

A  
DECLARATION  
OF  
INTERDEPENDENCE

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*The following document is both a chapter in a book-in-progress and also a work that stands on its own. As a separate document it is a declaration intended to be signed by individuals of all countries.*

One might object that the principles proposed here overlap largely with the Declaration of Human Rights as put forth by the United Nations. We would say in reply that the statements of the United Nations were made 60 years ago, at a time when most people now on earth were not even born. We can guess that most people are not even aware that such a noble Declaration even exists. In 1948 there was nothing like the present urgent concern with the possibility of “the end of history”. Furthermore, there is a decisive difference between the emotional impact of a document signed by representatives of millions of people versus one which is signed by those individuals themselves.

The course of human events is alarming in the extreme. We, the undersigned, believe we face the distinct possibility that there may no longer BE HUMAN EVENTS. For decades experts from various fields – political science, history, psychology, physics, climatology, ecology – have been warning of this terrible ultimate possibility. The Dalai Lama has said, “The continuity of civilization itself hangs in the balance.”

The matter has not entered into public discourse to the extent that it merits. It is evidently too frightening. One of the functions of this present Declaration will be to confront humanity with this profound crisis.

We affirm it to be our solemn responsibility to take council together, to put our heads and our hearts together, to call forth every last ounce of courage, experience, and wisdom to save and serve all people of the world. The survival of all of us must take precedence over the comforts of individuals. We go further: how can any individuals have any comfort when the very survival of humanity itself is in question?

# Heal or Die

Our intelligence and our intuition tell us that the root cause of our social difficulties is selfishness, egoism. It is evident to us that thousands of years of history have made little difference in this respect in our social behavior. Nevertheless we have not entirely stood still. The yearnings for equality and human dignity are now commonly expressed. Centuries ago they were regarded as ignorant, subversive, childish, contrary to the will of God.

Now we are not only wiser; we have a new and powerful motive: fear. Nay, more than fear – terror. The world might end as a result of war, or climate change, or the deliberate destructive acts of saboteurs.

We, the undersigned, wishing to confront these horrors, wish to enhance the social and political maturity of human beings throughout the world by proclaiming certain principles of INTERDEPENDENCE. We stand on the shoulders of those brave and wise men of America who fashioned the Declaration of Independence. That was a great step forward. Now, in a globalized world, further principles and understandings are required.

With the best will in the world, the outcome is in doubt. Tragically, our social fabric is such that we do not have unmixed goodwill. There is evidence that people and groups in power, even with knowledge of great dangers, pursue questionable policies. In some quarters this document will be regarded as the foolish whimperings of innocent sheep open to being fleeced.

This is a knot we wish to untangle. Can certain “idealistic” principles of mutual care, concern, generosity be combined with the shrewdness and political sagacity required of political effectiveness?

It is for these combinations of talent that men like Lincoln and Ghandi were so widely loved and acclaimed. Obviously such men are rare in history and the hope that men and women the world over can embody these features in their national and international policies is indeed ambitious.

But that is what we need for our very survival.

A dozen years ago a group of psychologists and psychiatrists published a volume entitled “Heal or Die”. It cannot be said better.

But “healed” of what? Primarily of egoism, of drives for wealth and power so great and so blind that the sufferings and agonies of billions of others throughout the planet are given no importance.

All religions exhort us to care for one another, “To love thy brother as thyself”. Men will give lip service to these ideals and quickly forget them in their daily struggles.

Mankind has always yearned for social justice. This in turn is based on power – military and economic power. Of course those with power cling to it with all means at their disposal. What a good feeling to ignore everyone’s wishes but your own!

Paradoxically inequality of power has given rise to leisure and training and in turn has produced huge cultural advances, i.e. art, religion, science, technology. But now we see that these “advances” have turned in on themselves with utter ruthlessness and destructive brutality.

We must seek out and produce Adam Smith’s and Keynes”, Beethovens and Einsteins in the arts of morality, for this is the challenge – to dare to become truly human; to be proud to be human rather than ashamed. The possibilities for development in skies full of promise are dizzying. Possibilities for descent are just as dizzying.

Is this too innocent and silly for words? Not according to Jesus, Buddha, Moses, the Dalai Lama. It will be seen that, as in the Tale of The Emperor’s Clothes, innocence of perception has the greatest power in the search for social truth. Let us be unashamed to strive for prosperity, justice and love.

We hold these truths to be self-evident, TOTALLY SELF-EVIDENT

1. That wars are stupid, brutal and wasteful. And cost a lot of money. A few people make a handsome living. An American General said, "War is a racket." Since they have almost always been with us, no one claims it will be easy to get rid of. But if we don't, there is nothing to talk about.
2. Oppression of women is an abomination in the face of Life and Nature and all that makes sense. IN the short space of the feminist movement, women's contributions have been huge, and it has been said, "Shall we have womanly times or shall we die?"
3. Colonialism is worse than bestial. Our fellow man is not an object to be bought, sold, torn to bits. Our fellow man is our fellow man: ourselves.

We do not know what is to be the fate or function of this document. Ideally it will be read and signed by man the world over. In some places these ideas will be taken as a matter of course. In some places they will be seen as anathema and giving support will require great courage.

We begin by giving it to the tender mercies of cyberspace, wishing for it all good fortune.

TO HELL WITH HELL AND MORAL DECAY  
AND THE CENTURIES OF COWARDICE AND LIES.

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