic organizations, top personnel of universities, and other quasi-public endeavors. Many civic groups have long done this. For example, neighborhood associations, either with unspoken intuition or by stated design, assure that their officers reflect the racial-ethnic mix of the neighborhood and include both men and women. Many governing boards have come to this realization -- on their own, by encouragement of their members or constituents, or sometimes by outside urging. Almost always this is a flexible process without absolute quotas but with a clear commitment for diversity.

Indeed, this internal commitment is the best way to obtain diversity. It's a process that can't be rigidly prescribed by governmental regulations or absolute numerical reckoning. Upon occasion it may need a push by an outsider, but education and persuasion are usually more appropriate than legal action.

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Fourth, we should find ways for representatives of diverse populations to work together in problem solving. In another presentation,<sup>5</sup> I have noted how this can help strengthen our sense of community through a commitment to common purposes, such as improving the life situation of children and youth and conserving and restoring natural resources.

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<sup>5</sup> Chapter .11.

A number of cities have participatory systems based upon neighborhood associations that send representatives to citywide boards and advisory committees. This can be for community development planning, input into the annual city budget, advice to department heads and the school superintendent, and other concerns. In the process a multi-racial, multi-ethnic body of citizens works together to deal with common problems and to develop a citywide view that encompasses neighborhood concerns while attaining a wider perspective. In their residences and in much of their social life, citizens may be separated along racial lines. But in these civic endeavors they come together in purposeful activities. This builds bridges and provides opportunities for working out consensus on public policy issues.

The same process could be applied in an entire metropolitan area. It would be especially beneficial where the central city is predominantly black and the suburbs are primarily white. This would help overcome the tendency toward two societies, one black and one white.

Applying this idea to the states and the nation as a whole runs into the obstacle of travel time and expense, but certainly it could happen with citizen advisory committees to state and federal agencies. Moreover, we have scarcely touched the opportunities available through interactive television in which variations of skin coloration, facial features, and speech would make the participants realize their diversity.<sup>6</sup>

And you, my listeners among the American people, can easily come up with other ways that we can work together to solve our common problems.

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<sup>6</sup> For more on citizen participation, see chapter .21.

Fifth, we should do much more to develop knowledge, understanding, and appreciation of the richly varied heritage of Americans.

A number of cities have annual neighborhood fairs where neighborhoods have displays and sell food reflecting their varying ethnic and racial background. This is a practice worth expanding.

Perhaps service clubs, church groups, and other civic organizations that meet regularly could have "a minute" (or two or three) for a brief presentation on the heritage of some group in the community. Initially this might be persons talking about their own heritage. Then after a while people could do some research and present "a minute" about groups other than their own.

Schools have numerous opportunities for teaching about the diversity found in American history and in contemporary society. This shouldn't avoid blots on our society, such as broken promises to the First Settlers, black slavery, discriminatory practices against successive waves of Second Settlers, religious bigotry. But it shouldn't be obsessed with our flaws at the expense of our accomplishments. In spite of the incompleteness of quest for equal opportunity and fully applied diversity, the United States has made remarkable achievements in bringing together a highly varied population. Compared to many multi-ethnic, multi-religious nations of Earth, we have accomplished a great deal in striving to apply our national motto: *E Pluribus Unum*. Out of many, one.

So, my friends, please join me in singing praise to a solid American accomplishment: Diversity within Unity.

## *.12B In Praise of Diversity*

*My fellow Americans. Forces of divisiveness and disunity are abroad in our land. In various locales there is suspicion and contention between whites and blacks, Anglos and Latinos, African-Americans and Hispanics, Gentiles and Jews, Protestants and Catholics, women and men, the poor and the rich, the First Settlers and the Second Settlers. Some community activists add heat to the cauldron of discontent to gain a following. Here and there hate groups are active.*

*The situation is compounded by politicians who exploit fears arising from intergroup rivalry. Efforts to create greater inclusiveness and more equal opportunity in employment, at universities, and in other institutions have come under attack. "Quotas" has become a tar-and-feather word. Seeking "diversity" has garnered the accusation of racial, ethnic, and gender favoritism.*

*Such tumult is nothing new for American democracy. We have often experienced social conflict, even deadly strife much worse than today's clashes. And no wonder. We are a diverse people with widely varying outlooks. Our society has many centrifugal forces that threaten to cast us apart. Only through continuous effort can we maintain social harmony and a workable unity.*

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*Our founders faced a similar challenge. Their great task was to achieve one nation out of thirteen separate colonies. The same Continental Congress that adopted the Declaration of Independence appointed a committee to design a national seal which would be a symbol national unity. And what a committee! It's members were Benjamin Franklin, John Adams, and Thomas Jefferson. As a national motto for the Great Seal, they chose a Latin phrase, "E Pluribus Unum". "Out of many, one."*

*The motto, though, couldn't do it alone. To achieve political unity the Constitutional Convention compromised on a basic issue of human rights, allowing slavery to continue in the South. Even with this concession the Southern states eventually seceded over the slavery issue, with some economic concerns thrown in. The national government insisted on preserving the Union and prevailed in the costly Civil War*

*Today the issue of Union is fundamentally settled, though continuous adjustments are made in roles, responsibilities, and relationships of the states and the national government. Our big issue is social conflict. Our "pluribus" are racial, ethnic, religious, and economic groups. Our challenge is to achieve social unity while maintaining diversity.*

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Diversity has always been a hallmark of people living on this continent. The First Settlers, coming from Asia over a land or ice bridge from Siberia to Alaska approximately 20,000 years ago, were quite diverse. An estimated xx million people lived in what later became the 48 contiguous states by 1500 when European explorers and the Second Settlers began to arrive. Scholars have identified 240 different tribal groupings, speaking xxx distinct languages.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> William Booth, "Indians as Diverse as Their 'Discoverers'", *The Washington Post*, June 23, 1991, p. A23.

Among them were Mohawk, Mohican, Shawnee, Cherokee, Muskogee, Seminole, Choctaw, Osage, Dakota, Shoshone, Cheyenne, Comanche, Navajo, Hopi, Apache, Palute. Because the continent itself is diverse -- deciduous woodland in the East, pine forests and swamps in the South, grassy plains in mid-continent, arid terrain in the Mountain West, and ancient evergreens on the Pacific Coast -- the life styles and cultures of the First Settlers displayed considerable variation. Mostly they lived a peaceful coexistence, but some intertribal fighting did occur.

The wave of Second Settlers, arriving in the 500 years after Columbus reached this hemisphere, were also diverse. Attracted to the "sweet land of liberty", they came seeking opportunity for jobs, trade, land, adventure. A grave exception were the enslaved Africans, brought for forced labor and denied their freedom.

In the mid-19th century Walt Whitman caught the spirit of American diversity in his poem, "Song of Myself", as a short excerpt reveals.

I am of old and young, of the foolish  
as much as the wise;...  
Maternal as well as paternal, a child as well as a man...;  
One of the Great Nation, the nation of many nations,  
the smallest the same, and the largest the same;...  
  
Of every hue and caste am I, of every rank and religion;  
A farmer, mechanic, artist, gentleman, sailor, quaker;  
A prisoner, fancy-man, rowdy, lawyer, physician, priest.  
  
I resist anything better than my own diversity;  
I breathe the air, but leave plenty after me,  
And am not stuck up, and am in my place.<sup>2</sup>

This heritage gained restatement in the *Ballad for Americans* that gained popularity during World War II. When asked by the chorus "Are you an American?", the lead singer replies:

Am I an American?  
I'm just an Irish, Negro, Jewish, Italian,  
French and English, Spanish, Russian,  
Chinese, Polish, Scotch, Hungarian,  
Litvak, Swedish, Finnish, Canadian,

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<sup>2</sup> *The Portable Whitman*. New York: Viking Press, 1945. pp. 80-81

*Greek and Turk, and Czech, and double Czech American!*<sup>3</sup>

*And he could have added Latinos and many other emigrant groups and also numerous tribal names of the First Settlers, originally misidentified as Indians and more recently referred to as Native Americans or the Indigenous People.*

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<sup>3</sup> John Latouche and Earl Robinson, *Ballad for American*. Robbins Music Corp., 1944.

*Indeed, we are a diverse people. This is a reality, not a matter of choice. Variations in the continental habitat yielded diversity among the First Settlers in their 20,000 year history. The Second Settlers came from many different lands so that diversity was inherent in their immigration.*

*But let's be honest. Within the totality of our diversity we tend toward segmentation by race, ethnicity, religion, and social class. This occurs more-or-less by choice in our more intimate associations, such as family, friendship, neighboring, and worship. It also has happened through exclusionary practices in housing, employment, education, public accommodations, and in various institutions. Thus, segmentation is partly natural, partly forced.*

*The natural explanation is our inclination toward comfort. We feel most comfortable associating with people similar to ourselves. We find that when we are with people having a background like our own, we don't have to explain who we are. We can relax and be ourselves. Our common traits might encompass race, religion, our family's country of national origin or region of the United States, occupation, income level, perception of social class (though perhaps not openly stated). This is more a tendency than an absolute phenomenon. Moreover, some persons want to escape their background and seek a new identity, as uncomfortable as that task may be.*

*Separation can also be forced. The First Settlers were herded into reservations, often with less productive land than they previously occupied. African-Americans lived in slave quarters, and when freed they were restricted to certain sections of the city. Land covenants, though now unenforceable, excluded Negroes, Jews, Asians, and sometimes Catholics from owning or renting housing in particular neighborhoods. Many realtors and landlords were practitioners of exclusion. Employers refused to hire various minority groups or kept them in low-paying jobs. Women also suffered job discrimination through custom and intent.*

*Although job and housing discrimination is now unlawful throughout the United States, it still occurs through subtle means, such as steering toward or away from particular neighborhoods and jobs, and through not-so-subtle means, such as intimidation and outright violation of nondiscrimination laws. Zoning and other land use regulations are used to keep socio-economic classes apart by determining the type and price of housing in different sections of the metropolis.*

*In urban housing patterns the natural and the forced interact. Historically segregated districts tend to expand. African-Americans, Hispanics, Asians, and European ethnics with rising incomes tend to seek more expensive housing along the same axis away from downtown or in the same quadrant of the metropolis. That's because their new neighborhood has or is close to the churches, shops, and other facilities with which they are familiar. Their new neighbors are similar to themselves. In short, it is more comfortable than moving to the other side of the city or further out where people have more dissimilarities. This is not universal, for some prefer to break out of the mold, but it is a general tendency.*



At school and at work a considerable amount of self-segregation occurs. New entrants breaking barriers of homogeneity tend to socialize and have lunch together, partly for mutual support and protection from hostility and slights, partly for comfort by being with persons like themselves. Long-dominant racial and gender groups at these places also tend to stick together out of habit and perhaps to maintain their dominance.

Groupings of other types also occur. At colleges: eggheads, jocks, party animals, political activists (conservative, radical, party affiliated). At work: sports aficionados, feminists, college networks, occupational specialties. Almost always there are exceptions of people from both sides of past barriers who seek cross-racial, cross-ethnic, cross-cultural contacts. And there are loners who don't belong to any particular groups. Yet, there is a tendency for clusters of similar people to form.

This kind of differentiation gives people with similar interests and outlook opportunities to associate with one another for mutual benefit. This can be a positive social value as long as it isn't coerced and doesn't form a base for bigotry, hatred, and denial of other persons' basic human rights.

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Unfortunately our society contains a considerable amount of racial, ethnic, and religious bigotry and hatred. Victims vary around the country but are most likely to be African-Americans, Native Americans, Hispanics, Asians, Pacific Islanders, that is, non-Anglo, non-whites. Jews and Catholics are also victims, and women, too, especially in the commercial world of jobs, credit, and housing. Except for women, these tend to be minority groups in their communities, though in some places African-Americans, even Hispanics, may hold a majority and still suffer from discrimination and abuse.

We need to pause and ask ourselves why religious bigotry, racism, and sexism exist in our democratic society, which is founded on the idea of the worth and dignity of every person. It is a learned response, not something innate in human nature.

Recall, if you will, the song "You've Got to Be Carefully Taught" by Rogers and Hammerstein from the musical *South Pacific*. The setting is a South Pacific Island during World War II. Nurse Ensign Nellie Forbush falls in love with a local French planter, Emile de Beque. An indigenous entrepreneur known as Bloody Mary arranges for Marine Lieutenant Joseph Cable to become the first lover of her daughter, Liat. Bloody Mary then wants the lieutenant to marry the girl, but he refuses. With his Princeton (?) background, he can't contemplate such an interracial marriage. Meanwhile, Nellie Forbush discovers that Emile has two children from his first marriage to a Polynesian woman, now deceased. Being from Little Rock, Arkansas, she is so unsettled by his previous "mixed marriage" and the children that she breaks off with Emile. In discussing this situation with Lieutenant Cable, Emile asks, " Cable replies, "...its not born in you" and then sings:

You've got to be taught to hate and fear,  
You've got to be taught from year to year,  
It's got to be drummed in your dear little ear,  
You've got to be carefully taught.

You've got to be taught to be afraid  
of people whose eyes are oddly made,  
And people whose skin is a different shade,  
You've got to be carefully taught.

You've got to be taught before it's too late,  
Before you are six or seven or eight,  
To hate all the people your relatives hate,  
You've got to be carefully taught!

You've got to be carefully taught!<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>4</sup> From *South Pacific*. Words by Oscar Hammerstein II, music by Richard Rogers. Williamson Music, Inc., 1949.

*When were we taught? As the song says, for most of us it occurred before we were seven or eight.*

*In your mind's eye, re-live your early life. Picture yourself on the day of your birth. A nurse picks you out of your crib in the hospital nursery. You open your eyes and notice that the other babies have various skin color: white, black, brown, bronze, and some have eyes shaped different than the others. But you all have the same needs: your mother's milk and a change of diapers. As far as you know, its natural for this diversity to be together.*

*Fast forward to your first birthday. Family members are the sole guests at your birthday party. Their skin color and facial characteristics are similar to your own. In the afternoon your parents take you to the zoo. You see different kinds of animals and different kind of children. You are aware that the world beyond your family has lots of differences. Fine! That's the way it is.*

*Fast forward again to your fourth birthday and an outing in the park. Again you see many different kinds of people. By now you've had a lot of direct and indirect coaching from your parents and grandparents to be wary of certain types of people: blacks, whites, Puerto Ricans, Chinese. They're different. They do this and that. They can't be trusted. They're out to get us. We are victims. You may have heard your father or mother complain about a work situation with racial or ethnic overtones. Or it may be more subtle, such as the tone of voice and body language your parents use when "one of them" comes to the door or meets your family in a shop or on the street.*

*If you're from a minority group, you may have already experienced displays of bigotry. If you're from the majority, you may have observed some action that confirms your parents' warning. If a family member has frequently expressed hatred toward a particular group, you may be copying his or her feelings. Already you have been taught to fear and hate.*

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*Let's be honest to admit that everyone of us has had lessons in bigotry and hatred by the time we've entered elementary school. If our parents have tried hard to teach us acceptance of everybody, we have picked up clues elsewhere. And even the most fair-minded, conscientious parent may slip and expose a prejudice latent from her or his own upbringing.*

*For some among us the learned response is reinforced by a sense of economic insecurity. This is happening today as manufacturing jobs disappear and promotional opportunities diminish. Persons competing for a declining number of jobs would like to narrow the competition by excluding whole groups of competitors by race or ethnicity. Or they may feel that minority groups now have an unfair advantage because of "affirmative action" remedies to past discriminatory practices. I discuss this*

more fully in a presentation on basic fairness.<sup>5</sup> Here I would emphasize that providing more employment opportunities and achieving greater economic security for persons on the edge of economic survival would help to mitigate this source of racism in our society.

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<sup>5</sup> Chapter .13.

For some of us, personal insecurity leads us to put others down. To achieve our own sense of self-esteem, we try to feel superior to other persons. If we are poor and white, we want to keep blacks "in their place." If we are middle income homeowners, who have scrimped and saved to buy a home in "a good neighborhood", we don't want persons considered undesirable to live nearby. This may be whites wanting to keep out blacks, and it can be middle class blacks wanting to keep out poor blacks. It's prestige as well as a concern for housing value. If we are upper income persons, we may have the same psychological need even though we are more able to insulate ourselves from direct contact and threat from persons we consider undesirable. For the whole income range, the remedy is to assure that people have many different ways to develop self-esteem other than a superior-inferior relationship.

If we've learned racial and religious bigotry, we can unlearn it. And we can be very careful not to pass it on to our children.

In particular churches and synagogues have an important role to play. Our religious values teach us that all persons are equal in the sight of God. Therefore, one cannot claim superiority over other persons and be true to the highest precepts of religion. In secular society democratic values contain this same basic teachings. Self-worth is an inherent quality for each of us and should not depend upon putting down other persons. Schools can teach us this.

Part of the remedy can come through practical experience of associating with people who are different than oneself. We can have such experiences at school, at work, in civic life, at church, in recreational activities. When we do things with other people, we begin to see good qualities in individuals whom we previously saw only as persons defined by such characteristics as skin coloration, ethnic background, and religious adherence. We may learn that some persons' undesirable qualities stem from personal traits, not group identity.

In this manner integration of schools, the workplace, and other arenas of society has the dual purpose of providing equal opportunity and changing attitudes from bigotry to acceptance. By associating with other people and knowing them as individuals, we can overcome our prejudices -- our pre-judging.

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Beyond the value of reducing prejudice and bigotry, achieving diversity in our public and civic institutions has other significant values for our democratic society.

Because American society is highly diverse young people can benefit by associating at school and in other activities with persons their own age from different backgrounds. It gives them a much better understanding of the society in which they live. Particularly for youth who will later play civic and

*governmental roles, this first hand knowledge is essential preparation for the service they will render as adults. It is highly useful for persons who will become employers and supervisors of a diverse work force, and also for those who will work beside people from different backgrounds.*

*This is not merely being at the same school or university but while there separated (even voluntarily) into racial, ethnic, or other identity groups. Rather there is a strong need to be engaged in positive interaction with diverse people. Such interaction should occur not just for its own sake but rather in meaningful activities with broader purposes.*

*The legislative, executive, and judicial branches of government can all benefit by achieving broad diversity. Office holders from varied backgrounds will know first hand the needs of various segments of the population they are serving. They will also have clearer insights on the effects of governmental policies on various people.*

*For the legislative branch the manner of districting affects diversity. In cities and urban counties, small compact districts are more likely to achieve greater diversity on city and county council than at-large election. State legislative and congressional districts can also be defined to offer fair opportunity for diversity of membership.*

*In many jurisdictions elections for the executive branch have several offices to fill (mayor, vice mayor, city attorney; governor, lieutenant governor, other state offices; president, vice president). Where the electorate has considerable diversity, political parties often try to put together a balanced slate that can attract a majority of the voters. Where a minority group is a small portion of the electorate, a more conscious effort may be needed to nominate a diverse slate. Likewise executive and judicial appointments can and should purposefully seek diversity.*

*The same concept applies to officers of civic organizations, top personnel of universities, and other quasi-public endeavors. Many civic groups have long done this. For example, neighborhood associations, either with unspoken intuition or by stated design, assure that their officers reflect the racial-ethnic mix of the neighborhood and include both men and women. Governing boards of many other organizations and institutions have come to this realization -- on their own, by encouragement of their members or constituents, or sometimes by outside urging. Usually the process has flexibility rather than restoring to fixed quotas but with a clear commitment to diversity.*

*Indeed, this internal commitment is the best way to obtain diversity. It's a process that can't be rigidly prescribed by governmental regulations or absolute numerical reckoning. Upon occasion it may need a push by an outsider, but education and persuasion are usually more appropriate than legal action.*

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Diversity in participation can help us to improve our capacity to solve community and national problems by working together for mutual benefit. In another presentation,<sup>6</sup> I have noted how this can help strengthen our sense of community through a commitment to common purposes, such as improving the life situation of children and youth and conserving and restoring natural resources.

A number of cities have participatory systems based upon neighborhood associations that send representatives to citywide boards and advisory committees. They do this for community development planning, input into the annual city budget, advice to department heads and the school superintendent, and other concerns. In the process a multi-racial, multi-ethnic body of citizens works together to deal with common problems and to develop a citywide view that encompasses neighborhood concerns while attaining a wider perspective. In their residences and in much of their social life, citizens may be separated along racial lines. But in these civic endeavors they come together in purposeful activities. This builds bridges and provides opportunities for working out consensus on public policy issues.

The same process could be applied in an entire metropolitan area. It would be especially beneficial where the central city is predominantly black and the suburbs are primarily white. This would help overcome the tendency toward two societies, one black and one white.

Applying this idea to the states and the nation as a whole runs into the obstacle of travel time and expense, but certainly it could happen with citizen advisory committees to state and federal agencies. Moreover, we have scarcely touched the opportunities available through interactive television in which variations of skin coloration, facial features, and speech would make the participants realize their diversity.<sup>7</sup>

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<sup>6</sup> Chapter .11.

<sup>7</sup> For more on citizen participation, see chapter .21.

And you, my listeners among the American people, can easily come up with other ways that we can work together to solve our common problems.

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We also should do much more to develop knowledge, understanding, and appreciation of the richly varied heritage of Americans.

A number of cities have annual neighborhood fairs where neighborhoods have displays and sell food reflecting their varying ethnic and racial background. This is a practice worth expanding.

In our service clubs, church groups, and other civic organizations that meet regularly we could have "a minute" (or two or three) for a brief presentation on the heritage of some group in the community. Initially this might be persons talking about their own heritage. Then after a while people could do some research and present "a minute" about groups other than their own.

Schools have numerous opportunities for teaching about the diversity found in American history and in contemporary society. This shouldn't avoid blots on our society, such as broken promises to the First Settlers, black slavery, discriminatory practices against successive waves of Second Settlers, and religious bigotry. But it shouldn't be obsessed with our flaws at the expense of our accomplishments. In spite of the incompleteness of our quest for equal opportunity and fully realized diversity, we in the United States have made remarkable achievements in bringing together a highly varied population. Compared to many multi-ethnic, multi-religious nations of Earth, we have accomplished a great deal in striving to apply our national motto: *E Pluribus Unum*. Out of many, one.

So, my friends, please join me in singing praise to a solid American accomplishment: Diversity within Unity.



### *.13 Basic Fairness*

*My fellow Americans. There is a lot of anger throughout America these days. Some of this anger has a social dimension that we must deal with.*

*Blacks are angry at whites because of centuries of mistreatment, beginning with slavery and continuing to the present day. Whites are angry at blacks because whites claim blacks are taking away their jobs and promotional opportunities through affirmative action programs. Hispanics are angry at Anglos who want to keep them as second class citizens. Anglos are angry at Hispanics because they are pouring into cities and requiring services the taxpayers can't afford.*

*Women are angry at men, who have dominated them for far too long. Men are angry at women because they are expected to move into some kind of undefined, new relationship. Middle class taxpayers are angry at government at all levels because of rising taxes and because they feel they are paying too much of the burden while the rich are getting numerous tax breaks. Poor people and their advocates are angry at the president and the Congress because of a dozen years of program cutbacks even though there is plenty of money for the savings and loan bailout. And I could provide other examples of public anger.*

*To sum it up, many Americans feel that they are not being treated fairly. They work hard, but other people get the breaks. Or, they suffer from a long history of discrimination against their race, ethnic group, or gender. There is enough truth in their claims that we need to give serious attention to the fairness issue.*

*---*

*Fairness has long been an attribute that we Americans hold near and dear to our hearts. We believe that everyone should be treated fairly. We believe that rules of the game should be fair and should be applied to all in the same way. We believe that people should be fairly rewarded for their efforts. We believe that taxes should be fair.*

*Each generation of Americans has its own bout with the fairness issue. During the 1950s and '60s a vigorous civil rights movement raised our consciousness on some blatant unfairness. In many places people of color were restricted in their access to restaurants, motels, and other public accommodations. African-Americans and Hispanics were denied full voting rights. There was widespread discrimination in jobs and housing. Women and older workers were also experiencing workplace discrimination.*

*The Congress of the United States, with presidential support, responded with the landmark Voting Rights Act of 1965 and the Civil Rights Act of 1966. With an occasional exception, public*

*accommodations are now accessible to all persons throughout the United States. Voting rights are well established, though we are still working to assure that district lines for members of city and council councils, state legislatures, and Congress provide fair representation for minority groups. We have made considerable progress in eliminating job and housing discrimination, though we still have more to accomplish.*

## *.15 Self-Interest and the Public Interest*

*We have emerged wounded from the 1980s. This was the decade when greed seemed to gain the upper hand. Corporate raids left many previously sound businesses in ruin. Junk bond dealers manipulated the stock market. Rapacious entrepreneurs took over savings and loans association. They used savers' money as if were their own personal assets. In the name of deregulation government safeguards against unscrupulous operators were allowed to deteriorate. An unfortunately large number of federal officials took personally the idea of "privatization of the public sector" and used their position to enhance present and future wealth. Personal ethics degenerated.*

*I am speaking of the excesses, which were indeed excessive. Beneath this layer of showy greed millions of Americans continued to work hard to support their families, to live modest, decent lives. Most bankers observed high ethical standards. Most federal officials were scrupulously honest, especially the talented core of long-time career employees. Even so, the decade was tarnished by the greedy.*

*Public life is always features a contest between "me" and "us", between the pursuit of self-interest and the quest for the common good. During the 1980s "me-ism" seemed to gain an upper hand. Greed, that is, excessive acquisitiveness, became socially acceptable.*

### *Self-seeking and Self-giving [FAREWELL.09]*

*Our basic human nature is also the same, down deep. Through what I am and what I observe in others, I find that human nature displays a pair of intertwined characteristics: self-seeking and self-giving. The one has an inward pull of what's in it for me, the other an outward thrust of how I relate to others and care for them. The two impulses are interwoven, and neither is totally missing from anyone.*

*The root of self-seeking is the desire to survive -- individually and as a species. Thus, the initial drive for economic gain rests on the need for food, clothing, and shelter. And sexual desire is nature's way of preserving the species. On this foundation we build an elaborate structure of personal vanity and acquisitions, and sometimes a quest for power.*

*To some extent, even our involvement with other people derives from a need to fulfill our own being by developing personal relationships: a child with mother and father, children with one another, adolescents and young adults with their group, all of us interrelated in social, economic, and political processes which help us achieve personal objectives. But even if initially motivated by a desire for personal fulfillment, we become aware that these relationships must be based upon reciprocity. To receive, we must give. Then we learn that giving is a blessing regardless of the return. Ultimately we come to the truth that to find your life, you must lose it. Caring and self-giving are necessary to make*

*your being complete.*

*This self-giving we call love. Through experiential learning, teaching, and the examples of others we realize that love is a major force in our lives and in the broader universe. We can understand the truth that God is Love. We can be aware that love for others can be as strong and influential as concern for self. In many respects our existence is defined by the interaction of these two essential aspects of human nature -- self-seeking and self-giving.*

*Everyone of every nationality possesses these two intertwined traits. The relative emphasis varies among individuals and over periods of time, but neither trait is missing from anyone. Even the most saintly, altruistic person has an element of self-seeking. Even the most diabolical person has a remnant of self-giving and a potential for much more.*

*These two aspects of human nature influence the response of individuals and groups to one another. Because self-giving is rooted in a desire to survive, when a person feels trapped or otherwise threatened he or she seeks to escape or to find another means of protecting oneself from harm, perhaps by fighting back. When a group or a nation feels threatened, the same kinds of responses arise.*

*Conversely when a person reaches out to another in a loving and caring manner, there is a good chance that the other person will respond in kind. Not always, for some are so wounded by life's experience that they are distrustful of even friendly gestures. Others are so taken up by self-seeking that they will try to take advantage of those coming in friendship. Yet the spirit of love can be a remarkable force for positive change.*

### *.23 Politics: The Art of the Potential*

*My fellow Americans. It is often said that politics is the art of the possible. Practitioners work out compromises among holders of diverse opinions on public issues. They develop practicable solutions to societal problems.*

*This is a worthy contribution to our democratic life. Yet, it is not enough. The compromise can be the lowest common denominator for a majority that ignores the rights and needs of a minority. Focus on what is deemed realistically possible can result in avoiding complex problems whose solution would be difficult to achieve. Restricting attention on what conventional wisdom considers possible limits our sights and inhibits breakthroughs.*

*It is, but it is more. In a democracy, politics is also the art of the potential.*

Negative campaigning that has become so commonplace in recent years is an expression of the politics of fear.....

For candidates facing an opponent who uses negative campaign ads on TV, I offer the following counter-ad. It's a technique my daughters learned in elementary school.

*Scene one. Two eight-year old boys in a schoolyard.*

First boy: You're a stinkeroo and a mealy-mouth mushhead!

Second boy: Ha! I'm rubber, you're glue. The bad things you say about me bounce off and stick on you!

*Scene two. The two candidates in cartoon style.*

Your opponent: (Saying something nasty about you.)

*Key words appear on screen.*

You: I'm rubber, you're glue. The bad things you say about me bounce off and stick on you.

*The key words bounce off you and stick on him.*

Narrator: (Citing some action or speech by your opponent or his/her appointees that do what he/she has accused you of.)

If as a candidate you are in a debate with an opponent who is very abusive, you can use a method suggested by (Buddha?).

(To audience). Friends, you have heard my opponent unleash a scurrilous attack against me. You may wonder how I'm going to respond.

I simply want to ask him [her] a question. (Name of opponent), if you offer me a gift and I don't accept it, to whom does the gift belong? Obviously the gift still belongs to you. Likewise with your abuse, I don't accept it. You may keep it for yourself.

And if your audience is appreciative of a more earthy approach, you can add:

(To audience). Let me put it another way. It's like spitting into the wind. The spittle

*blows back into your own face. (To opponent). That's the way it is with your abusive words. People in this state who insist upon fairness and friendly debate will blow your abuse right back on you. (Pulling out a handkerchief). And to show you that I have no ill-feelings, I offer you my handkerchief to wipe it off.*

*Voters can press candidates to cease their negative campaigning. Whenever a negative ad appears on television and radio and in newspapers, you should write the candidate in protest. Such letters will be most influential if they come from the candidate's supports or supposed constituency, but anyone can write. Let me offer you some samples.*

*Dear Senator:*

*I saw your ad on television tonight where pair of white hands were crumpling a job rejection letter. The narrator told us that the job went unfairly to a black person and that your opponent favors taking jobs from deserving whites and giving them to undeserving blacks.*

*Your appeal is racism, pure and simple. As one who has voted for you twice previously because of you want to cut the federal deficit, I deplore this racist approach. I urge you to cease this kind of negative campaign and to focus on really important issues, such as getting more jobs for everybody in our state.*

*Yours truly,  
Charlotte Piedmont*

*Dear Sir:*

*As a life-long Republican, I'm appalled at your TV ad that suggests that your opponent willingly lets black murderers out of prison so that they can rape white women. You and I both know that it's not true. This appeal to racist fears should have no place in the party of Abraham Lincoln.*

*With best regards,  
Herbert Alfred Wendell, III*

*Dear Governor:*

*Your TV ad that indicates your opponent will severely cut social security benefits has my 80-year old aunt very upset. Her only income comes from social security, so her fears are easily aroused. However, the Republicans support a strong social security system as much as we Democrats. So please stop causing the old folks needless anxiety.*

Sincerely,  
Willie Franklin

*In sum, many politicians will continue negative campaigning as long as they believe it picks up more votes than it loses. We need to let them know that we find this style repulsive. We need to insist that they accentuate the positive and eliminate the negative.*



### PART III. THREE PATRIOTIC ODES

#### .31 Pledge of Allegiance

My fellow Americans. Vividly in our memory is Edward Everett Hale's fictional account of *The Man Without A Country* (1863).<sup>1</sup> After Army Lieutenant Philip Nolan is convicted at a trial by court-martial, he cries out in exasperation, "Damn the United States! I wish I may never hear of the United States again!" He gets his wish as the presiding officer sentences him to sail aboard ships for the rest of his life, never again to see or hear of his country.

As the years pass by Nolan seems to take his fate with equanimity until one day he reads the *Lay of the Last Minstrel* by Sir Walter Scott. The crushing blow is this passage:

Breathes there a man, with soul so dead,  
Who never to himself hath said,  
    This is my own, my native land!  
Whose heart hath ne'er within him burn'd,  
As home his footsteps he hath turn'd  
    From wandering on a foreign strand!

This feeling for one's native land is natural. It goes with love of family and hometown. It is the foundation of patriotism. The feeling is an asset to a nation as long as it is kept in perspective, as long as love for one's own country doesn't occur at the expense of other lands.

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For the American patriot the "Pledge of Allegiance" conveys this feeling. First written in 1892 and expanded in 1923-24 and 1954, the "Pledge" in its deepest meaning affirms basic American principles and expresses a genuine love of country without threatening harm to other nations. Reflect on the words.

I pledge allegiance to the flag of the United States of America

Flags have long been flown by nations and city-states, kings and emperors, fiefdoms and warrior tribes. The flag serves as a symbol, a visual representation of the nation or kingdom. Led into battle,

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<sup>1</sup> Edward Everett Hale, "The Man Without a Country" in *The American Tradition*, edited by Louis B. Wright and H.T. Swedenberg, Jr. New York: F.S. Crofts & Co., 1945. pp.570-588.

it becomes a rallying point for combatants. Wrapped around the casket of a deceased soldier or political leader, it shows honor and respect. Carried in parades and displayed in public places, it evokes devotion and loyalty.

The flag's importance is not in its design, its color, the material of which it is made, not even in the manner of display, but rather in what it symbolizes. We pledge our allegiance not to a piece of cloth but rather to the nation, to the United States of America.

Almost too easily we say "United States", virtually as one word. But if we enter our historical memory, we recall the struggle for unity among the American colonies. It occurred first through the two Continental Congresses, then the weak Confederation of States, until finally the Federal Union was formed. Individual states chose freely to unite. "E pluribus unum" became the national motto. That is, "out of many, one". The "many" still existed, but they were united. The United States of America. Emphasize "united".

We also remember the decades-long struggle to keep the Union whole. We call to mind the agonizing debate over whether one nation could be half-slave, half-free, and the wrenching, bloody Civil War. We recall the Reconstruction era when national supremacy asserted itself in the South, then replaced by a robust states-rights movement that resisted application of the U.S. constitution's protection of human rights. Fresh in our memory is the civil rights movement of the 1950s and '60s that culminated in assertion of federal authority over state laws on voting rights, access to public accommodations, and other basic rights.

Today any tension between the states and the national government is contained with bonds of fundamental unity that permits amicable resolution. Alexis de Tocqueville's descriptions of the 1830s still applies, that the American citizen is a member of "two distinct social structures, connected, and, as it were, encased, one within the other."<sup>2</sup> This is the United States to which we pledge our allegiance.

and to the Republic for which it stands

A republic is a representative form of government. Public policy decisions are made by representatives of the people. This contrasts with direct democracy in which the people vote on every issue. A republic is the opposite of monarchy or dictatorship in which the people have no voice.

The members of the Constitutional Convention favored representative democracy for two reasons. First, they were distrustful of the people's common passions, which might adversely affect the rights of others. Second, they recognized that the representative form could serve a wider territory

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<sup>2</sup> Alexis de Tocqueville, *Democracy in America*. A.S. Barnes & Co., n.d. pp. 166-7.

*and more citizens than direct democracy.*

*Whatever their reasons, this is the form to which we pledge our allegiance. In doing so we are making a commitment to participate in the processes by which we the people give our consent.<sup>3</sup> Public officials who make this pledge are making a commitment to carry out the responsibilities of office in a trustworthy manner.<sup>4</sup>*

*In this sense, the non-voter and the derelict official are violating their pledge.*

*one Nation*

*We are one nation. Not two nations, one black and one white. Not two nations, one rich and one poor. Not two nations, one Democrat and one Republican. Not several nations, Protestant, Catholic, Jewish, Muslim, agnostic.*

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<sup>3</sup> *For more on consent of the governed, see chapter .21.*

<sup>4</sup> *For more on "Leadership in a Representative Democracy", see chapter .22.*

To be sure, we are a diverse people. We fill numerous occupations, proudly claim many ethnic backgrounds, worship in different ways, have varied life styles, and have rich variation of consumer preferences. We honor this diversity.<sup>5</sup> Indeed, those who push for uniformity of opinion don't understand the true nature of American life.

But within this diversity, we are committed to being one nation that assures freedom for everyone and is respectful of individual and group differences.

*under God*

The U.S. Constitution guarantees freedom of religious belief and worship. It prohibits establishment of an official religion. This freedom allows us to describe God in our own manner and even to deny that God exists. God's existence, though, is not dependent upon our belief or creedal formulation.

Within this scope of religious freedom, we acknowledge in the pledge of allegiance that our nation is under God's domain. This is true for all humankind and for all nations, whether or not they admit it. There is one Eternal God for the whole Universe.

We are all equally endowed by the Creator God with inalienable rights of life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness. So states the Declaration of Independence. Americans who deny the rights of others are breaking their pledge to "one Nation under God".

In my personal belief I accept the Quaker teaching that there is "that of God" in everyone. When we harm another human, we injure something of God. As Jesus explained, "God makes the sun rise on the evil and on the good, and sends rain on the just and on the unjust." Although God calls evil doers to repentance, every human being is precious for God. When I pledge my allegiance to "one Nation under God", I incorporate my belief in the worth and dignity of every person and insist that the nation show this respect for everyone.

*indivisible*

Again we affirm our fundamental unity, asserting that our nation cannot be split asunder. This does not disavow our diversity, nor thus it nullify the federal principle through which national, state, and local governments all have important roles to play. Rather it states that we will not allow our diversity to tear us apart.

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<sup>5</sup> See chapter .12.

To remain indivisible, we continuously seek to enhance our sense of community as a nation. This is the "we feeling" that comes from shared ideals and aspiration and is achieved by working together for common objectives. It provides a national sense of purpose that respects individual differences and finds a place for them in common endeavors.<sup>6</sup>

Stated another way, we make a commitment to wholeness. The whole is composed of many parts. When one part is ailing or disabled, the whole is weakened. Retaining our indivisibility requires us to strengthen the weak elements of our society, to remedy deficiencies that prevent us from achieving wholeness.

*with liberty and justice for all*

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<sup>6</sup> For more on sense of community, see chapter .11.

Our "Pledge of Allegiance" commits us to seek both liberty and justice for everyone. It is well that they are paired. As both air and water are essential for human life so also both liberty and justice are essential for a flourishing democracy.

For America's founders, living under the restrictions of British rule, liberty was so precious that Patrick Henry could proclaim, "give me liberty or give me death!" The Declaration of Independence specified liberty as one of the three inalienable rights. The Preamble to the U.S. Constitution stated that one of six fundamental purposes was to "secure the Blessings of Liberty to ourselves and our Posterity."

The original Constitution contained varied provisions to protect liberty, such as prohibiting a religious test for office, assuring the writ of habeas corpus and trial by jury, and prohibiting ex post facto laws. Quickly the first ten Amendments added others: freedom of speech and of the press, free exercise of religion, right to peaceably assemble and to petition the government for redress of grievances, protection from unreasonable searches and seizures, protection against self-incrimination, prohibiting the national government from depriving persons of life, liberty, or property without due process of the law, right to a speedy and public trial, right to have assistance of counsel in defense, prohibition of excessive bail and fines and cruel and unusual punishments. Post-Civil War amendments outlawed slavery and applied the due process clause to the states.

This is the bundle of liberties we commit ourselves to in the "Pledge of Allegiance". When we worry that alleged criminals and other persons we don't like might be taking advantage of these constitutional rights, we should remember that we have taken the pledge of liberty for all.

And likewise justice for all. Another of the six purposes of the U.S. Constitution, as specified in the Preamble, is to "establish Justice." As *The Federalist* affirmed, "Justice is the end of government. It is the end of civil society."<sup>7</sup>

Holding this belief, the founders gave considerable attention to constitutional provisions assuring a system of legal justice. They created an independent judiciary. Many of the basic rights enumerated in the Constitution and its Amendments relate to the judicial system. It is no wonder that the portico of the Supreme Court of the United States displays the credo, "Equal Justice Under Law."

Justice also has social and economic dimensions. The Declaration places "life" as the first of three inalienable rights that government is founded to secure. The Preamble states that to "promote the general Welfare" is a basic purpose of the Constitution. Instructed by these fundamental principles,

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<sup>7</sup> *The Federalist*. No. 50. p. 340

*we use our governments to be instruments for remedying social injustices, for assuring that all people have adequate food, shelter, and medical care. We use the taxing powers of government to achieve a degree of redistribution of wealth by basing taxes on the ability to pay and by directing services to persons and communities in greatest need.<sup>8</sup> We reaffirm this commitment when we pledge to support "justice for all."*

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<sup>8</sup> For more on this matter, see chapter .13 on "Basic Fairness."

So we see, the "Pledge of Allegiance" is very people oriented. It promises "liberty and justice for all". It insists that we are one people indivisible. As a Republic, the people give their consent to those who represent them in running the government. Being "one Nation under God", we acknowledge that God reigns over all of us.

Knowing that God is the Lord of the Universe, we realize that God reigns over other nations as well. From this knowledge it is a natural step for us to assert that "liberty and justice for all" is an aspiration of all humankind.

Thus, we can extend our love of native land to love for all of Earth and its people. As common inhabitants of this planet, we share a common destiny. Rather than rallying around the flag to war against other Earth dwellers, we can perceive of our flag as a symbol of our commitment to global unity, indivisibility, liberty, and justice.<sup>9</sup> We can sing:

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<sup>9</sup> See chapter .41 on "Internationalism without Militarism".



*This is my song, O God of all the nations,  
a song of peace for lands afar and mine.  
This is my home, the country where my heart is;  
here are my hopes, my dreams, my holy shrine;  
but other hearts in other lands are beating  
with hopes and dreams as true and high as mine.*

*My country's skies are bluer than the oceans,  
and sunlight beams on cloverleaf and pine;  
but other lands have sunlight too, and clover,  
and skies are everywhere as blue as mine.  
O hear my song, thou God of all the nations,  
a song of peace for their land and for mine.<sup>10</sup>*

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<sup>10</sup> Lloyd Stone, 1934.

### *,32 America the Beautiful*

*Yes, why can't we have patriotism as envisioned in the words of "America, the Beautiful"? Let patriots love the spacious skies, the amber waves of grain, the purple mountain majesties, the fruited plain. Let patriots strive to create brotherhood (and sisterhood) from sea to shining sea, to work for alabaster cities gleaming undimmed by human tears. And let us realize that we can also rejoice in other nations' spacious skies and grieve when their fruited plains suffer from drought. Let all patriots realize that we need God's grace and God's guidance to mend our flaws, to confirm our souls in self-control, our liberty in law. That is true patriotism.*

.33 Lift Every Voice and Sing

I

*Lift ev'ry voice and sing,  
Till earth and heaven ring,  
Ring with the harmonies of liberty;*

*Let our rejoicing rise  
High as the list'ning skies,  
Let it resound loud as the rolling sea.*

*Sing a song full of the faith  
That the dark past has taught us;*

*Sing a song full of the hope  
That the present has brought us;*

*Facing the rising sun  
Of our new day begun,  
Let us march on  
Till victory is won.*

II

*Stony the road we trod,  
Bitter the chast'ning rod,  
Felt in the days when hope unborn had died;*

*Yet, with a steady beat,  
Have not our weary feet  
Come to the place for which our fathers sighed?*

*We have come over a way  
That with tears has been watered;*

*We have come, treading our path  
Through the blood of the slaughtered;*

*Out from the gloomy past,  
Till now we stand at last  
Where the white gleam  
Of our bright star is cast.*

III

*God of our weary years,  
God of our silent tears,  
Thou has brought us thus far on the way;*

*Thou who hast by thy might  
Led us into the light,  
Keep us forever in the path, we pray.*

*Lest our feet stray from the places,  
Our God, where we met thee;*

*Lest, our hearts drunk with the wine  
Of the world, we forget thee;*

*Shadowed beneath thy hand  
May we forever stand,  
True to our God,  
True to our native land.*

## *.41 Internationalism without Militarism*

### *True Strength [FAREWELL.04]*

*To those who preach patriotism based on "peace through strength" and who advocate an awesome nuclear arsenal as the means, let us ask: what is true strength in the long-range perspective, transcending even nations? Who was stronger, Martin Luther King, Jr. and his unarmed followers or Sheriff "Bull" Connor with his police dogs, and other suppressors of black freedom? Who was stronger, Mahatma Gandhi or the British Raj? Who was ultimately stronger, Adolf Hitler or Pastor Martin Niemoeller whom he imprisoned, Pastor Dietrich Bonhoeffer whom he executed, and other resisters of Nazism? Who was stronger, the baby Jesus lying in a manger or King Herod, who out of fear and jealousy had all the baby boys in Bethlehem murdered? Who was stronger, Jesus on the cross praying, "Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do" or Pontius Pilate, wielder of Roman power, who, frightened by his wife's dream, washed his hands of the death of him whose execution he ordered?*

*What is true strength to go with true patriotism? True strength is commitment to freedom, democracy, justice, individual opportunity, and social responsibility, to just means for achieving these ends. In a strange irony, reliance upon nuclear weapons represents weakness rather than strength, a reliance unnecessary for any self-confident nation that has a clear understanding of means and ends. Because the end is contained in the means, as is the oak tree in the acorn, true peace (compared to a fearful absence of war) and justice cannot be achieved by the use or threat of nuclear weapons. Accordingly, the wise and patriotic course is to abolish them.*

### *Our Fundamental Nature [FAREWELL.09]*

*The future is in our hands. Although we cannot amend the past, we need not be restricted by our historical inheritance forever and ever. We have it in our power to transform Cold War insecurity into peaceful common security.*

*Where to begin? Well, let's first step back and see who we are and who our adversaries are -- deep down within, not merely on the surface. As we do, we can perceive that we have a common humanity.*

*If we look at the people of the Soviet Union -- for many years our primary adversary, we should acknowledge that they are genuine flesh-and-blood human beings. Real people, just like us. They breathe, eat, and sleep, just like we do. They reproduce in the same manner. Every member of the human species bleeds when cut. That blood is one of four types (A,B, AB, or O) and either Rh-positive or negative, not distinguishable by race or nationality. Everyone will die. We all have one God, who is the same for all of us, regardless of our belief or disbelief (for God's nature is determined by God, not our belief).*

[Section on human nature in SENSE.15]

Yes, all humans have fundamental similarities physiologically and in their basic nature. At the same time each of us is an individual who varies in some ways from every other human being. We also have special ties binding us to a particular segment, such as family, clan, ethnic group, nationality. This segmentation is the basis for many of the adversarial relations with "others" whom we confront. These "others" are different from us, but they also have similarities. If we could understand this better, we could then search for mutual interests. Doing so could take the raw edge off our conflicts.

If we apply this approach to the Soviet Union, we may discover that we have a great bond of commonality with the Soviet people even if we don't like their political and economic system and disapprove of actions taken by their leaders.

## *.42 For Our Children and Our Grandchildren*

*My fellow Americans. And may I add, my fellow grandparents, and parents of growing children, aunts, and uncles. There is nothing like the birth of a child to make a person future oriented. At least that was my feeling with the birth of my first grandchild in April 1988. Holding the new-born baby in my arms, a fragment of a hymn tune came to mind:*

*In hope that sends a shining ray  
Far down the future's broadening way. <sup>1</sup>*

*Through my grandson, Matthew, I can look ahead 70 to 80 years, far beyond my own life time. Think of his dates. Born in 1988. In the year 2006 he will graduate from high school and either go to work or enter college. If to college and perhaps to graduate school, he will finish in 2012 then enters the workforce. If works until he is 70, he will retire in 2058.*

*You can do the same for your grandchildren, children, nieces, and nephews. This projection makes us think about the world we are creating for him and his generation. The planet Earth will be theirs during the first half of the 21st century. What heritage are we leaving in the United States and elsewhere around the globe?*

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*I have great hopes, but also apprehensions. I can see gathering clouds that will dull the future's shining ray and will narrow rather than broaden the way. Anger rises within me when I think how the selfishness of our generation, especially the last dozen years has mortgaged the future of this newest generation.*

*Because of an ill-advised tax cut in 1981 and bloated military expenditures, our federal debt doubled between 1981 and 198x. The tax cut was based upon fallacious "supply side" economics that claimed a burst of economic activity would so increase the tax base that additional revenue would eliminate the federal deficit by 1985. What a cruel joke!*

*In the name of national security, the defense budget doubled in xx years, beginning in 197x toward the end of the Carter administration through 198x. This occurred because of fear of a Soviet Union military buildup. The result was two muscle-bound heavyweights, claiming to be superpowers but were more like a pair of corpulent Sumo wrestlers "doin' the dozens". Because the Soviet economic system was the weaker, the Soviet economy crashed first. The United States avoided deep disaster by*

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<sup>1</sup> From "O Master, Let Me Walk with Thee" by

*papering over its fiscal imbalance with deficit financing and by neglecting urgent domestic needs.*

*And what problems of neglect we have left unattended. [children, homeless, housing, health]*

*Big oil price increases by Middle East oil producers in 1973 and 1974 caused a beginning of serious energy conservation measures in the United States and efforts to harness more renewable energy. But these were put aside in the profigate '80s. With the American economy dependent upon Middle East oil, a second-rate dictator, Saddam Hussein, drew us into war in the Persian Gulf.*

*Finally the generals got to use the weapons they designed to fight the Soviet Union and quickly vanquish a nation one-fourteenth our size. American euphoria over victory and relief that very few Americans died in combat casualties is more than counterbalanced by a realization that as many as 200,000 Iraqis died in war-related deaths, including a large portion of children, women, and elderly. And still we have no comprehensive energy conservation program.*

*During the 1980s curtailment of federal regulations to contain greedy excesses of banking institutions and corporations led to enormous failure among savings and loan associations. Rather than our generation taking responsibility for our shortcomings, we are financing the bailout through borrowing. The total bailout cost of \$xxx billion or more is a debt that Matthew's generation will have to pay off.*

*From 1789 when George Washington was inaugurated as our first president through 1980 the U.S. debt accumulated to \$ billion. In the next dozen years it increased percent to a total of \$ trillion. That's the "gift" we are giving our children and grandchildren. That's why I'm angry on my grandson's behalf.*

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*When Adlai Stevenson accepted the Democratic nomination for the presidency the early morning hours of July 26, 1952, he said:*

*Let's talk sense to the American people. Let's tell them the truth, that there are no gains without pains.<sup>2</sup>*

*Stevenson had the misfortune to run against a popular hero, General Dwight D. Eisenhower, at a time when 20 years of Democratic rule had accumulated some liabilities that created a mood for change.*

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<sup>2</sup> *Major Campaign Speeches of Adlai E. Stevenson, 1952.* New York: Random House, 1953.  
p. 10



*When Walter Mondale accepted the Democratic nomination on July xx, 1984, he said:  
[on necessity of a tax increase]*

*For his honesty in his campaign against widely popular President Ronald Reagan, running on a slogan of "It's a New Morning in America" (?), Mondale was soundly defeated at the polls.*

*The lesson that President George Bush and the Democratic leadership in Congress*

### *.43 Politics of Hopes and Fears*

#### *Comparison of Hopes, Fears*

*To make this discovery for yourself, let me suggest a four-part exercise.*

*First, before reading any further, take a sheet of paper and pen or pencil and make two columns. In one write the greatest hopes of your life and in the other your greatest fears.*

*Second, try to imagine a Russian who is similar to yourself in age, sex, occupation, place of residence (rural, small town, suburban, city), and other common characteristics. Even though the Soviet Union contains numerous nationalities, I suggest Russian because they are politically dominant. Give your counterpart a name: Ivan, Natasha, or some other name. In your mind think of his or her life story, compared with your own.*

*For instance, if you are in your sixties or older, remember what it was like when Nazi Germany waged war throughout Europe, your own involvement in World War II, the postwar period, and the years since. What did the Russian go through in those same years?*

*If you were born in the fifteen years after the Second World War, then the Cold War between the United States and the Soviet Union was in full force when you first became aware of international relations. In your lifetime you have seen the civil rights revolution in the United States, national leaders assassinated, the divisive Vietnam War, rapid rise of oil prices, inflation, detente, return to US/Soviet hostilities, a recent relaxation of tensions. What has a Russian of your age gone through?*

*If you are college age, you were born in a tumultuous period of the late sixties and early seventies, but you were not aware of public events until the Vietnam War was over. Already you have lived through several recessions and economic recoveries. You have noticed the political mood of the nation changing. What about your Russian counterpart? How many changes of leadership has she or he experienced? What do you think of your job future? What are the Russian's prospects?*

*Beyond this political slant, what is it like to be a Russian of age, occupation, and family status similar to yours in everyday life events? Shopping for food and clothing. Going to school. Work. Getting around the city or countryside. Dealing with bureaucracy. Recreation. Entertainment. Courting and marrying. Birthing babies and caring for young children. Having friends and parents die. Looking ahead to one's own death. Sure, there are lots of differences. But aren't there also many things the same?*

*Third, take another sheet of paper, make two columns, in one write what you think are your Russian counterpart's greatest hopes and in the other his or her greatest fears.*

Fourth, compare your hopes and fears with the Russian's. Which are the same? Which are different? If we are truly honest in this comparison, we will discover that in our common humanity we have many similar interests and concerns, far more than our differences.

Among the hopes you listed, there may have been some of the following: Enough to eat. Adequate shelter and clothing. Personal safety. Sanitary water, clean air. Perhaps wealth, social status, and the symbols of such status (possibly you disguise this desire rather than stating it openly). Good friends. Successful courtship (if you're at that place in life). A loving spouse (in the future, or for your present spouse to be more loving). Children and a happy family life. A good future for your children and grandchildren. End of racial, ethnic, religious, and sexual discrimination. Better personal communication within your family, at work. Good health, lack of pain. Death (if you're willing to face it) to come after a long, happy life, to be painless and not a burden to your family. An afterlife (if you so believe).

Your favorite team to win the championship. Success in school. Success in business, profession, trade, or occupation. Better TV programs. Retention of incumbents holding positions of authority in government, political party, church, club, or other organization -- or their replacement. To win an election yourself. A nice vacation with good weather. If a farmer or a gardener, the right combination of rain and sunshine. The person in the next apartment to be less noisy (and maybe less nose-y). The neighbors next door to keep their dog under control. Better treatment from the bureaucracy (of government, utilities, department stores, motels, hospitals, church structure). Lessening of restrictions on personal freedom. Restoration of lost independence. Never experience a nuclear war or any other kind of attack on your homeland. Have other nations quit threatening us and our interests.

Your list will undoubtedly vary from this one in some respects because we each express our hopes differently. What about the listing of hopes you made for your Russian counterpart? For me, the list would be virtually identical with my own. Sure, there will be different emphases arising from cultural factors, economic interests, and political differences. But, sharing a common humanity, the hopes of Russians and ourselves will have many, many similarities.

Likewise our fears. Some of them are the converse of our hopes: Fear of personal injury, verbal abuse, theft of property, death. Fear of unruly neighbors and disorderly youth. Loss of status. Loss of job, income, and home. Nuclear attack. Invasion.

Other fears are matters of psychological discomfort: Fear of change and uncertainty. Fear of differences we don't like or understand. Fear of alien ideas. Fear of other social, political, and economic systems. Fear of losing first place, or fear of being considered second rate. Fear of being replaced (if you're in a position of authority).

*These fears, which we have in common with the Soviet people, are natural and inevitable. Many of them arise from our instinct for survival, from our desire to avoid discomfort, from the self-seeking part of our nature. Fears can scarcely be avoided. What matters is what we do about them and whether we let other people exploit our fears in a manner harmful to our long-range interests.*

*If after going through this process, we begin to perceive the Soviet people as human beings like ourselves, we are building a foundation for reconciliation. Yet, this doesn't take away from the fact that our two nations -- the United States and the Soviet Union -- are in conflict in a variety of ways in many parts of the globe. Perhaps then we conclude that the Soviet people may be all right but not their rulers, those who control the instruments of power.*

#### .44 Dealing with Adversaries

What about Their Leaders? [FAREWELL.09]

Certainly it is the Soviet leaders with whom those who represent the United States must deal. It is they, and their predecessors, who have developed and maintained the system. It is they who have the greatest stake in preserving the present regime, in keeping their position of power. It is they who will decide whether the Soviet Union will work out a nuclear arms agreement with the United States, whether the Cold War will continue, or whether armed conflict will occur.

Soviet leaders are human beings. Real people. They have all the traits previously discussed. Because the path to the top of most organizations requires ambition, aggressiveness, and a strong ego, they are likely to possess these traits to a much greater extent than the average citizen. (And so do most of our leaders). But, like most of us, they never feel wholly secure.

In the Cold War era since the end of World War II we have confronted three generations of Soviet leaders. First, Joseph Stalin and his henchmen. Stalin rivaled Adolph Hitler in brutality and drive for power. In the 1930s he caused the death of millions of his own countrymen, perpetrated through purges of political opponents and genocide by starvation in the Ukraine and elsewhere in forcing collectivization of the land. But Stalin was also venerated within the Soviet Union as a great national leader in turning back the German invaders and saving Mother Russia. After the war he extended the harsh features of his regime to satellite states in Eastern Europe.

Next came men who arose in the party structure under Stalin. They survived purges, may have participated in some of the brutality, but came to recognize the excesses. Nikita Khrushchev especially led a de-Stalinization campaign. Whereas Stalin was content with expansion into contiguous territory (though hoping for Communist parties to gain control further into Western Europe), this new group embarked upon efforts to gain allies and create Communist states in the Third World. They suppressed dissent at home (as Stalin had done previously) and used force to overturn reform initiatives and citizen revolts in the satellite nations. They brought the Soviet nuclear arsenal to parity with the United States, but they were also willing to negotiate arms control agreements.

Mikhail Gorbachev and his appointees represent a new generation of Soviet leaders. Most of them were teenagers during World War II, so have vivid memories of battles, destruction, suffering, and the fight to save the nation. They were coming of age at the end of the Stalin era and were starting to climb party ranks during the de-Stalinization period. They have inherited all the Cold War stereotypes about their chief adversary, the United States, but they seem to be less dogmatically ideological than earlier leaders. They have also inherited a stodgy, bureaucracy-laden economic system. Andrei Gromyko's remark that Gorbachev has a "nice smile and iron teeth" indicates toughness and determination, combined with a more appealing public personality than his three

*predecessors. He is more open to new ways than any of them, but not at the expense of fundamental Soviet interest, as he perceives it.*

*A good sampling of Gorbachev's thinking is contained in his book, *Perestroika: New Thinking for Our Country and the World*, written, he indicated, "to address directly the peoples of the USSR, the United States, indeed every country" (1987:9).*

## WHAT? LOVE MY ENEMY?

Sermon for Araby United Methodist Church

June 13, 1993

Old Testament reading: Leviticus 19:17-18

Epistle reading: Romans 12:14-21

Gospel reading: Matthew 5:43-48 -- from the Sermon on the Mount.

"You have heard that it was said,

'You shall love your neighbor and hate your enemy.'

But I say to you,

Love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you

so that you may be children of your Father in heaven;

For he makes his sun rise on the evil and on the good,

and sends rain on the righteous and on the unrighteous.

For if you love those who love you, what reward do you have?

Do not even the tax collectors do the same?

And if you greet only your brothers and sisters,

what more are you doing than others?

Do not even the Gentiles do the same?

Be perfect, therefore,

as your heavenly Father is perfect."

Books on "preaching on hard sayings." Some are hard to understand, others are hard to do.

"Love your enemies" is one of those. Yet amazingly practical both in personal relationships and in relationships between social groups and nations.

"You have heard that it was said,

'You shall love your neighbor and hate your enemy.'"

First part we heard in Old Testament reading from Leviticus:

"You shall love your neighbor as yourself."

Second part -- "hate your enemy" -- not found in Old Testament. People just assumed that it as natural and acceptable. After all, they thought, what's an enemy for if you can't hate him or her.

Jesus taught otherwise: "Love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you."

Interestingly no one asked, "Who is my enemy" as happened when the lawyer asked Jesus, "Who is my neighbor?" Jesus answered with the story of the Good Samaritan. The listeners didn't interrupt the Sermon on the Mount because they knew who their enemies were without asking: Gentiles, especially the occupying Romans; tax collectors, who were agents of Rome; nearby Samaritans (considered heretics and half-breeds). Also their own personal enemies.

They were like Ko Ko, the Lord High Executioner, in Gilbert and Sullivan's operetta, "Mikado."

The people wonder how he'll perform the job, where he'll find victims to execute. He pompously replies,

"There will be no difficulty in finding plenty of people whose loss will be a distinct gain to society at large."

Then Ko Ko sings in a humorous vein:

"As some day it may happen  
that a victim must be found,  
I've got a little list.  
I've got a little list.  
Of society offenders  
Who might well be underground  
They never would be missed.  
They never would be missed."

He proceeds to name them, such as

"People with flabby hands and irritating laughs,  
All funny fellows, comic men, and clowns of private life,  
Apologetic statesmen of a compromising kind."

And lots more, then concludes:

"But the task of filling up the blanks I'd rather leave to you."

And truth to tell, most of us carry in our heads a list of persons who "never would be missed." To be sure, many of have over the years taken Jesus' teaching to love our enemies. Yet, while we may have succeed in reducing hateful feelings toward supposed enemies, most of us confront adversaries at work or in the community. We have family rivals. We deal with people who annoy us, sometimes even within the church and also in other settings.

It's like Martin Luther wrote:

"We live in the world among people who sorely vex us  
and give us occasion for impatience, anger, revenge."

Going beyond personal relations, we might harbor animosity toward a particular racial or ethnic group. Or another nation. Or its leader. An enemy of the United States of America.

In recent years successive presidents have tried to stir up hatred for Ayatollah Khomeini in Iran, Gaddafi in Libya, Saddam Hussein in Iraq. Yet, these feelings are mild when compared to how we felt toward Hitler during World War II. Nazi swastika still makes my stomach churn.

Ridicule is one of strongest expressions of hatred. Song with chorus, "I'll say, `Heil! Pthh! Heil! Pthh!" right in the fuhrer's face." My brother breaking the base drum. So intense was the hatred.

A.J. Muste at a Friends meeting, "If I can't love Hitler, I can't love anybody." Then sat down. Maybe exaggeration. Maybe not. Try it yourselves. Take someone from your list or enemies, adversaries, rivals, or persons who annoy you. Say to yourself, "If I can't love" -- you supply the name -- "I can't love anybody."

We may feel that this too strong a test for love. But did not Jesus insist:

"Love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you



so that you may be children of your Father in heaven;  
For he makes his sun rise on the evil and on the good,  
and sends rain on the righteous and on the unrighteous."

Jesus concluded:

*Be perfect, therefore, as your heavenly Father is perfect."*

Now that's another hard part of this teaching. We can believe that God is perfect, but most of us realize that we can't be perfect. Of course, some think they are, like the fellow who said, "I used to be conceited, but now I'm perfect." The rest of us, though, in our heart of hearts, realize that we have some flaws.

What is this perfection that Jesus is talking about? We can think of it as "perfect" in the sense of completeness, wholeness. Like a circle is complete. In this manner, we can think of love as flowing in a circle.

According to the First Letter of John,

*"We love because God first loved us."*

God also loves our enemies. As Jesus said, God gives them daylight every morning and provides rain for their gardens.

First John continues:

*"If any one says, 'I love God,' and hates his brother, he is a liar; for he who does not his love his brother whom he has seen, cannot love God whom he has not seen."*

Thus, the love of God which flows to us must flow on through us to our brothers and sisters and even to our enemies. In that way we complete the circle. God loves our brother, our sister, our enemy. And so do we. We have responsibility for making the circle perfectly round.

This is an awesome responsibility but no less that what Jesus teaches us to do. So how do we do it? Let me suggest five ways to go about it.

First, as we are sons and daughters of God, so also are our enemies. Aren't they? As the Quakers say, "There is that of God in everyone." That being the case, we can appreciate the insight offered by Martin Luther King, Jr., who wrote:

*"We must recognize that evil deed of the enemy-neighbor, the thing that hurts, never quite expresses all that he is.*

*An element of goodness may be found even in our worst enemy."*

Search for the good in our enemies, relate to that goodness, bring out the best.

Application to whole groups, entire nations. Good Samaritan story. The enemy became the neighbor.

Second, if we are to love our enemies, we must understand them better. Native American saying, "You cannot know another person unless you walk in his moccasins." Not literally but by projection.

Write an imaginary biography of someone on your enemy or adversary list. What makes them tick? Why are they as they are?. Helps with understanding. May not take away disagreements, but enables you to be initiator of greater love. Your part in strengthening the circle of love.

Application in Cuban missile crisis (1962). (Explain.) Robert Kennedy:

"The final lesson of the Cuban missile crisis is the importance of placing ourselves in other country's shoes. During the crisis, President Kennedy spent more time trying to determine the effect of a particular course of action on Khrushchev or the Russians than on any other phase of what he was doing."

Third, be able to forgive. Also in the Sermon on the Mount, the Lord's Prayer. The one part that Jesus felt necessary to explain was the forgiveness passage, telling them:

"But if you forgive men their trespasses,  
your heavenly Father will also forgive you;  
But if you do not forgive men their trespasses,  
neither will your Father forgive you.

When I quoted Martin Luther earlier, it was from his exposition of this petition. He pointed out that it "is concerned with our poor, miserable conduct." It is we who are angry and vengeful. As Luther explained,

"in case anyone insists on his own goodness and despises others,...  
let him look into himself when this petition confronts him.

He will find that he is no better than others  
and that in the presence of God  
everyone must duck his head  
and come into the joy of forgiveness  
only through the low door of humility."

What a marvelous metaphor! Even short people must duck!

Some how-to advice is offered in another section of the Sermon on the Mount, which Carlee mentioned several weeks ago.

"If you are offering your gift at the altar,  
and there remember that your brother has something against you,  
Leave your gift before the altar and go;  
First be reconciled to your brother,  
and then come and offer your gift.

For us, before communion. My two experiences. Effect is on me. If my brother says "I'm sorry" and changes his ways, that's a bonus. But I can control only myself, offer love and forgiveness, do my part to make the circle of love complete.

Applied in family life. For instance, some one has said, you can't be a good parent until you forgive your own parents.

Possible applicability to ethnic struggles around the globe. Grievances decades, sometimes centuries, old. Bury them. Forgiveness as start of reconciliation.

Martin Luther King:

"Forgiveness does not mean ignoring what has been done  
or putting a false label on an evil act.  
It means, rather, that the evil act no longer remains

as a barrier to the relationship....

Forgiveness means reconciliation, a coming together again."

Still have to resolve causes of conflict, but forgiveness sets stage in a very practical way.

Fourth, (Martin Luther) King added another ingredient for dealing with one's enemy in a loving manner:

"We must not seek to defeat or humiliate the enemy  
but to win his friendship and understanding...."

Every word and deed must contribute to an understanding with the enemy  
and release those vast reservoirs of goodwill  
which have been blocked by impenetrable walls of hate."

Interestingly, Robert Kennedy used similar language in describing President John Kennedy's action during the Cuban missile crisis:

"What guided all his deliberation was an effort not to disgrace Khrushchev, humiliate the Soviet Union, not to have them feel they would have to escalate their response because their national security or national interests so committed them."

When President Kennedy received word that the Soviets would withdraw their missiles from Cuba, he immediately issued instructions that there would be no victory claim. Later the president observed:

"Every setback has the seeds of its own reprisal....We tried to make their setback in Cuba not the kind that would bring about an increase in hostility but perhaps provide for an easing of relations."

That's how the commander-in-chief of the United States, the most powerful nation on Earth, show how he could love the nation's enemy.

Fifth and last, we have the instruction of Paul, as we heard in the Epistle reading this morning:

"Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good."

Paul was giving voice to another teaching of the Sermon on the Mount when Jesus said not an eye for an eye, a tooth for a tooth, but rather do not resist the evildoer, turn the other cheek, walk the second mile.

Among the early Christians Jesus' teachings had taken hold. Paul's letter was written to Christians in Rome, the capital of the empire which was persecuting Christians in many locales. Yet, Paul could say,

"Bless those who persecute you; bless and do not curse them."

This echoes Jesus instruction to "pray for those who persecute you."

Paul also picked up on the story about the Samaritan on the road to Jericho, who found the injured Jew at the side of the road, gave him drink and food, took him to inn for care. He overcame the historic enmity between Jews and Samaritans by doing a good deed.

As Paul expressed it:

"If your enemy is hungry, feed him.  
if he is thirsty, give him drink."

And so we, too, can do good deeds to our enemies, regardless of what they do to us.

*In summation, there are five very practical ways that we can love our enemies, our adversaries, our rivals, those who annoy and vex us.*

*(1) We can recognize that there is that of God in everyone, including our enemies.*

*(2) We can seek to understand our enemies better.*

*(3) We can forgive.*

*(4) We can avoid humiliating our adversaries.*

*(5) We can overcome evil with good deeds.*

*In these ways we can help complete the circle whereby God loves us, God loves our enemies, and we love God, our neighbors, and our enemies. By our actions we make it possible for our enemies to return our love, thus making the circle even stronger. But our love doesn't depend upon our enemies loving us first. God loves us first. That's our sufficient resource for loving others.*

*As we share this love with others, including our adversaries, we become worthy to be considered true children of God.*

## PASSION FOR JUSTICE

Sermon prepared for delivery at  
Araby United Methodist Church  
May 29, 1994

Scriptures: Amos 5:8-15

James 1:22-27

Mark: 12:28-34

Today is Peace with Justice Sunday. [Explain] Last year I talked on peace -- loving our enemies. Today on justice.

**Justice is fair treatment.** Receiving what we deserve: reward and punishment. I want to emphasize **social justice: fair treatment for all social groups, elimination of unfair treatment.**

First I want to talk about some famous people who had a great passion for justice. Then I want to consider how we in this church can express our own concern for justice.

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(1) **Amos.** In the Old Testament Amos was especially concerned about justice.

**Who was Amos?** 8th century B.C. He was from Tekoa in Judah, the southern kingdom. He was called to prophesy in Israel, the northern kingdom. Jerusalem was capital of Judah. Samaria was capital of Israel; Bethel was its religious center. Like a rural resident from Alabama going through Atlanta and Washington to prophesy in New York.

*Challenged by Amaziah, the priest of Bethel, he explained:*

*"I am no prophet, nor a prophet's son;  
but am a herdsman, and a dresser of sycamore trees,  
[a kind of fig tree: puncture unripe fruit to make it edible]  
and the Lord took me from following the flock,  
and the Lord said to me, 'Go, prophesy to my people Israel.'"  
[Amos 7:14-15]*

*Amos had a strong passion for justice. His first words were:*

*"The Lord roars from Zion,  
and utters his voice from Jerusalem." [Amos 1:2]*

*"Thus says the Lord:  
For three transgression of Damascus,  
and for four, I will not revoke the punishment...  
of Gaza, Tyre, the Ammonites, Moah, Judah, Israel.*

*Like: Damascus, Brunswick, Harper's Ferry, the Frederickites, Ijamsville,  
Urbana, Araby.*

*For three transgressions and for four,  
I will not revoke the punishment.*

*Our reading provided samples of transgressions:*

*hate the one who reproves at the gate  
abhor the one who speaks the truth  
you trample on the poor  
afflict the righteous  
push aside the needy*

Yet hope:

"Seek good and not evil, that you may live....

Hate evil and love good, and establish justice in the gate.

It may be that the Lord, the God of hosts,

will be gracious to the remnant of Joseph."

[Amos 5:14-15]

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(2) **Anti-slavery.** On New Year's Day 1831 the first issue of a new anti-slavery newspaper, *The Liberator*, was published in Boston. The editor was **William Lloyd Garrison**, age 25. In his opening editorial he vividly and passionately expressed his undying enmity to slavery, ending with this warning:

I will be as harsh as truth, and as uncompromising as justice.

On this subject, I do not wish to think, or speak, or write, with moderation.

No! No!

Tell a man whose house is on fire to give a moderate alarm;

tell him to moderately rescue his wife from the hands of the ravisher;

tell the mother to gradually extricate her babe from the fire into which it has fallen; --

but urge me not to use moderation in a cause like the present.

I am in earnest -- I will not equivocate -- I will not

excuse -- I will not retreat a single inch -- AND I WILL BE HEARD.

Early in 1832 Garrison was instrumental in forming the New England

Anti-Slavery Society. The next year he helped to organize the American Anti-Slavery Society.

Lots of opposition.

In 1835 a mob in Boston dragged him from his office, tore off his clothes and would have tarred and feathered him had not some friends taken him by deception to city hall where he spent the night in jail for his own protection.

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(3) **Women's rights.** Women were leaders in the abolitionist movement. **Lucretia Coffin Mott**, a Quaker from Philadelphia, helped found the American Anti-Slavery Society in 1833. In 1840 she and **Elizabeth Cady Stanton** went to London to the World Anti-Slavery Convention. They were not allowed to participate because they were women.

Returning to the United States, they began to focus on women's right. This led to a small meeting in 1848 in Seneca Falls, New York, which was the **first woman's suffrage convention** in the United States.

Two years later **Lucy Stone** organized an even larger gathering, the **Women's Rights Convention**, held in Worcester, Massachusetts. For this occasion, Lucy Stone, who incidently retained her birth name when she was married, wrote a paraphrase on the Declaration of Independence:

"We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men and **women** are created equal."

For the grievances against King George in the Declaration, she substituted examples of unequal treatment of women in American society.



Lucy Stone toured the country lecturing on women's rights. She converted **Susan B. Anthony** and **Julia Ward Howe** to this cause. They all had a great passion for justice.

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(4) **Martin Luther King, Jr.** We all know "I Have A Dream" speech at the Lincoln Memorial in August 1963.

Ph.D. from Boston University in 1954. Became pastor of Dexter Avenue Baptist Church on September 1, 1954. Across street from Alabama State Capitol.

Montgomery bus boycott started December 5, 1955. King was chosen president Montgomery Improvement Association. Age 26.

"When I went to Montgomery as a pastor, I had not the slightest idea that I would become involved in a crisis in which non-violent resistance would be applicable. I neither started the protest nor suggested it. I simply responded to the call of the people for a spokesman.

"When the protest began, my mind, consciously or unconsciously, was driven back to the Sermon on the Mount, with its sublime teachings on love, and the Gandhian method of nonviolent resistance."

Gandhi, a Hindu, was influenced by the Sermon on the Mount, Leo Tolstoy (Russian Christian), and Henry David Thoreau's essay on civil disobedience (as was King).

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(5) **Marian Wright Edelman.** Grew up in South Carolina, daughter and

granddaughter of Baptist ministers.

"The Children's Defense Fund was conceived in the cauldron of Mississippi's summer project of 1964 and in the Head Start battles of 1965, where both the great need for and limits of local action were apparent.

"As a private civil rights lawyer, I learned that I could have only limited, albeit important, impact on meeting epidemic family and child needs in that poor state without coherent national policy and investment strategies to complement community empowerment strategies."

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### **What Then Shall We Do?**

Passion for justice not merely a brief, prophetic burst like a 100 yard dash. Rather a long-distance runner. Like a long marriage -- steady, ever-lasting commitment.

(1) **Attitudes** toward various ethnic and racial groups.

(a) What we think about other people.

Blacks are \_\_\_\_\_. Jews are \_\_\_\_\_. Indians and Pakistanis are \_\_\_\_\_. Born again Christians are \_\_\_\_\_.

(b) What we say about other people. For example, reporting when someone crowded in front of you in the supermarket line.

It was a pushy \_\_\_\_\_.

Rather reporting the incident (if at all) as merely a person, not a racial or ethnic stereotype.

(c) Dealing with what other people say. For example, when somebody makes a remark about some particular group. Countering. Saying that some are, but not all. Etc.

(2) Being *doers of the word*, not merely hearers. (James' epistle).

(a) Many are doing things now *individually*.

(b) *Araby UMC as a body* taking on a project collectively

(c) *Support wider causes:*

Religious Coalition for Emergency Human Needs

Frederick Union Rescue Mission

Peace Resource Center

Concerned Citizens for Racial Justice

Children's Defense Fund

(d) *Legislation*

Frederick city and county, Annapolis, Washington

Organizational networks, such as MUPJ

(e) *Being examples for children*

*Marian Wright Edelman: The adults in her church taught her that "the measure of our worth was inside our heads and not outside in our possessions on our backs."*

*From them "we learned that service is the rent we pay for living. It is the very purpose of life and not something you do in your spare time."*

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**Closing:** *In our gospel reading from Mark, when the scribe said that loving God and loving one's neighbor was "much more important than all whole burnt offerings and sacrifices", Jesus said to him, "You are not far from the kingdom of God."*

*How does the kingdom come? A familiar hymn tells us how:*

*"Lead on, O King Eternal  
The day of march has come.*

*"For not with swords loud clashing,  
Nor roll of stirring drums.*

*"With deeds of love and mercy,  
The heavenly kingdom comes."*

*Amen.*

## *That "We Feeling"*

*Sermon prepared for delivery at  
Araby United Methodist Church  
Sunday, June 11, 1995*

*Scripture: Psalm 105:1-15  
Acts 4:32-35  
Like 8:1-3*

*Two years ago on Peace with Justice Sunday I spoke on peace with emphasis love your enemy. Last year I spoke on justice. This year I want to take up the topic of community. This is a pertinent topic because the realization of community is a social expression of love. Moreover, there can be no true community unless it is based on justice.*

*What do I mean by community? A community consists of people who possess shared values, who have common interests, and who engage in social interaction for mutual benefit. In a community we have a sense of common identity -- a "we feeling".*

*In this sense a local church is a community. So are neighborhoods to varying degrees. Sometimes we speak of the Christian community, the Jewish community, the African American community.*

*Some communities are closed and insular. Others are open and outreaching. This contrast is expressed in the saying, "He drew a circle and kept me out. I drew a circle and took him in." A true Christian community is know by its openness and outreach.*

*People associated with communities have a common identity. In many cases this identity is founded on a shared, historic memory. Clearly this is the case with the Jewish people, whose history is laid out in the Hebrew Bible, which we call the Old Testament.*

Repeatedly the Bible re-tells their story. Psalm 105, from which Mary Stup read 15 verses, is an example. It goes for 46 verses, encompassing the story of Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Joseph, Moses, and the exodus from Egypt. Psalm 106 continues the story for another 48 verses to recount the 40 years in the wilderness. Psalm 137 recalls a later period in Jewish history when leading families were forced to live in exile. "By the rivers of Babylon," this Psalm begins, "There we sat down and there we wept when we remembered Zion." These remembrances helped bind the Jewish people into an enduring community.

This history is our history, too. Jesus of Nazareth soaked up this history. We Christians have encompassed Jewish history by making the Old Testament part of our Bible. There we find the word of God, as revealed to and discovered by the Jewish people. Therefore, we usually have an Old Testament reading each Sunday. We also read from the Gospel, the Acts of the Apostles, and the Epistles, which set forth the faith and experience of early Christians. When we tell Bible stories to our children, we strengthen their ties with the Christian community.

Not only does knowledge of our Christian heritage help bind us together as a community of believers, it also teaches us lessons on the idea of community itself. One of these lessons is the importance of making our communities open, rather than closed. Making them inclusive rather than exclusive. "They drew a circle and kept us out. We drew a circle and took them in." This is the true nature of the Christian community.

Jesus was a Jew. He grew up in the a Jewish village perhaps the size of Woodsboro, Libertytown, or smaller. Most likely it was a close-knit community. It was also part of the wider Jewish community in the land of Israel.

In his life on earth, Jesus steadily expanded his outlook on who would be encompassed in the faith community he was establishing. The early Christian Church continued this expansion.

The Gospel of Luke and the Acts of the Apostles, which Luke wrote, have recorded this steady broadening of the sense of community.

Luke 2:41-51. Jesus trip to Jerusalem with his family. An extended family that was part of the wider Jewish community.

Luke 5:1-11, 27-31; 6:12-16. Selection of disciples. First almost an

extended family: a pair of brothers Simon Peter and Andrew, James and John. Healing of Peter's mother-in-law. But then "outsiders": Levi, the tax-collector, also known as Matthew; and Judas Iscariot, who make have been a member of the radical Zealots.

Luke 8:1-3 (today's scripture). 12 disciples, some women he had cured,

and some others, including some who provided for them out of their resources.

Luke 8:19-21. "My mother and brothers are those who hear the word of

God and do it." Going beyond family to a wider community.

Luke 10:29-37. Good Samaritan

Luke 7:1-10. Healing of the centurion's servant

Mark 7:24-30, Matthew 15:21-28. Trip to Tyre and Sidon (Gentile territory). Healing the daughter of the Canaanite (Matthew) or Syrophoenician (Mark) woman. At first Jesus said, "I was sent only to the lost sheep of Israel." Her faith convinced him to change his mind.

Luke 19:1-10 Dinner with Zacchaeus, a tax collector. Other meals with

"despised" people.

The established religious leaders drew a circle and kept out Gentiles and outcasts. Jesus drew a circle and took them in.

Acts 2:1-13. (Last week's reading). Coming of the Holy Spirit on Pentecost. Jews from many lands (for Judaism had expanded outward), each heard in his and her own language.

Acts 4:32-35 (today's scripture). Early Christian community.

"Everything they owned was held in common." There were other patterns. Missionaries, such as Paul, had their congregations send money to Jerusalem to help the poor.

Acts 8:26-40 Philip baptizing the Ethiopian eunuch.

Acts 9:1- Saul's conversion on the road to Damascus. Ananias told by the Lord, "Go, for he is an instrument I have chosen to bring my name before the Gentiles."

Controversy over bringing in Gentiles to the growing Christian Church.

Acts 11:1-18. Peter's dream (which I read several weeks ago and Carlee preached on), with the message, "What God has made clean, you must not call profane." When the Holy Spirit fell on the Gentiles, Peter realized, "If then God gave them the same gift as he gave to us when we believed in the Lord Jesus Christ, who was I that I could hinder God?"

In the early church, some would draw a circle and keep the Gentiles out. Peter and Paul drew a larger circle and took them in.

Coming up to our day, Bishop Ruediger Minor's story at 1992 General Conference. "Others will be there, too!"

Think of that when you sing after the benediction --

Bless be the tie that binds  
Our hearts in Christian love,  
The fellowship of kindred minds  
Is like to that above."

Others are there, too.

**Our every-expanding circle**

**Araby UMC -- (1) Newcomers: adults and children**



bringing them in fully at church, receptions,  
fellowship suppers, Sunday school, vacation Bible  
school

(2) Reaching to others (return to this later)

**Neighborhood** -- (1) Fire Hall area

(2) Cluster of UM churches

**Wider Frederick community:** (1) Ties with other Christians

(2) Serving those in need. Looking after our own not enough.

Already doing a lot: Visiting sick, putting on worship services at  
nursing homes, food baskets at Thanksgiving and Christmas,  
UMW contributions, support for Religious Coalition on Human  
Needs, pastor's activities, special offerings (like today's), table for  
Salvation Army in the mall at Christmas, serving meal at Rescue  
Mission, individual volunteers: at the hospital, in walkathons.

Could do even more, involve more people. Mark of Christians.

(3) Bring into focus through a Christmas Gift Catalogue:

commitment

of time and money.

United States, Earth. Extension of community, but that would take  
another sermon to cover adequately. Maybe next year. The true  
sentiment was expressed in our preparatory hymn: "In Christ there  
is no East or West." It is also the message of our final hymn: "A  
song of peace for lands afar and mine."

[More]

**Functioning of a church community.**

A final word about how communities function. It's all right for  
members of a community to have disagreements. It depends on how it's done.

For example, a choir that argued over which version to sing of the song the choir sang today, "Give us peace in our time, O Lord, and let it begin with me."

A vital community overcomes division by having a common purpose. For Christians this purpose is to join together in loving God with our all our heart, strength, and mind, and loving our neighbors -- and also our adversaries -- as ourself.

We do this by widening our circle. Some may draw circles and keep us out. We draw circles and take them in. This is what a true Christian community does.

As we do this, people will know we are Christians by our love, by our love. They will know we are Christians by our love. A Christian community is a loving community, for its members and for those beyond. May it be true for us in this church. Amen.

*Extra material, not used*

**United States** -- a nation of immigrants (including "Native Americans"), now turning mean-minded toward immigrants

*Other divisions.*

*Need for a stronger sense of national purpose. Experience of World War II: significant adversary, positive goals -- Four Freedoms (of speech and expression, of worship, from want, from fear).*

*Today our common adversary is not other nations (Russia, Iraq, Iran, but rather manifestations of poverty. One fourth of the children in America are living in poverty. Unemployment. Homelessness. Poor health.*

*To give ourselves a higher sense of purpose, which is so essential for community building, let us establish significant public goals, such as:*

- *End hunger and malnutrition*
- *Provide a decent home in a suitable environment for every American family*
- *Assure adequate medical care for everyone*
- *Provide good education for all*
- *Guarantee an employment opportunity for everyone willing and able to work*
- *Clean up the environment*
- *Make better use of natural resources.*

**Earth** -- *And not just for the United States. For all of Earth.*

*In Christ there is no East or West, there is no South or North.*

*But one great fellowship of love throughout the whole wide world.*

*Things to do:*

*Instruments of peace, such as United Nations*

*Foreign aid, such as African Development Fund*

*Foreign policy -- more "pro" than "anti"*  
*This sentiment is expressed in the closing hymn:*  
*A song of peace for lands afar and mine.*