

## **1917 - The United Nations is Born**

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In the chaos into which from one moment to another the world may precipitate, as we just risked with the War in Iraq, man who has been set free from the major historical superstitions and sustained by the growing scientific results, has understood that only a world government that is rational and therefore equal can save humanity. It is not a recent idea, but comes under a historic context of the modern epoch during these last 300 years. Without wanting to be exhaustive I will connect my participation with the preceding speech that symbolically dates the historical turning-point for religions heterodoxy as 1517. In the Occident this date means a scission which distinguishes the religious from the civil sphere. It was only the beginning: there would be errors and reviews, but the dichotomy of religious thought or rather the criticism and liberation from dogmatic absolutism had in fact begun. In the same century irrefutable scientific facts were created such as the discoveries by Copernicus, Kepler, Galileo and Descartes and the radical philosophical dissertations initiated by Bacon, Giordano Bruno and Tommaso Campanella.

They were individual thoughts and discoveries which belonged neither to a school of thought nor to an operative political organization. This scenario foreshadowed the Age of Enlightenment when thinkers began to give an order to all scientific observations demanding that scientific deductions be without theological or religious preconceptions. It is easy to associate the Age of Enlightenment with speculative Freemasonry; the coincidence is so logical making it easy, in the sense of a symbolic fact, to fix this turning-point, whose benefit on the level of mankind has been and is fundamental, in the year 1717.

The pretext for freeing ourselves from the dogmatic propositions, moving in opposition, or rather beginning to demonstrate the evolutionary sequential progress in the biological world, the physical causality of the inanimate world, consented a re-launching of thought and a very distinct cultural sign of the prevailing single-thought. A domino effect also began in which the scientific curiosities, the taxonomy brought the Linnaeus, the Van De Stosch, the Newtons to collect, interpret and understand the phenomena in their dimension and to frame them in specific rational laws whenever the phenomena was repeated.

The scientific disciplines began in dichotomy by specialization and in parallel to the emerging culture, too, to ask for major distinction between civil collectivity and ecclesiastical dominion, a clear reference to Voltaire's thought.

Among the many episodes of this century of the Age of Enlightenment there is that of Tommaso Crudeli, an Italian martyr of the repression of free thought.

Moment after moment more episodes were created until the French Revolution which re-determined the equalitarian asset of man individuating and enouncing the rights of man without distinction of race or religion. With the 19<sup>th</sup> century the French Revolution, although it was chronologically ended, continued in the European political world, with consequent benefits for the peoples emancipated from slavery and from subaltern conditions which had been the ineluctable sign of the Divine.

If on one hand formidable benefits in the liberation of man as individual beings and of men as a collectivity can be indicated, the ethnic, religious and ideological tensions were such that a succession of wars, devastations, genocides and ethnocides became the great preoccupation for the thinkers who were able to interpret super-national politics. Already at the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century these men spoke of founding international unions to cooperate on specific matters or specialized agencies, but as always happens at the beginning of great innovations, the objectives and forms were more than a little confused. There was also a sensation of empathy before generic associationism. It was only after the outbreak of the First World War following the assassination of the King at Sarajevo in 1914, a motto “Ordo ab Chao” (order out of chaos) which was attributed to universal Freemasonry emerged the need for peace.

In the context of war in the first world conflict it was easy to suppose that when the war ended it would be much easier to create a One-World Governing body to unite the Nations of the world.

In this direction several groups of thinkers who did not accept war as a fatality began to take their bearings but they intended going in the opposite direction to be able to find a pacific solution to the conflict through reason.

A group of leaders of the free thinkers, after the growing atrocities on the French-German and Italian-Austrian borders met in Paris in January 1917 deciding to convoke a congress of Neutral Powers in June 1917 and to attempt in the meantime any stratagem they could to end the conflict.

*“The object of this Congress will be to investigate the means of elaborating the Constitution of the League of Nations, so as to prevent the recurrence of a catastrophe similar to the one a present raging which has plunged the civilized world in mourning”.*

In the meantime, in October 1917, there were forcings of great importance to find the solution to the conflict going on. Remember the case of Caporetto in Italy where, connivances of intention allowed an Austrian sally in an attempt to obtain first a truce and then peace between Austria and Italy.

Notwithstanding that the results were negative, the intent to end the war, at least on the eastern side must be considered with attention.

1918 followed in a bloodbath, seeing the end of a conflict that had been fought for economic and ethnic reasons.

The intent of those thinkers who were proposing the League of Nations was strong, they did not give up, even though the major Countries among these Nations were not present.

With the Treaty of Versailles in 1919, it was re-founded under the name of the League of Nations.

It was only on October 24, 1945, after the Second World War which surpassed any other event in man's history by the sheer number of millions of deaths, that the United Nations was born. The new organization fully inherited the intentions of the League, which had been dissolved only in April 1946, or exactly three months after the ratification of the creation of the United Nations by 51 nations of the world.

Today the United Nations is made up of 191 nations, that is to say almost the whole planet. Step by step the United Nations began to organize and complete some points of mutual agreement and control between the nations: control of arms and disarmament and arms limitation in front of nuclear weapons increase. In 1948 the United Nations had already planted the best flag: Human Rights.

Human Rights should be in our hearts, too. Unfortunately during the past 50 years they have been gravely violated by genocides, ethnocides, and today serious violations are still taking place. The scenario seems to disregard the spirit of the foundation of the United Nations, especially since some States, or those which have declared to be States and who propose the religion of love, have not even adhered at present to the first article.

Man must confide in his own rational capacities to find the just way of living in harmony and tolerance with other men in a sphere of a constructed and experienced democracy. At the time when man finds himself in the dimension of pacific living with others on the basis of some religious dogma or ideological proposition, at the time in which these dogmas and propositions fail him, war will return. Man must cultivate with his reason the dimension of his own civil and democratic conscience, because he is not born, but becomes, tolerant and democratic. Thus a continuous culture in active growth is necessary.

*“The pursuit of human rights was one of the central reasons for creating the UN. The World War II atrocities and genocide led to ready consensus that the new organization must work to prevent any similar tragedies in the future. An early objective was creating a legal framework for considering and acting on complaints about human rights violations.”*

Outside every numerological meaning it is a pleasure to remember this recurrence of dates in the centuries 1517, 1717, 1917, almost as if it signifies the progress of the liberation of man from mental subordination in the Middle Ages, or even better, from the prevailing single-thought of that epoch.