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SYMBOLS OF AMERICA
STANDARD-BEARER OF A NEW WORLD ORDER

An Autobiographical Interpretation of U.S. Culture and Civilization
in the Twentieth Century

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MAT XI

B.A., Human Services
Northeastern University, Boston, Massachusetts
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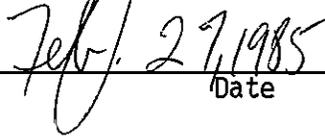
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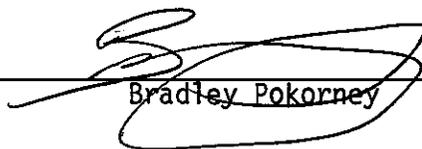


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ABSTRACT

Throughout my internship in Latin America I was faced with the dilemma of representing U.S. culture and civilization. This paper represents the synthesis of an introspective process of self-realization as a cultural being. The format is partially autobiographical and partially historical. The process involved the separating out of certain cultural tendencies derived from a largely materialistic background of training and replacing these with a more spiritual view of American identity which I perceived to be consistent with the original intentions of the Founders of the U.S.A. The process thus led to a more enlightened vision of U.S. culture and its role in the global community. This resulted in a common sense approach to teaching U.S. culture as it relates to other cultures. After the approach was synthesized it was discovered that Community Language Learning as outlined by Dr. Charles Curran to be consistent as an applied methodology to the assumptions of the approach.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Sincere thanks to the staff and students of the MAT XI Program for the profound experience of that year which brought many of the issues included in this project to the surface of my awareness. Special thanks to Michael Jerald whose course in U.S. culture and civilization and guidance provided the necessary format. Thanks also to Brad Pokorney for extending his assistance to the effort through many extended lunch hours. Sincere thanks also to my aunt, Jean DiMauro, who assisted in the typing of the manuscript, without whom the task may have been impossible. Finally, the efforts of Abdul'Bahá to awaken the American people to their destiny at the turn of the century must be acknowledged as the source of inspiration.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

	<u>Page</u>
TITLE PAGE -----	i
SIGNATURE PAGE -----	ii
ABSTRACT -----	iii
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS -----	iv
TABLE OF CONTENTS -----	v
INTRODUCTION -----	1
CHAPTER I - The First Americans -----	3
CHAPTER II - Common Sense -----	17
CHAPTER III - A New Race of Men -----	34
END NOTES -----	42
BIBLIOGRAPHY -----	45

INTRODUCTION

In the development of an international career one invariably comes into the situation where the home culture must be represented to the host culture. I have come to realize that the language instructor cannot escape the responsibility of constantly being placed on the line as a representative of his or her culture because language is the key that unlocks the internal meanings contained within the heart of each culture. In addition, he or she is actively promoting and promulgating these meanings, whether willingly or not, by the very act of teaching. Ultimately, the author feels that propaganda is one of the inevitable hazards of the profession.

Faced with this dilemma, I found myself in a position of responsibility to sort out the various cultural doctrines within myself that I considered valuable and presentable to other cultures and the global community. This required a systematic search where I have been led through a series of progressive stages of research and awareness of the American identity. The various clues and signs along the way have been indicated in the narrative in much the same sequensive manner in which they were initially experienced. Some of the stages have been reconstructed in a more lucid written format but much of the initial impact came as I was writing. The reader will notice parts of the narrative where it has been difficult to restrain my enthusiasm. Nevertheless, I have attempted to retain a consistent and uniform style throughout so that the trail of thought might be easily followed.

This autobiographical statement of cultural identity is divided into two major chapters. The first traces an exploration into America's ancient beginnings. The second explores the European American influences in the Judeo-Christian tradition which have shaped the structure of our government and society. This chapter also includes a study in current contrast with our present culture and how it has moved away from the initial philosophical base which shaped America during the historical period of the enlightenment. I concluded this chapter by showing how a return to the philosophical basis of U.S. culture and civilization may offer a viable alternative to the current state of world upheaval in the peaceful settlement of the affairs of the planet. In fact, I discovered in the vision of America's Founders what may offer considerable guidance to our global policies in this century.

In this manner, I concluded the assumptions of what I have found applicable and justifiable in promoting U.S. culture and language abroad. The third chapter offers practical application of these assumptions in the Community Language Learning approach to teaching/learning. I have found some close correlations in Dr. Curran's methodology with the proposed assumptions in my research. In chapter three a general outline is offered as one possible alternative leading to the right direction. I have discovered in Community Language Learning a workable model for the theoretical application of these principles to the teaching and learning process.

I. THE FIRST AMERICANS

My interest in the first Americans or, to use the current term, Native Americans, began very early in my life. The first five years of my childhood were spent in a house adjacent to the Harvard University campus. Within a short walking distance from my home stood one of the finest collections of Native American artifacts in the world. The Peabody Museum of Anthropology holds an extensive display of North, Central, and South American artifacts. When I was only four and five years old I visited this museum many times. One can well imagine what kind of impression this made on me as I went from room to room in a seemingly endless display of ancient American cultures. My young mind was fired with an impression of America which manifested itself in a burning desire to witness such cultures and scenes myself. Fortunately, it was not too late in history to have such experience directly. One more generation and it might have been.

The following decade was the sixties. This was a time for the disintegration of the American identity. Our images of America had been shattered completely leaving us with no sense of who we were. We made it into the seventies with an acute sense of need for cultural reintegration. Although we could no longer trust what we had been taught we were, we did not know where to begin to identify ourselves again. This lyric from the Don McClean album, American Pie, typifies the point "and there we were in one place, a generation lost in space with no time left to start again ... bye-bye Miss American Pie."

I recall attending one of the last great rock festivals of that era, Watkins Glen. The scene of the half-million plus American youth in a sea of blue jeans and red bandanas provides the image necessary to complete the picture of the cultural context. This scene of red, white and blue with its native folk music (The Allman Brothers, the Grateful Dead, the Band) seemed just like the Don McClean song, "lost in space." I felt as if I was involved in a massive search along with all these others for something of tremendous importance which would give meaning to the age in which we live. The blue jeans and folk music seemed like an attempt to identify and search for this meaning in the past. Although I had not discovered what I had hoped to find in the way of fulfillment at Watkins Glen, I left the concert with a sense of inner peace. I felt that this meaning existed and through determination I would find it soon.

These were halcyon days which briefly followed the Vietnam War. For a few short years which followed the Vietnam War there was a revival of hope for the future of the human race. Peace seemed a possibility at that time and the dream of a better future for all humanity seemed within our grasp. It was a rebirth of that almost uniquely American sense of optimism for the future. The utopian vision of a better and more perfect world, I feel, is the essence of the American Dream. This Dream of a perfect order and peaceful society can be traced to the traditions and mythology of most peoples and cultures. It was in the new world, and particularly in the United States of America that the Dream began to take shape

as these various people worked towards its fulfillment. One can trace the establishment of the culture of the United States of these utopian principles right back to the pilgrims in Massachusetts. The various utopian communities and experiments which followed are a matter of historical fact. Here the people were free to find the fulfillment of their Dream.

There is a culture of diversified people, however, which predate the Indo-European expansion into America. These people have their own version of the American Dream. Among the Native Americans, I decided would be the most appropriate place to start in my search for the meaning and purpose of the American Dream.

The Native Americans are a race of dreamers. I do not relate this in a derogatory sense, I heard this from an Indian woman who was speaking to an audience about the nature of her people. I thought at the time of the lecture how very true this was. Their religion, their culture are based on the realm of dreams and visions. To find the real basis of the American Dream, here was the place to start. Thus, in the mid-seventies, my childhood desire to experience America's primitive beginnings was finally realized. I planned to cover thousands of miles from the Rocky Mountains down to Mexico City in search of that meaning. In order to integrate the trip into my academic career at Northeastern University, I submitted a proposal to Blanche Geer, Professor of Cultural Anthropology, for course credit. She readily accepted my proposal to write a detailed account and analysis of the experience.

By the end of July, I found myself in the back of an old camper riding through the Arizona desert on my way to a council fire. When we stopped to camp for the night, I looked up at the billions of stars in the milky way and sensed that I had entered an entirely different world. Here was a part of America that stretched back a thousand years and longer. My great longing to experience American history at its ancient beginnings was destined not to be disappointed. The Hopi reservation was established over 900 years ago by the wandering tribes of the Anasazi era. Their oldest villages exist on the tops of three mesas and are surrounded by the vast tribal lands of the Navajo. The land area is the size of the state of Connecticut. The vast area of reservation land situated in one of the remotest corners of the United States makes this area quite literally a separate world. Navajo and Hopi are spoken as first languages and English is the second language. Indeed, many of the older people could only speak their tribal language. The ancient Hopi tradition relates that they were directed to settle there by the Great Spirit in order to preserve their heritage.¹

Our destination was the very heart of the reservation, the Navajo land area just outside the ancient village of Oriabi. The place was named Dinnebito which meant "the water of the people". It is a wash situated just below a large mesa. The naked desert with its stark hues of red and brown formed a sharp contrast with the lush green of Indian corn growing in small plots near there. It was astonishing to

see how this corn along with the beans and squash grew out of the dry desert. A great part of Hopi and Navajo ritual centers around the cycle of the growth of corn. We drove until we noticed two large cottonwood trees which stood in a corn field, the only trees for miles around. Before the fields stood the hogan and shade house (a makeshift open-air shack with branches for a roof used for shelter in the summer) of the Yazzi family.

Dan Yazzi was the head of the family and was often referred to as Shaydan, denoting his rank as Shaman in the area. He moved in those mysterious circles of magic and ritual with both the Navajo and the Hopi tribes. Dan was a short, strongly built man with a large belly and a crewcut who sported a black medicine hat. His medicine was known as "crystal medicine," a technique of diagnosis learned from the Hopis which involved the use of natural quartz crystals. In order to learn this skill a twenty year apprenticeship was required. His connection with both tribes was significant here. They were in the middle of a great land dispute involving the land rights of the Navajo and Hopi tribes under the original treaties. For this reason, Dan had invited the elders of both tribes to the council on his land in order to promote unity.

The council was well attended by approximately 75 people. The image of a number of us crowded into the shade house one hot afternoon will forever be with me. The sunlight sifted through the slits between the old planks which were used to make this rectangular structure.

The floor was dirt with some old rug remnants and sheep skins covering it. The smell of the pinion branches above could still be detected. Lining the walls were the older members of both the Navajo and Hopi tribes. After people took turns praying and singing there were talks which had to be slowly and meticulously translated. The feeling of being close to America's beginnings was indescribable. Perhaps this part of a Navajo song sung that day may best indicate it, "In beauty I walk, beauty above me, beauty before me, beauty behind me, beauty all around me." A definite sense of harmony and attunement with the natural rhythm and beauty of life seemed to permeate the lives of these people. One of the speakers was Grandfather David or David Moenanga, one of the Hopi elders. In his lap was a large envelope with a rainbow on it. This symbol would have great significance for me that summer.*

When it was time to leave, I was invited to stay on and spend time with the Yazzie family. It was an offer which I readily accepted. This began my first real cross-cultural experience. As previously mentioned, I seemed to be living in a different world here in Dinnebito. The pace of life was not determined by the existence of clocks and schedules.

* For me, the rainbow bridge was the best cross-cultural symbol to express the experience of that summer. The meaning of the rainbow representing harmonious blending of tribes in the universal man is a theme known throughout Navajo and Hopi ceremony.² Other traditions tell of the four directions which form the spokes of the great wheel of life; the red, the yellow, the white, the black. When all four are in balance, the wheel will turn.

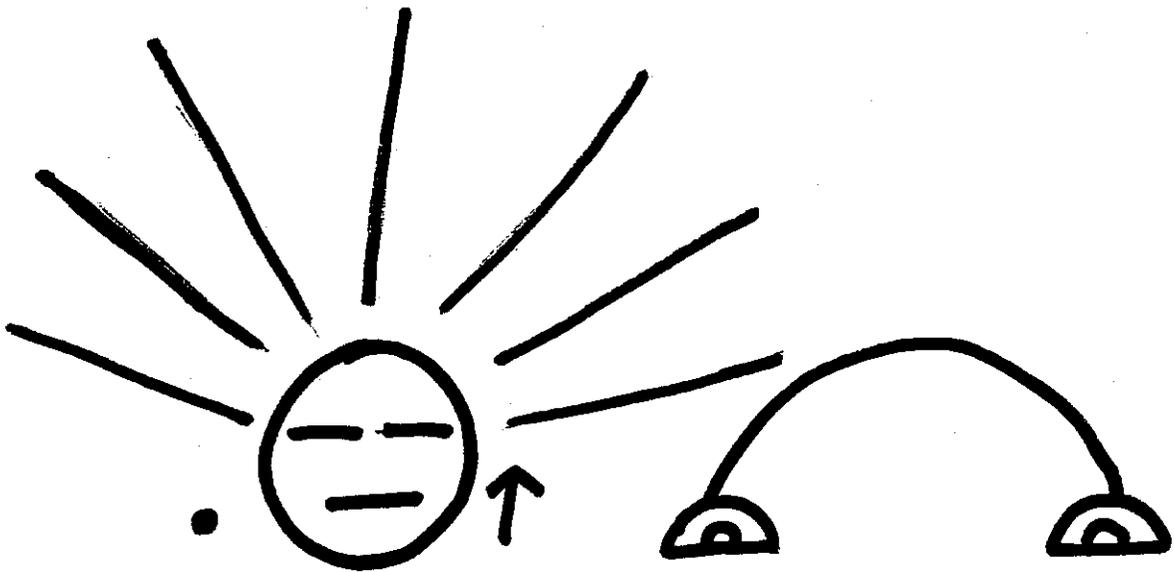
When the sun rose, everyone awoke, and breakfast consisting of fried potatoes and pan bread was prepared. The day ended at sunset with everyone turning into their sheepskins. For the most part we slept under the stars at night because the weather was usually accommodating. I say usually because I can remember at least one occasion when we got rained on. There were some younger men in the family who became my steadfast companions. Our days were never dull, there was always something that needed to be done or somewhere to go. I can remember Dan Yazzie laughing heartily at this suburbanite trying to help clear the fields as he was plowing. The Navajos have a delightful sense of humor. They laughed at everything they could poke fun at. One never felt threatened or belittled by such humor, on the contrary, you could not help but join in. There was a crazy goat who wore a ski mask on his head. The stupid animal would eat anything it would find as it wandered in and out of the shadehouse; soap, garbage, etc. I recall Waldine's (the matron) hiss as she would shoo the animal out with a broom whenever this happened. One day the goat ate a twenty dollar bill and ended up as the next night's supper.

Often I would tend sheep with the others. We would climb the mesas and wander for the better part of the day. It was on just one such excursion that I had a vision while lying down to rest in the shade of a pinon pine one hot afternoon. I saw a Navajo rainbow man. Later that evening Dan Yazzie conducted a short ceremony to decipher the symbol. Placing the crystal in my palm, he looked into it while

chanting. His diagnosis was like a spiritual prescription, to pray at the first light of day and at sunset. Dan Yazzie also told me that if I did this all my hopes would be realized.

While doing this one particular evening I was greeted by an incredible sight in the sky, a rainbow of such brilliant hue and intensity as I had ever seen. The rainbows of the Southwestern desert are like that because of the combination of elements. To the Navajo and other tribes it represents the harmonious blending of different people and cultures. In the Judeo-Christian tradition it is a symbol of the everlasting covenant between the Creator and man. The symbol of the everlasting covenant in the form of a rainbow appeared to Noah and his family after the deluge of the flood.³ Hopi cosmology speaks of four worlds. The concept of previous worlds can also be found in Hindu, Tibetan Buddhism, Persian, Chinese and Icelandic traditions. The last world called Sotunknang in Hopi was destroyed by flood.

Another Hopi prophecy tells of migrations of the tribes of different colors (the black, yellow, red, white brothers) beginning at the time of the emergence from the previous world. They foretell that the true white brother will return at the time of purification (literally, the "Purification Day") to rejoin with his red brother in helping each other to create the final world of peace.⁴ Many of these prophecies were carved on the cliffs in that area in the form called petroglyphs. One of the Yazzie family took me to a canyon one day to show me the petroglyphs reproduced on the next page.



I felt that this petrograph may be referring to the connection between the white brother and the red brother (symbolized by the two houses joined by the rainbow) would be made at the time of the rising of the message from the East (symbolized by the rising sun from a human face.) Hopi prophecy foretells that when the true white brother returns he will bring a message from the East containing the mark of the essential oneness of mankind -- the wheel with four spokes → ⊕ .5

When the Spaniards reached the Hopi they were received as the "true white brother" at first. Soon, however, it became apparent by their greed that they were not the ones which the prophecy foretold. They looked back and realized certain signs had to appear first before the prophecy could be fulfilled. Two of these signs destined to appear were the swastika and the rising sun. These two would be followed by a "goard of ashes" which would be dropped on the earth with tremendous destruction. After this the Hopi were told to go to the "house of mica" in the east to warn the nations of the coming purification of the current world. In the nineteen sixties the Hopi elders spoke to the U.N. General Assembly in fulfillment of this prophecy. Their warning had to do with the use of nuclear power, the minerals of which had been mined from their reservation. They were given instruction not to touch the black mesa and extract these minerals until there was peace on the earth, because they would be used for the destruction of mankind. Refer back to the statement of David Moenanga given at the council fire mentioned earlier about the "warriors of peace" who would soon arise. These warriors of peace were also referred to as the "warriors of the rainbow." This meant the harmonious joining together of cultures in the creation of world peace, the only hope for the restoration of the planet. The word Hopi means "peaceful people." This name refers to the true path of peace intended by the Creator for all people.⁶ The Native American tradition states that humanity is essentially one. Throughout history the various tribes and cultures became separated. When the appointed time had come, however, all the tribes would meet in America to fulfill their destiny and become one again.

What all this prophecy and folklore is leading to is the one simple fact that lies at the core of this thesis. The melting pot of America is the blending of cultures and people for the purpose of creating world peace. This essential fact lies at the root of the Native American folklore and prophecy. Their traditions told them long ago of the role which America would play in the fulfillment of the collective hope of humanity. In this I felt I had discovered the essence of the American Dream from its ancient beginnings. It was just as the shaman told me it would be.

An astounding occurrence happened when I was in the Southwest again in 1976. The Tibetan lamas came to the Hopi elders to exchange prophecy. They were told that when the dharma (the divine law) set in Tibet, it would rise again and perpetrate itself from the land of the redman. They were told to go to that land to exchange prophecies. I was fortunate to have heard a first-hand account from some people who were present at that meeting. Both the Hopi and the Tibetans had the exact same prophecies in their respective cultural heritages. Both witnessed the fulfillment of these prophecies concerning that meeting of their tribes made many centuries ago.

It was interesting to see how similar prophecies from two opposite sides of the planet foretold that from North America a spiritual revitalization would be born and spread across the planet. This seemed to reinforce the Hopi assumptions that all cultures were one in their origin and destiny.

The Hopi maintain that the white man is not the "true white brother" because he does not remember his spiritual heritage. They maintain that the current white man has forgotten the path of peace, hence he cannot join with the red brother in the common purpose. If he were the true brother then he would come to the Hopi and each would provide things which the other lacked in the realization of the common goal. In this way, the unity of the human race would be realized and world peace established. I concluded that they may be speaking the truth about sharing something in common. The Hopi say that when the earth's people first separated each was given a piece of a tablet. At the end these pieces would be brought back together.⁷ Although, in my opinion, this should be taken in an allegorical sense, it makes sense that I might discover in my own history the missing piece which completes the puzzle of America's destiny. Is that missing piece buried somewhere deep within our own psyche?

For five years the author researched, lived, and worked among Native Americans. During that period of time I made several cross-country tours and visited many reservations. I studied their literature and listened to oral traditions. On one occasion, I spent time on the Pine Ridge reservation with a descendent of Black Elk. Black Elk was a visionary and medicine man of the Sioux in the later part of the nineteenth century and the beginning of the twentieth. This occasion stands out as particularly significant in my mind. The name of the man was Petaga. One late summer day he took a small group including me to a spot sacred to his people. In Black Elk's vision he saw how degraded his

people would be in the next century. It was heartbreaking to see how this had come true, "And when I looked down, the people were all changed back to human, and they were thin, for they were starving. Their ponies were only hide and bones, and the holy tree was gone."⁸ Petaga described a conflict which had occurred at Wounded Knee a few years ago which was almost an exact parallel to the one which occurred in the previous century. He described this incident involved his own people fighting among themselves over the one issue of selling out the land to mining companies. The ones who wished to sell out the land were called goons. They were given guns to shoot at their own people. Here was the same treatment given out by Custer all over again. To the Native American his identity is intimately tied into the land. This could not be sold at any price so readily. With tears in his eyes, Petaga told us how at a low point in the struggle to hold their ground at the church, they fasted and prayed. During that time they were strengthened by hearing the singing of the ones who had struggled and died there 100 years earlier. This gave them the courage to hold onto their ground. The Native American Indian is the keeper of America's primal identity, the land. To take this away there would be nothing left on which to build the future. Their identity and the land are inseparable.

Petaga was the last of the eagle medicine men for the Sioux. To me, he was a remnant of a proud and steadfast American tradition which is as inherently identified with America as the land itself. The eagle is the symbol of our cultural heritage and destiny. When we started

to destroy the land, the symbol of our national heritage also began to disappear, becoming an endangered species. Yet, through the efforts of some, the American bald eagle is beginning to make a comeback. So, too, through the efforts of some, the American heritage still lives and will make an eventual comeback. The vision of Black Elk ends on a hopeful note that everything will be recreated, "A good nation I will make live. This nation ... they have given me the power to make over ... and I saw that the sacred hoop of my people was one of many hoops that made one circle, wide as daylight and as starlight, and in the center one mighty flowering tree to shelter all the children of one Mother and Father."⁹

One more Hopi tradition completed my process of investigation. Picking up a newsletter one day which was published by the Hopi elders I read about this prophecy that refers to the coming of the white man. It tells that his great great grandchildren will grow their hair long, wear beads and come to the Hopi for guidance. They would have a name like Hopi. This sign would be one of the final ones which would signal the coming of the spiritual rebirth. This letter goes on stating that the elders felt sorry for the hippies who could not remember their own heritage.¹⁰ I understood that any further investigation must be carried out in my own cultural background. This concludes the first chapter of the thesis. To the Native American, life is a circle, when it revolves it returns to the point from which it started. It was time for me to return to where I had started to uncover what I needed to find next.

II. COMMON SENSE

Let me begin by relating a memory of a popular movie made in the late forties called The Wizard of Oz. This movie was one of the first films to be made in color. The movie starts out in black and white and changes into color as Judy Garland, who plays the star role of Dorothy, goes to the land of her dreams called Oz. The land of Oz is described in the theme song of the movie as "Somewhere Over the Rainbow." When she returns from Oz she realizes that this imagined place is really no further away than her own back yard after all. Judy Garland died of a drug overdose years later in real life, still looking for that place "over the rainbow." The movie ended in black and white. I assume that the black and white of home really did not answer the need for fulfillment of the American Dream. Somewhere beyond these conventions, a richer and more colorful world does exist. The homogeneity of American life just did not seem to fit.

Simon and Garfunkel composed a song about the hometown America which explains the point, "And when it rained, there was a rainbow but all of the colors weren't there, it is just imagination they lack back in my little town Nothing but the dead of night back in my little town." One Spring evening in 1980 I was sitting with a friend in my car at the end of one of the last developed areas of my own home town. We were discussing how all the remaining bits of land were being used to build the garrison colonial houses in front of us.

Here we were at the end of this road looking at the fulfillment of what people now considered the American Dream. Something, however, had gone wrong. The Hopi had, long ago, warned their youth that the path of the white man was a dead end. My friend and I discussed how that year a few of the people I had graduated with died of drug overdoses. All that striving by their parents to fulfill what they felt was the American Dream had ended just as the Hopi predicted. Suddenly, we found ourselves surrounded by a group of men wondering what we were doing there. It seemed like the men who were surrounding the car embodied the frustrations which Americans in general were beginning to feel. With no more room for expansion, they cling tenaciously to what is left without vision or purpose. I knew that there was more to the American Dream than this.

Franklin D. Roosevelt in his inaugural address said, "When there is no vision the people perish."¹¹ The statement was particularly significant in 1980 more than ever. Without a sense of vision and singular purpose we are doomed to repeat the mistakes of the past. In an article from the Wall Street Journal that same year, Robert Reilly (a member of Reagan's transition team in the area of International Financial Institutions) wrote, "It would be hard to deny that this lack of hope has penetrated America, and when people do not understand the purpose for which they live, they find it difficult to exert the effort necessary to keep alive. People simply will not make the sacrifices necessary to exercise power unless they understand that the power serves a good end. In

Vietnam, the application of power without a clearly understood purpose ended in a debacle."¹² He goes on to point out that America has retreated from the world to the degree that her people have lost belief in the legitimacy of purpose originally set up by the Founding Fathers and thus continues, "If we, then, abandon that vision of men with which we began, we ought not to be surprised if our will becomes debilitated by a lack of purpose."¹³

This article seemed to voice a nation wide plea to return to some sense of meaning and purpose found in the past. Along with the Native American experience these sentiments combined to form a great impact on the awareness of my make-up as a cultural being. This period between 1979-1980 involved one of the most intense periods of awakening and transformation of my life. It was also during this year that I was enrolled in the Graduate School at the Experiment in the Master of Arts in Teaching program. The academic discipline with an emphasis on cross-cultural and international issues worked to synthesize these sentiments and bring them to the surface.

Somewhere in the past there existed a key to the future. America has always been a land of dreamers. Beginning with the Native American, it seems as if this land was destined as a place for people to work out their dreams and visions for the future. When and where did things go wrong in the process? I had concluded that an external culture based on material well-being and individual security does not fill the gap. Perhaps this is the very reason why the Native American refuses to

integrate in what may seem to us an obviously superior way of life. It is their perception that we have lost touch with reality. I began to wonder if there was an element of truth in what they were saying.

As a teacher of American English one becomes acutely aware of how much the American Dream of success and fulfillment fire the hopes of the individuals who we are teaching. By adopting our language which is the cultural symbols of our society, they hope to get in on the Dream. During my teaching internship in La Paz, Bolivia, I became acutely aware of this as I was returning from the binational center one day. While waiting at the corner for the bus, I observed the Marxist slogans and posters over the facade of the University across the street. As I waited, I mused about how much propaganda the Russians were pumping into Latin America when suddenly it dawned upon me, "What do you think you're doing here anyway?" Of all the culture shocks this was the biggest jolt. I determined to find out just what I was doing there and discover what it was that I wanted to convey by the experience. No one can escape the responsibility of these issues. What did I have to offer which would be of value to the realization of the hopes and dreams of these people and how could I assist them in avoiding the pitfalls of this current version of the Dream? Was there a clear path ahead leading to fulfillment of the hope for a better and more peaceful world which I had determined earlier to be the real essence of the American Dream? I began seeking anew for the vision of America's destiny.

The answer to all these questions was found on the most obvious place, the dollar bill. To use a figure of speech, what I needed to find was "on the money." What could possibly be more ironic in a materialistic culture which focuses so much time and energy on the acquisition of money than that the answer could be embodied in the object of its aspirations. By getting behind the surface of the external culture symbolized by the dollar, I uncovered what I found to be the answer to America's future buried deep in the past.

What I am about to relate may or may not be accepted by the reader as factual because much of the conclusions came as a result of personal interpretation of the data through research into the writings and philosophy of the Founding Fathers. What it did for me, however, is provide a firm cultural basis which I could use in teaching American English and culture internationally. It is hoped by sharing these conclusions the paper will also be of some use to the reader in developing a philosophical approach to teaching American culture as it relates to the global community at large.

The dollar bill is rich in historical data. No single document expresses so succinctly and accurately our traditions. Underneath its surface is a wealth of knowledge which I found to be priceless. On the reverse side one discovers the Great Seal of the United States. The word seal comes from the Latin word signum meaning sign. More than anything else this is the sign of our culture.

The Seal was first placed on the dollar bill by Franklin D. Roosevelt in 1932. He was a member of the secret society of the Masonic Order whose ranks included many of the Founding Fathers of the United States. Franklin Roosevelt himself was a visionary and was responsible for the Atlantic Charter which led to the United Nations. Perhaps he saw how the vision of America's past fits into the future. The word mason comes from the trade of masonry or bricklaying. Observe the symbol of the pyramid. The purpose for choosing this ancient structure was to indicate "durability" according to Remarks and Explanations, a paper written to explain some of the symbols of the Great Seal.¹⁴ What could be a more appropriate symbol of masonry than this structure which has lasted throughout the ages?

Above the pyramid is the Eye of God which probably indicates enlightenment. Observe the rays of light emanating from the eye. Above the eye one can read in Latin "Annuit Coepitus" which means "He favors our undertaking."¹⁵ Notice the flowering plants growing at the base of the pyramid. If these plants are lillies then the clues may be pointing to a Bible passage in Matthew 6:18-34. These verses give a clear warning against materialism which leads to a state of unenlightenment or blindness. The verses further illustrate the perfect order of nature and how things prosper in their proper prospective, a state of affairs intended for humanity as long as the individuals are willing to follow the right course of action first and not concern themselves primarily with the issues of material well-being and security. I felt close to finding the

treasure which I sought as I read the words of this passage.

Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon the earth which moth and rust doth corrupt and where thieves break through and steal:

For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also.

The light of the body is the eye; if therefore thine eye be single, the whole body shall be full of light.

But if thine eye be evil, thy whole body shall be full of darkness. If, therefore, the light that is in these be darkness, how great is that darkness!

No man can serve two masters; for either he will hate the one and love the other; or else he will hold to the one, and despise the other. Ye cannot serve God and mammon.

Therefore, I say unto you, take no thought for your life, what ye shall eat, or what ye shall drink; nor yet for your body, what ye shall put on. Is not life more than meat, and the body more than raiment?

Behold the fowls of the air, for they sow not, neigh do they reap, nor gather into barns; yet your heavenly Father feedeth them. Are ye not much better than they?

Which of you by taking thought can add one cubit to this stature?

And why take ye thought for raiment? Consider the lillies of the field, how they grow; they toil not, neither do they spin;

And yet, I say unto you, that even Solomon in all his glory was arrayed like one of these.

Wherefore, if God so clothe the grass of the field, which today is, and tomorrow is cast into the oven, shall He not much more clothe you, O ye of little faith?

Therefore, take no thought, saying, what shall we eat? Or what shall we drink? Or wherewithal shall we be clothed?

"For after all these things do the Gentiles seek) for your heavenly Father knoweth that ye have need of all these things.

But seek ye first the Kingdom of God, and His righteousness; and all of these things shall be added unto you.

Take therefore no thought for the morrow: for the morrow shall take thought for the things of itself. Sufficient unto the day is the evil thereof.

Next, I asked myself why the Founding Fathers may have indicated this passage. To me it was like uncovering a time capsule. I became filled with excitement as the pieces of the puzzle came together. While sitting recently on a beautiful late autumn day in a park adjoining the headquarters of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences at Harvard University, I thought about this statement recorded at the inception of the Academy in 1780, "When we contemplate these works of nature, which no human eloquence can accurately describe, they force upon us the idea of a Supreme Mind, the consummately perfect author of them -- That universal spirit, which informs, pervades, activates the wond'rous whole."¹⁶ As I thought about this statement, I considered how far away we had gone in 200 years from that philosophy. Our system of education has become almost totally based on materialism. Webster's dictionary defines materialism as "(1a) A theory that physical matter is the only reality and that all beings and processes and phenomena can be explained as manifestations or results of matter (1b) a doctrine that the highest values of objectives lie in material well-being and in the furtherance of material progress (1c) a doctrine that economic or social change is materially caused (2) a preoccupation with or stress upon material rather than intellectual or spiritual things."¹⁷ It seems like our whole sense of reality as a civilization has changed drastically in 200 years. A survey of government policy and political platforms will show how accurately this term defines the American way of thinking.

What I am intending to illustrate is that I believe that Americans have lost touch with a way of thinking or perceiving reality which would lead to an entirely different course of action as a civilization relating to the world at large. The answer to the question from the previous paragraph as to why the Founding Fathers would place such a cryptic message in the Great Seal can be found in these words of Thomas Jefferson who was one of those involved in the creation of the Seal. He wrote, "Besides the spirit of the times may alter, will alter. Our rulers will become corrupt, our people careless ... They will be forgotten, therefore, and their rights disregarded. They will forget themselves, but in the sole faculty of making money, and will never think of uniting a due respect for their rights. The shackles, therefore, which shall not be knocked off at the conclusion of this war, will remain with us long, will be made heavier and heavier, till our rights shall revive in a convulsion."¹⁸

What could these "shackles" possibly refer to? It's obvious that it wasn't just the burden involving the empire of King George. Nearly eighty years later Abraham Lincoln spoke on this same theme at a public address. While mentioning the Declaration of Independence, he referred to "something in the Declaration giving liberty, not alone to this country but hope to the world for all future time ... It was that which gave promise that in due time the weights should be lifted from the shoulders of all men, and all should have an equal chance."¹⁹

The rights of humanity which the Declaration defines as life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness mean something entirely different when taken out of the context of the materialism. In order to recapitulate what the Founders meant by these rights, I found that they defined equality to mean the sense of moral responsibility which was the same for everyone. Jefferson wrote "The moral sense is not only man's highest faculty, but the one that is equal to all men."²⁰ This moral sense is the common sense, which was the title for Thomas Paine's famous pamphlet that was circulated in the year 1776. All men are created equal in this common sense. The context must be taken collectively in order to be understood.

In the pamphlet Common Sense Paine stated his convictions that "declaring war against the natural rights of all mankind and extirpating the defenders thereof from the face of the earth is the concern of every man to whom nature has given the power of feeling." Later on he declares, "The cause of America is in a great measure the cause of all mankind. Many circumstances have, and will arise which are not local, but universal, and through which the principles of all lovers of mankind are affected, and in the event of which their affections are interested."²¹

Taken in this collective sense, the rights of humanity mean something entirely different. I concluded that the cause of America was to abolish war, the single greatest burden which has weighed down the life, liberty, and pursuit of happiness for the entire human race. Why is this common sense so sadly lacking in American culture and civilization these days? It's just as Jefferson predicted it would be - for the sake of making

money the people have forgotten themselves. My recollection of the similar statement from the Hopi elders drove the point home even further. We had, indeed, forgotten our own heritage and traditions.

It is my personal conviction that our very survival lies in the hope for a renaissance of these ideals. These universal rights must revive in the wake of this world-shaking convulsion which is now breaking up the structures of the old order. On the Great Seal we see again the pyramid, a reminder of structural permanence and stability. Under the pyramid, we can read the words "Novus Ordo Seclorum" - meaning "a new order of the ages."²² In 1792 Thomas Paine wrote "In the declaratory exordium which prefaces the Declaration of Rights, we see the solemn and majestic spectacle of a nation opening its commission, under the auspices of its Creator, to establish a Government; a scene, so new ... that the name of a revolution is diminutive of its character, and it rises into a regeneration of man."²³

By going back, therefore, to the opening paragraph of the exordium which prefaces the Declaration of Rights, I discovered what I believe Lincoln was referring to as the hope for the future of the world. In this opening paragraph of the Declaration of Independence is the exhortation to "assume among the powers of the earth the separate and equal station which the Laws of Nature and Nature's God entitle them ...". The statement which follows is a poignant reminder to have "a decent respect to the opinions of mankind."²⁴ Then, and only then, I realized, would the burden of war be lifted from the shoulders of mankind. Since war can be abolished only through universal law, it

stands to reason that common sense would tell us that all should have an equal chance to voice their opinions. It's time that Americans, I concluded, began to strive toward the establishment of world federation.

Thomas Jefferson wrote, "I sincerely pray that all the members of the human family may, in the time prescribed by the Father of us all, find themselves securely established in the enjoyment of life, liberty, and happiness."²⁵ Benjamin Franklin also expressed his prayer that "God grant that not only the love of liberty but a thorough knowledge of the rights of man may pervade all the nations of the earth, so that a philosopher may set its foot anywhere on its surface and say 'This is my country.'"²⁶ In a letter written at the conclusion of the Revolutionary War, George Washington expressed that his "first wish" was to see the whole world at peace as a true brotherhood of nations "each striving who should contribute most to the happiness of mankind."²⁷

Personally, I feel these statements are not just expressions of pious hope but an expression of firm belief by America's Founders that her ultimate destiny and purpose lie in the assurance of life, liberty, and happiness of mankind by elimination of war. In 1793, Phillip Freneau wrote a poem commenting on Thomas Paine's Rights of Man. In this poem Freneau reminds us, "Be ours the task the ambitious to restrain, and this great lesson teach - that kings are vain; that warring realms to certain ruin haste, that kings subsist by war, and wars are waste: So shall our nation formed on Virtue's plan, Remain the guardian of the Rights of Man ..."²⁸

Putting all this together enabled me to reach the conclusion that the Founders foresaw that the United States had an important and vital role to play in the evolution of world affairs. Dr. Benjamin Rush, one of the signers of the Declaration of Independence, wrote "The American war is over, but this is far from being the case with the American Revolution. On the contrary, nothing but the first act of the drama is closed."²⁹ During the Continental Convention, George Washington expressed his belief that what they were doing in framing the Constitution was the "great rehearsal" for mankind.³⁰ I became convinced from my research that the stage had been set for this generation to act out what may be the most dramatic part of the story, now that I was able to read the script.

It is my opinion that America is on the verge of a great awakening. The dream is about to be fulfilled. Let me quote from another poem, by Phillip Freneau, which, I believe, anticipates the age in which we live,

Far brighter scenes a future age
the muse predicts these stages will hail,
whose genius may the world engage,
whose deeds may over death prevail,
and happier systems bring to view
than all the eastern sages knew."³¹

The cause of America, in this sense, means that I should take pride in the love of mankind first. This bond of affection for the human race where all should be treated as equals I discovered to be the essence of U.S. culture and civilization. This cultural essence is easily applicable to the field of teaching American English. With a clear

understanding of what I perceived to be our destiny and purpose I felt justified in spreading the political and social doctrines of America worldwide. In this manner I found the philosophical basis and foundation of U.S. culture and civilization sufficiently enlightened to meet the needs of an evolving world culture and civilization.

I found that righteousness meant to subordinate the desire of personal gain and security in the light of the understanding that the greatest happiness and prosperity is possible only through the recognition that the collective rights of all must come first. Taken on a planetary scale this common sense philosophy makes perfect sense. Such is not the case, however, with popular psychology in America which sets up the hierarchy of needs backwards. I realized that Americans are so wrapped up in themselves that they could not even recognize their own best interests. What lasting happiness is possible in a world constantly threatened by war and economic collapse through the self-centered struggle of competing nation states?

This principle of collective security is so powerfully expressed on the other side of the Great seal which contains the American eagle. Above the eagle's head is a cluster of stars tightly bound together each having a separate but equal place. The cluster seems to explode with power. I was not surprised to find out that in Remarks and Explanations, it is written that the cluster in the Seal represented the United States taking its place among the powers of the earth.³²

Could this be another clue that America should assume among the powers of the earth a separate but equal station? President Woodrow Wilson, who inspired the League of Nations, said "There must be, not a balance of power, but a community of power; not organized rivalries, but an organized common peace."³³

Should America be the one to call for the creation of a World Federation? The further implications of this part of the Seal would seem to indicate this for the American eagle holds a banner which reads "E Pluribus Unum" meaning "Out of Many - One."³⁴ This banner is held just below the cluster of stars representing the powers of the earth. Could this be a symbol calling for a world congress united to establish peace and abolish war? The arrows and the olive branch which the American eagle carries would seem to indicate this. Common sense would tell us that the final issues to war and peace could only be decidedly grasped through the agency of a world congress. A decent respect to the opinions of mankind would definitely require it.

Should America be the first to assume the responsibility for laying the foundation of world order? To me the answer was very clearly in the affirmative. The whole concept of world order has been promulgated from the U.S. as a distinct possibility right from the beginning. George Washington, the Father of the United States, also said, "Is there any doubt a common government can embrace so large a sphere? Let experience solve it ... It is well worth a fair and full experiment."³⁵

During the nineteenth century, the vision that America was chosen to fulfill this destiny was kept alive in words such as these spoken by Abraham Lincoln in his second inaugural address: "With malice toward none, with charity for all, with firmness in the right as God gives us to see the right, let us strive to finish the work we are in ... To do all that may achieve and cherish a just and lasting peace among ourselves and with all nations."³⁶ President Ulysses S. Grant, his successor, expressed this conviction even more clearly, "I am convinced that the Great Framers of the World will so develop it that it becomes one nation, so that armies and navies are no longer necessary."³⁷

This process of evolution towards world government gained particular momentum in the twentieth century with the League of Nations inspired by the genius of President Wilson. Although abandoned by the American people, a mistake which eventually led to World War II, the historic step had been taken towards World Federation. The second stage of this stupendous process has led to the United Nations. Whatever chaotic conditions which may result due to current lack of world law, let us keep in mind the vision of this evolutionary process. Eventually, there should emerge a Supreme Tribunal to settle international disputes to which all nations will give up the rights of absolute sovereignty. The third and final step will mark the stage of maturity for the human race when the citizens of the world put away the playthings of war and nationalism forever.

The generation of the post-atomic era must take the responsibility now for meeting the needs of a global community. Einstein wrote in

1947 "Through the release of atomic energy our generation has brought into the world the most revolutionary force since prehistoric man's discovery of fire. This basic power of the universe cannot be fitted into the outmoded concept of narrow nationalism."³⁸ President Eisenhower felt this responsibility acutely, "The world no longer has a choice between force and law; if civilization is to survive, he must choose the rule of law."³⁹ Einstein also indicated the only option available, "There is no salvation for civilization, or even the human race, other than the creation of a world government."⁴⁰

Finally, I found this statement of President Truman expresses so clearly the common sense of world law as modeled by the U.S.A. as the next stage of human evolution that I thought I would conclude my assumptions with these words, "When Kansas and Colorado have a quarrel over the water in the Arkansas River they don't call out the National Guard in each state and go to war over it. They bring suit in the Supreme Court of the United States and abide by the decision. There isn't a reason in the world why we cannot do that internationally."⁴¹

A NEW RACE OF MEN

Theoretical Application in Community Language Learning

This research completed my assumptions about the nature of U.S. culture and civilization in this period of human history. I was truly excited and inspired by this information which had led to the revival of my shattered hopes in the destiny and purpose of America. My rediscovery of the solid principles on which the past is based gave hope for the future pointing the way to a safe path ahead. By understanding these principles, I knew where I was going in my approach to teaching U.S. culture and civilization. I felt justified in promoting such principles now that I could separate the wheat from the tares, that is, now that I could weed out the materialist doctrine along with its imperialistic attitudes. It was in LaPaz that I first realized the necessity to find the right approach to teaching U.S. culture and civilization in a way which would not lead to a dead end. My intention in this chapter is to point out the direction where this approach might lead and give some practical applications which are the steps along the way.

Wherever conservative trends may be in the current state of U.S. affairs in world politics the fundamental principles underlying that foundation of this nation stand for themselves. Sooner or later we will be forced as a nation to act according to our own principles in global affairs and go forward. It is the teacher of American English

who bears the responsibility of leading the way by being a cultural ambassador for the United States to the host country abroad. It is my conviction that if we bear these principles of the unity of the human race in mind while approaching our objectives, we can assist greatly in the acceleration of the process. This consists simply in keeping the assumption, "assume among the powers of the earth the separate and equal station" as the basis of approach. In this way our language, which has already become a global means of communication, will become a medium through which the consciousness of world citizenship will develop. Through various methods employed in the classroom we can foster and synthesize the emergence of the global community using the language medium as the vehicle. While allowing each culture to exist in its own separate and equal place, we can assist in creating world peace through understanding.

In his book Counsel-Learning in Second Languages, Charles Curran states, "In this context, Counselor-Learning skills create the positive atmosphere in which the knower and learner can function together in as a creative learning community."⁴² Using the cultural medium of English it is possible to create a microcosm of the global community right in the classroom. Methodology such as Dr. Curran's is ideal in fostering the proper spirit of communication through understanding. The inclination towards cultural imperialism can be avoided if the teacher becomes aware of the position of equality in this common sense approach.

There are various practical ways by which this can be applied in the classroom. One of the techniques which I found helpful is developing cultural contrasts. By contrasts I mean the comparisons of a basis of similarity while contrasting the variations culturally. Using the basic element of food is an example. I have found in advanced classes that many barriers of communication and understanding can be demolished by exploring this common ground of humanity. There are many such areas of human similarities which can be contrasted and shared such as family life, stories and folklore, holidays, etc. In such situations the desire to share and communicate can be so strong that barriers in language fluency can be more readily overcome. After all, the basis of the words communication and community have the same applied meaning which involves mutual sharing. Dr. Curran also writes on the subject of learning in such an environment, "This incorporated sense of belonging and sharing brings with it a sense of communication, communion and community in place of isolated competition that can be both alienating and rejecting."⁴³ On the planetary level a global community is certainly preferable to competing and antagonistic nation states. In the same way these principles apply to the classroom in the new language learning process.

I have discovered in Curran's theoretical assumptions an atmosphere emerges where attitudes, values, and goals can be discussed freely. A new sense of belonging to something greater is attained and out of many individual parts a feeling of unity and cohesion develops.

Dr. Curran goes on to describe the process, "As a consequence, a redemptive process emerges by which each one feels his growing worth in the achievement of learning. By this he is encouraged to further confidence and trust in his own learning capacity and self-worth as well as faith in and commitment to the other learners and the informed person, the teacher. Such faith and hope engender love and security in place of fear, anxiety and self-mistrust and attack. The student is therefore learning in an atmosphere of respectful love of self and others and the genuine regard this produces. Personal enthusiasm, self-affirmation and even competition, are not stifled by this but encouraged. These self-assertions do not, however, break the bonds of closeness and caring which each one shares with others. They rather engage each one in a process which is the reasonable pursuit of his own excellence without encroaching on others or manipulating them for his own needs and purposes."⁴⁴

I have quoted the statement above in full because I feel it perfectly expresses the experiences which I have had in applying the principles of U.S. culture outlined in my second chapter to the process of teaching American English. The two principles translated from the Latin as "out of many-one" and "a new order of the ages" can be found in the Community Language Learning environment. Just as the old order of competitive and antagonistic states is different and distinct from the unity and freedom of the new order, so the new system applies to individuals in a group situation. Rather than holding back the development of the component parts, the new order liberates growth

and potential. The basic human rights of life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness are more completely realized as a result. Charles Curran refers to this as "living learning."⁴⁵

Above and beyond all other assumptions, I have found that the unique American sense of optimism and high energy the most dynamic and positive of all aspects of the culture. By the enthusiasm generated by this sense of optimism I have discovered a quickening power that brings to life the interpersonal relationships of the classroom. The world is looking for a new vision of hope for the future, and I feel that the Americans have much to offer in this area.

Two centuries ago a Frenchman traveled and emigrated to the United States. He wrote his impressions down of the American cultural identity which quite accurately express my intentions here. In 1782, Hector St. John de Crevecoeur wrote "What then is the American, this new man? ... He is an American who, leaving behind all his ancient prejudices and manners, receives new ones from the new mode of life he has embraced, the new government he obeys and the new rank he holds ... Here individuals of all nations are melted into a new race of men, whose labors and posterity will one day cause great changes in the world ... The American is a new man, who acts upon new principles; he must therefore entertain new ideas from new opinions"⁴⁶

What is this "new race of men" alluded to by Crevecoeur? Perhaps the new race is simply the human race itself. The individuals comprising the new race are aware of the oneness of humanity and act upon these

principles. This revolutionary concept was incorporated into the very Seal of the United States. By breaking through the code of the Great Seal I have discovered that the United States bears the primary responsibility to promote the protection of human rights. Currently, the rights of the human race to life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness are seriously threatened with extinction. In this sense, I have found that the loyalty of Americans to the human race must come first, and, as Crevocoeur stated, they must leave behind all "ancient prejudices and manners." In order to lead the world into those "great changes" which involve the reorganization of the planet, Americans must act on new principles. This requires a fundamental change in the current way of American thinking which involves a complete rejection of materialism. The disease of materialism has debilitated the sense of purpose for the American people. What is needed is a return to the vision which fired the minds and hearts of Americans during the Revolution in 1776. That vision is essentially spiritual in nature, and involves a rejection of the things of the past.

In this context I have found Curran's research has made theoretical steps towards this goal. In the passage which follows I have found in Curran's theory a definition of this process of self-examination which leads to a transcendent way of thinking, "It is through taking counsel with oneself that a person can free himself from the bind of the past and arrive at a fresh experience, uncontaminated by the culture into which he has been born. In proportion as he can free himself

from prior unconscious selectivities in each new experience, he arrives at a certain primitive freedom which we can call truth, and it is this truth that makes him wholly free. That which is true will free him from his narrow, selective bias and enable him to move out to others. This truth will make him capable of self-communication which, by definition, means it will rightly involve him with others and will allow others to rightly involve themselves with him and invest in him."⁴⁷

In this context, the goal is for the individual to realize what he or she has to offer to humanity as a whole. The emergence of a new race of men who are conscious of the oneness and wholeness of their essential humanity is described by Curran in these words, "Our age has become especially conscious of the family of man and of equal adult dignity together. The nature of humanness is revealing itself as truly one species, and distinctions are found only within that species. The distinctions we now make are not in the nature of a social totem-pole but rather shared commonality. What is and what is not personal in each experience we have determines its humanness. These experiences determine, not positions of superiority and inferiority, but simply recognize each person's unique talent and ability and, therefore, what he or she can be enabled to become or to give."⁴⁸

As I have demonstrated earlier, these conclusions arrived at are just common sense. The concepts are not relatively new but I have found them intimately connected with the destiny and purpose of the United States right from the beginning. I would like to conclude

with these words of Curran which sum up the approach which I will take towards further application of these principles in the future, "It is perhaps misleading now to say that we are entering a new age, since a new age has obviously already dawned and its effects are apparent everywhere. What is currently more at issue is how we enter into the spirit of this new age and respond to the challenges and opportunities it presents. Rather than meeting these issues with anxiety, we need to respond to them constructively and positively."⁴⁹

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