

Point VII. People and Peace

Human being is free, intelligent and capable of love. It is known that love cannot be forced or imposed; neither can it be blind, it must have lucidity. Either it arises freely and wisely or it is not genuine. Whenever one's freedom is curtailed or one is deprived of wisdom we are preventing this person from loving us. Therefore, to defend, favour and develop the genuine freedom and wisdom of the individual -which in itself implies a social co-responsibility-, means favouring cordial feelings among people and thus better enables us to build peace.

Point VII addresses three fundamental capacities that structure the human person: love, intelligence, and liberty. The origin of peace lies within each person; respecting those capacities will support the peace within.

The Letter of Peace points out that in order for peace to occur all must foster the three fundamental dimensions within each person: love, intelligence, and liberty.

If you chose not to foster such capacities, the following could transpire:

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| Love | <p>Love without liberty would be slavery, prostitution;
Love without wisdom or intelligence would become tiresome, routine, crazy and harmful; it would be wrong.</p> |
| Intelligence | <p>We can ask ourselves: Why posses intelligence in the absence of freedom? It would be an enslaved intelligence, one subjugated to others.
Also; Is it worth it to be intelligent if it's not to love, or for good? ...For what then? Where would a loveless, frivolous intelligence lead us?</p> |
| Liberty | <p>Finally, liberty without intelligence and wisdom is silly and capricious.
Why be free if not to love? A liberty reluctant to love could lead to wickedness. A free and intelligent person unwilling to love frightens those that surround him. Certainly, this does not contribute to global peace.</p> |

The Capacity to Love

It is obvious that we can't tell anyone: "I order you to love me" for love would be slavery. Yet, according to most psychologists, love is necessary for the human being throughout life; from infancy to old age. The human being needs to love and be loved. A person needs to feel loved and to know what loving another feels like, so much so that if the person never experienced these emotions, he may surrender to death. On the other hand, love is not just necessary for each individual but for all social life.

The need for an attitude of love and friendship to consolidate peace among all is prevalent throughout the entire Letter of Peace. This particular point states: "promoting cordial agreements between persons could result in the construction of a better peace".

Love, with as many hues and ways as there are human relationships, is something necessary. It is not a supplement. Love is not something optional we can include or omit from our lives without impacting life. It is an essential element of the entirety of the human being.

Therefore, love should not be limited to the areas of family, friends, or where most people live today. Instead love should be adequately present in all interpersonal relationships, (social, political, cultural, leisure, labor, etc.), and inter-group relationships. The appreciation between unknown persons or social groups is what beckons solidarity.

A paradox appears here. Affable esteem while essential for the individual and for society can not be demanded or obtained by coercion. It must be given freely. The right to be loved is inalienable but it can not be demanded with coercion. A person is truly loved by another when the love is given freely. A social group will be cordially esteemed by another social group when both groups decide it out of their free wills.

This has consequences at personal, group, and social levels. Following are the ones listed by Jordi Cussó¹:

"Spouses not always base their love freely within the family arena. Social pressures, fear of remaining single, jealousy, and male chauvinism turn this otherwise peaceful and happy coexistence into a troubled one. One can not love simply because it is imposed on a marriage contract. Love is only true when it blooms freely. On the other

¹ J.Cussó, "*La Carta de La Paz, un itinerario de evidencias*", en J. Rigor y Otros, *Convivencia en el siglo XXI. La Carta de La Paz*. Barcelona, 1995. p. 51-72

hand, bloodlines do not guarantee love. Establishing relationships based solely on bloodlines, being son of a certain person, or surnames are the causes of much of our present suffering. Being involved in the conception of another life does not grant participants authority to force love. Yet, there are so many parents that have turned this event into the foremost reason for their children to love them.

The gratitude for the gift of life, the nurturing during the first years of life, all that they do for one does not entail an obligation for offspring to love their progenitors. Therefore, by respecting the freedom of spouses, parents, and children to love, will lead to the achievement of cordial esteem may and ultimately peace.

Today, leaders within our society do not base social relationships on respect and freedom. Instead they create small scams to achieve the esteem of others and to secure their fidelity. Employers base the relationship with employees on their ability to provide employment and salaries. Employees base their strength on the gain or loss of employer benefits. These types of relationships do not promote peace. Dictators intentionally use force and oppression to obtain a nation's support. However, true advocacy never stems from an imposition. Dictators are obeyed but not loved. While obedience originates from fear, love buds from liberty. Politicians harvest the appreciation of their people through the performances they provide. To gain votes they employ certain economic and social policies. These votes allow them to analyze the level of support they enjoy from their citizens. Then, based on the results, they favor the criterion of those who provided the most votes. Although this is a subtle way of securing advocacy it is also a way to provoke distrust, political hostilities, and social rupture.”

Intelligence and Wisdom

Keeping someone in the darkness of ignorance is a great hindrance for peace, for it establishes a form of domination. Every person needs to be able to develop intelligence in a dignified manner, to acquire knowledge and more importantly the wisdom of living which supercedes the possession of facts and information. Psychiatrist Joan Corbella² stresses the following:

² J. CORBELLA, “*Libertad y responsabilidad*” en J.M. Ainaud de Lasarte y otros, *Barcelona en clan de pau*. Barcelona, 1998. p. 110

“Intelligence should not be confused with wisdom. The wisest is not necessarily the most intelligent. Maybe the wisest has used more of his intelligence; yet we all have intelligence. We use it if we so desire. Above all, we must use it for what it’s really worth: being happy.”

Since the need of basic knowledge is widely recognized by society, most countries have established a minimum level of education for their citizens. On the other hand, having the wisdom to afford proper attitudes in human relationships, acknowledging certain facts, nurturing adequate feelings and emotions, and internalizing values go far and beyond an acceptable level of education.

Here we fall into what we previously discussed about love. It can not be absent in education or teaching. Many loving families fail to promote the growth of wisdom within their family members by refusing to share culture and traditions or by failing to inspire their creativity. While there is love, wisdom lacks development. Yet cognizant of this, we find that one of the main faults within the present educational system is possibly the scarcity of affection among teachers and students during the transmission of knowledge. This transfer of thoughts and knowledge occurs without proper appreciation of love.

To deify human reasoning involving freedom and love to the extent of the Age of Reason has produced disastrous results. Dr Alfredo Rubio³ explains how this process took place in the West:

“The Age of Enlightenment overestimated the Age of Reasoning. It was viewed as a talisman that would bequeath their wishes including the key to the mystery of existence. They went as far as to offer a flower crowned otherwise naked prostitute lying on a great silver platter as the new Goddess of Reason. The event took place at the Paris Cathedral during the French Revolution. Two centuries later the myth had crumbled. Reasoning, being our own, makes it grand yet remains limited. And when proven, regardless of all the scientific and technological advances, the mystery remains intact. As Heidegger would repeat:

“I would understand more, that which does not exist, than that which exists”. So they abdicate reason as if it were a worthless crown which they then toss into the garbage dump. Unfortunately they had expected too much from reason. Because we took

³ A.Rubio (1991): *Hablemos de la razon*, en Revista RE de Pensamiento y Opinión. nº 27, p. 20-21.

ourselves to be the embodiment of reason, we thought ourselves to be gods or the highest powers of the universe.

First, the suspicious phase surfaced, during which people doubted many things in addition to reasoning. Then, the stage of ideological crises set in. Finally, in the late XVIII century Modernism's disenchantment led to its end.

Presently, we have been reduced to disoriented beings weighed-down by the very ecological threats resulting from the civilization we have created. In fact, during this century humanity has witnessed the worst wars including the danger of atomic consequences.

We have entered a Post-Modernist period where we aren't certain where it will lead us or how we will depart it.

According to the Laws of the Pendulum, by exercising such great distrust in reasoning many fall into the webs of irrationality and evasion such as: drugs, bewilderments, fake paradises, or in extreme consumerism which results from loss of conscience and identity.

Therefore it is urgent that we rescue reasoning. In spite the fact that reasoning and liberty are limited they remain true treasures of all human beings. That is why we are the images of the absolute being.

Reasoning free of influences and vain conceit will be our best tool landscaping a better world. It is our task to make our common house, this world, a happier humanity by engaging humility, clarity, and solidarity.”

To reject the value of reasoning is a foolish attitude and error we continue to repeat since the end of Modernism. Love must be wise besides free or it could turn evil toward others. It would become a force with destructive possibilities. This is why the Letter of Peace states within this point that love must exist with lucidity.

Freedom

The most frequently used terms in the content of the Letter of Peace are: “free” and “freedom”. The document recognizes the importance liberty holds in the occurrence of peace.

There is one type of liberty or freedom that is present in children long before they are able to reason. These children are free and ready to adhere to beauty and joy. They express their wishes and preferences. Later, with the ability to reason they will have the freedom to choose and the ability to answer for their choices; in other words they will enjoy their free will.

The difficult task of teaching people about genuine freedom goes beyond knowledge and truth. Many believe they possess the truth or at least most of it. While, few find themselves free; free of external and internal influences, complexes, resentments, envies, pressures, coercions, seductions, etc.⁴ There are more masters of truth than there are masters of freedom.

Liberty: A Shared Responsibility

As indicated in the Letter of Peace, liberty involves shared social responsibilities. Liberty, when exercised with an individualistic attitude will impose itself on the freedom of others or will isolate itself rejecting sociability and solidarity. In essence the human being is a social creature. Being social makes a person share the responsibility of many things with other human beings. In other words a person is co-responsible. It is only then when society becomes creative and develops with vigor.

Dr. A. Rubio clarifies this idea in one of his articles regarding a soccer team:

Who is going to deny that a soccer team is a group of free men joined by a vocation and the love of a sport? They have a coach that guides them and a captain that coordinates them. However in the middle of a swift game with little respite, all players must remain inspired and creative. They must help each other with every timely pass they share in an effort to score a goal. These men harbor a coordinated will in spite of each man's individuality and spirit. They share a common social liberty which is neither mere individualism nor an obedience which reduces each man into a machine without any personal dignity.

⁴ A. RUBIO (1989): *¡Influencias! Quere influir, dejarse influir*, en Revista RE de Pensamiento y Opinión. nº 26, p. 4-5

An individualistic player would run with the ball never turning it over to another teammate. This type of player would impose a certain obedience that would grant him a game, an honor and a glory exclusively his. On the other hand, a captain or coach that viewed his players as mere obedient machines would enslave them into a selfish game of his own. Hence, extremes, individualism and dictatorship come together confusedly.

This example can occur outside the playing field. It is best to work as a team, to exercise teamwork. The sports world does not take this idea lightly, that is why sports can be a good school where people learn not to be individualistic or dictatorial.

All who work as a team in any given circumstance must do so of their free will. They choose to form a team to share a vocation and to play loyally aspiring to achieve common objectives and victories. If one or many were forced to belong or were there with personal agendas the group would fail as a team; almost as if the team members were aiming the ball at the wrong goalposts.

In other words, that which is truly humane and reasonable is known as a collective and cooperative liberty. An individualized freedom is as monstrous and sterile as a person in the middle of a jungle and totally alone. Liberties enslaved by a dictator are also monstrous and sterile because they fail to establish societies essential to mankind.

It is logical for a child to highlight individuality as he emerges into a self-consciousness period. However, he will be immature forever if he remains bogged down in that period. Maturity seeks for people to exercise teamwork so they may contribute freely to a proper liberty: social freedom. If he is an intelligent but neurotic man he will become a dictator to those of less intelligence. In either case, neither the individualist nor the dictator will form teams or a true society.

Structures and groups around the world are agonizingly debated between these two extremes; which in an effort to avoid one, places them in the other extreme. It is due to the fact that people have not discovered this relatively new concept of social freedom or how it allows people's wills to join freely in a joyful collaboration which is fertile, efficient, and full of personal freedom; one that does not enslave or deprive others of their personal freedom. Therefore, in a fair and unique manner, social freedom allows a person to achieve true liberty because it is not enslaved by its worst enemy: one's self.

Liberty and Duty

We must do away with a terrible error produced in our culture which defines liberty and duty as opposites. The opposite of liberty is not obligation. Truthfully, the opposite of liberty is coercion, or the power exercised by one person to force another person to things against his will.

Coercion is what overpowers and subjugates human liberty. Through intelligence, the human being is able to acknowledge his ethical duties or moral obligations that he must carry out.

Examples of these duties include aiding the injured in an accident, helping a disabled senior citizen, or defending a child from the abusive aggression of an adult. The existence of moral obligations does not discredit liberty. Quite the contrary, it becomes a manifestation of personal maturity. It is a terrible shame for some one to carry out moral obligations only when coerced when it is properly humane to execute them of our free will.