

The Changing World

Ernest O. Melby

HUMAN BROTHERHOOD IS GOOD BUSINESS

IN THE INTERNATIONAL SCENE we have been literally frightened into a widespread demand for unity. Yet, at the very time we are trying to promote unity on the international scene, we are in the midst of bitter and devastating conflict within our own society at home. Vast corporations seem determined to prevent wage increases which labor unions feel are not only rightfully theirs but desirable for the general prosperity of the country. Millions of Americans are ill, and uncared for, while we argue the merits of socialized medicine. Other millions of Americans go without adequate education while we debate the wisdom of Federal aid to education. While urgent problems of reconstruction go begging for solution, one house of Congress is in the midst of an absurd filibuster over fair employment practices. Other evidences of disunity and social irresponsibility multiply as we examine our economic and social scene.

Certainly every argument that can be advanced for unity in the international scene is equally as strong with regard to our domestic situation. Moreover, we shall probably be unsuccessful in international affairs unless we can have a large measure of unity among ourselves. The plain fact is that we have thus far failed to see that unity and human brotherhood are not only desirable social conditions from a humanitarian point of view, but actually constitute good business. If we could only raise the income of a large portion of the American people, there would be more business for everybody. High wages create larger markets; higher standards of living make for more productive workers. Instead of fighting each other, capital and labor should try to discover joint means for raising purchasing power and increasing productivity. We need more and more unity,

and less and less selfishness in all aspects of our lives.

Over 300 years ago an English poet, John Donne wrote, "No man is an ilande, entire to itselfe; every man is a peece of a continent, a part of the maine. If a clod be washed away by the sea, Europe is the less. . . . So every man's death diminishes me because I am involved in mankind, and therefore never seek to know for whom the bell tolls; it tolls for thee." Never before have these words been as full of meaning. The concept of the brotherhood of men has often in the past been viewed as the concern of the preacher and the philosopher. Today it is man's only practical basis for survival. We now not only must have one world but we must have one humanity. Freedom for us cannot be a reality unless all men have freedom. In the long run we shall not even have bread unless all men have bread. India is not only a responsibility for herself and Great Britain, she is our responsibility. Those who starve in Europe this winter are not Europe's dying, they are our dying—man's dying. When Negroes in our own country are denied education and meaningful freedom, it is not they alone who suffer. We, the entire American people suffer—humanity suffers.

We cannot bring about unity in national affairs without a more widespread recognition of the rights of the common man; and we cannot secure this widespread recognition of the rights of the common man without an education which exhibits more concern about people, about individual human beings. Education must constantly teach the oneness of mankind. It must emphasize human cooperation rather than competition. It must stress social responsibility rather than reckless individualism. Once we have a unified nation at home, we shall begin to be effective in talking unity in the international scene.

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