

A Logological Symbol for the Cause of Peace

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Now that the human race has the power to blacken this planet to a cinder, it has at last become obvious that every sane person has a vital interest in the cause of peace. By what process peace can be achieved is the problem confronting the whole world; but—however it may or may not be done—it is at least possible that a widely acceptable symbol could play a crucial role in that process.

Nonverbal symbols are not often represented by formations of words (words, when pressed into this kind of service, more often become manifestos or slogans), but I commend to your attention a phenomenal verbal trinity capable of so representing certain major symbols: three words whose providential combination and miraculous properties are expressive of nothing less than the fundamental moral injunction:

(1) DELIVER NO EVIL.

This was taught by The Prince of Peace, who also made it clear that it is an error to expect this world to be a theater of justice, for it is *not* the theater of justice, and, therefore, he who would *deliver no evil* may very well be made to suffer for it; but he taught that such suffering should be accepted, *id est*, he who would *deliver no evil* may also need to

(2) LIVE ON REVILED.

This was taught by The Man of Sorrows.

Note that, although (1) and (2) are mutual reversals (orthographically speaking), *their meanings are exactly the same* (they are moral palindromes), since to heed (1) is to heed (2). Surely, (2) is not anything that anybody particularly wants; but (2) is precisely *what you must be prepared to withstand* if you would *deliver no evil*. These two are inseparably the same teaching in exactly the same way that The Prince of Peace and The Man of Sorrows are the same teacher.

If I stand up and say, "What can I do? How can I suffer for peace? I am willing,

whatever it is," and if all men are prepared to do that, with only the desire the initial wish (peace) is immediately accomplished. If neither I nor anyone else is willing to do this, we are living in an eschatological age in which ATOM BOMBS will become A MOB'S TOMB. We can hope for something between these two extremes.



Who, in looking at this cross, cannot see the man who was the personification of these words? In the logological symbol shown above, The Word Made Flesh has become The Flesh Made Word. What a shame that the cross cannot possibly be used as a symbol for the cause of world peace!

A logological symbol should prove to be more stable than a nonverbal symbol. A nonverbal symbol may *now* mean, "We want world peace" (and, as a cause, universal peace cannot be challenged), but *later* it may mean, "Our peace movement is better than your peace movement." A logological symbol, identified as it is with certain words which keep the meaning immediately present, ought not be so easily corruptible and changed; and it is not impossible that the reversibility of such a symbol may give it a peculiar power to resist the most poisonous double-think (in the Orwellian sense).

Unfortunately, it is this very corruption and change that has already (now no less than long ago) befallen the cross, even though the cross has had a long peace history and is supposed to symbolize world peace. The cross also symbolizes the resurrection; and mayhap someday a redeemed cross—in the logological form here given it—will symbolize a *new* peace movement. But, for the present, it must be admitted that the number of times the cross as a symbol of peace has been defiled are as countless as the sands of the sea, and that the cross cannot serve as a symbol of world peace now because there are too many people who will reject it on sight,

in an instantaneous reaction—and it would not matter what words were superimposed on it.

We crusaded against the Turks and the Arabs: we held them at sword-point and said, "Accept my religion, or I'll run you through." For the Moslems, the cross is synonymous with infidelism. The government in power in South Viet Nam is predominantly Catholic: for the Buddhist peasant in North and South Viet Nam, Christianity has come to mean what is going on over there. The Arabs, who are Moslems, and the Israeli, who are Hebrew, are at war, and the cross is a negative symbol for both religions. In the United States, the Jewish people are among the most active members of the peace movement, and they have no particular love for the cross.

The whole of humankind are in exactly the right frame of mind and mood for a universally acceptable symbol of world peace; it is needed; it is topical; it is the opportune moment—but it cannot be the cross. The Bard of Avon penned lines that seem not entirely irrelevant:

They that have power to hurt, and will do none,
That do not do the things they most do show,
Who, moving others, are themselves as stone,
Unmoved, cold, and to temptation slow:
They rightly do inherit heaven's graces
And husband nature's riches from expense;
They are the Lords and owners of their faces,
Others but stewards of their excellence.
The summer's flower is to the summer sweet,
Though to itself it only live and die,
But if that flower with base infection meet,
The basest weed outbraves his dignity:
For sweetest things turn sourest by their deeds;
Lilies that fester smell far worse than weeds.

In the United States Army, during the Second World War, I met an unknown poet, named Rex Eugene Rogers, whom I quote from memory:

Two thousand years ago a thorn-crowned king lay dead
Upon a wooden cross. He died that we might live.
Today his memory is a present that we give:
A piece of ribbon; a bit of mistletoe above the head.
A well-fed preacher of the gospel counts his flock,
Lets slip the Christus words from silken tongue: "I preach
"The words of Christ. Interpreter am I. The breach
"Twixt man and God is mine to open and lock."
The king is dead. His messages are dead, and kissed
By sullied lips enwrapped with clouds of dogma-mist.
Oh Christ, I weep that all the things you taught
Have died with you upon the cross and come to naught.

In the poem above, we are reminded that there is a second symbol for the religion founded by The Prince of Peace and The Man of Sorrows: namely, the crown of thorns. By great good fortune, the circle is a minor symbol in many religions. It has small symbolic roles of all kinds which are widespread, and all of them are positive.

As a Christian symbol, the circle is a halo, or a crown of thorns. In the far East, jade rings are worn as a symbol of nobleness, marriage, friendship, and protection against evil. Here, too, the marriage band means unity and never-endingness. Then, there are family circles, and tribal circles, and all mean unity and peace. The American Indians sat in a circle when they talked peace, and they passed the peace-pipe in a circle. In round-table discussions, the round table gives no man any greater influence than any other man. It has not been so long ago, in the news, that North Vietnam required a round-table as a condition for holding international talks.

Because the circle is seen most frequently in a positive light by so many peoples, and from such a multitude of perspectives, it should be possible for it to serve as a widely acceptable symbol for the cause of world peace.



This circle may be read in either direction.