

THE PULSE OF SPIRIT



EMISSARIES
OF DIVINE LIGHT

THE IMPULSE OF THE AGES

17 NOVEMBER 2008

It's a political season. Here in the United States we have an election on Tuesday. Many of us have already voted. Depending on how you look at it, this is a not-so-big deal or a huge deal. But here it is—we have this election coming up and, at least at a certain level of things, it seems that the outcome will make a huge difference in the future of the world. I want to speak for a moment about political things. This isn't a political rally. I am not promoting a particular candidate. But it is interesting to see what is portrayed on the political scene, and it may say something about our own function and about the world in which we live.

It seems clear to me that over these last few years there has been, through the United States government, a manifestation of monumental incompetence, or at least what looks like that. I'm not here to run down the reputation of any of the people involved, but nonetheless, as you look at event after event, it's hard to get away from the appearance of great incompetence. That incompetence is accompanied by a claim to supposed ability. So it's accompanied by people portraying themselves as being very competent. But when you actually look at it, it's hard to get away from the picture of gross incompetence.

So it may sound like I'm participating in a popular human sport: We elect what seem to be inspiring leaders and we ask them to do the impossible, and when they fail we criticize them. Of course, the leaders play their part in all that. They offer the false promise of "A chicken in every pot." If you listen to all the campaigning, so much of what is being said comes down to that. "If you elect me, I will put a chicken in every pot. And in fact, for every pot you have, of whatever shape or variety, I will put some kind of chicken in it." And that is, in substantial measure, the course of political leadership.

There have been some rare exceptions, which stand out in great relief from politics as usual. It seems to take unusual circumstances to bring out any other kind of leadership, or for people to accept any other kind of leadership. One such occasion was during the Second World War, when Europe, and particularly England, was facing a calamitous situation. I have with me a quote from

the speech that Winston Churchill gave on the first occasion upon which he addressed the House of Commons, and I'd like to read from it:

"I say to the House as I said to ministers who have joined this government, I have nothing to offer but blood, toil, tears, and sweat. We have before us an ordeal of the most grievous kind. We have before us many, many months of struggle and suffering.

"You ask, what is our policy? I say it is to wage war by land, sea, and air. War with all our might and with all the strength God has given us, and to wage war against a monstrous tyranny never surpassed in the dark and lamentable catalogue of human crime. That is our policy.

"You ask, what is our aim? I can answer in one word. It is victory. Victory at all costs. Victory in spite of all terrors. Victory, however long and hard the road may be, for without victory there is no survival.

"Let that be realized. No survival for the British Empire, no survival for all that the British Empire has stood for, no survival for the urge, the impulse of the ages, that mankind shall move forward toward his goal.

"I take up my task in buoyancy and hope. I feel sure that our cause will not be suffered to fail among men. I feel entitled at this juncture, at this time, to claim the aid of all and to say, 'Come then, let us go forward together with our united strength.'" (www.fordham.edu/halsall/mod/churchill-blood.html)

There was a demonstration by the British people during the Battle of Britain of a united strength. I give thanks for those in any age who've seen that there was something of great value to be preserved for the sake of all humanity. We could call in question the virtue of the British Empire, and yet there was something of greater significance that was being preserved, a greater opportunity, which Winston Churchill described as "the impulse of the ages."

There is a high calling for all of humanity, which we have not yet fulfilled. Our calling is not based on the virtue of our past. Our calling is to the greatness of the future that is our highest potential. To the degree that call comes through leaders in our political process today, as it has through Barak Obama, it is a wonderful thing. It calls us to be one people around the world. It calls us to be one people wherever we gather and in whatever we endeavor to do. It calls us to be one people, drawn together in the only way a people could be drawn together, which is through a higher love—a love for a great mission. That mission may be understood in limited ways and may be acted upon in limited ways. But that limitation in no way changes the reality of our calling. We are called to manifest something glorious on earth together, as one people.

That stands in sharp contrast to the apparent incompetence of our government. But it is far too easy to blame our failing as a people on our leaders or upon our government. Blame of leaders might seem to let us off the hook. Yet it is futile to be passive oneself while pointing a finger at leaders,

accusing them of failing to deliver what was impossible for them to deliver without a body of people coming together for the highest purpose.

Many of us have been looking at the story of the days of Creation to see what it has to say about our own function and about the creative process. The third of those days has to do with competence and incompetence. It talks about dry land appearing. That has to do with what shows up in the outer form of our lives. On the larger scene there is financial crisis, war, and the specter of economic collapse. Closer to home, there is whatever is showing up in our personal lives. We can put forth a Herculean effort to make the form be what we think it ought to be, to let the dry land appear. When the circumstances of our lives don't turn out the way we want them to, we can redouble our efforts and work even harder. And when that doesn't work, we can redouble our efforts again—leading ultimately, if there's nothing else in the equation, to exhaustion. There's no way we can work hard enough to make the forms of our life beautiful and be what they ought to be by sheer human effort.

We could look at this on the larger scene. Do you think there's any way to put an end to war, or to have the peoples of the world thrive and live in well-being, if the power of love is not bringing people together around the world as one people? If there isn't one love that burns bright in the human heart, is there any way for the forms of our world to come out right?

It may be easy to see that on the larger scene, but how about among us in the groups of people we work with at whatever level—our families, our communities, or organizations of any kind? Is it really possible for us to fail to come together in love, with one heart, for the highest purpose, and then have everything come out right?

It's interesting that in this verse from Genesis, there's something that precedes the dry land. The waters come together in one place. The waters have to be gathered unto one place before the dry land appears, before the forms of our lives are creative. And what are those waters that have to come together in one place? Aren't they the waters of emotional experience that are present in us all? Those waters of the heart have to come together in one place for the dry land to appear, for the forms in our life to come out right, to be beautiful. It isn't possible for a body of people to be divided and at odds with one another, and then have the forms of their life together be beautiful. It won't happen in any meaningful or lasting way for any body of people or for humanity as a whole.

But the process of the waters coming together doesn't start in the world at large. It doesn't start for humanity as a whole, and in fact it doesn't start in any of the groups in which you or I participate. Because the waters in the groups in which we participate, our families and communities and nations, depend upon the waters in us—the waters of our own heart, which can be like so many disparate puddles and pools of heart substance all over the place, serving so many strange gods, instead of the highest love.

Many of us know the family motto of Martin Exeter, who led this ministry for many years: "One Heart, One Way." Where there is one heart for a person, there is one way—one way forward, and

one thing to do. There are no longer divided ideas and mixed allegiances. The fullness of a man's or a woman's heart can come to the place of serving what is most high for that person, and because of that there is one heart. And then the forms of a person's life can reflect that highest purpose.

So if we are feeling incompetent, without the necessary capacity to carry forward creatively in our life personally, or if we are projecting incompetence upon other people—whether it be our national leaders, our family leaders, or community leaders—and we're accusing them of incompetence because we're not getting a chicken in our pot, let's stop. Let's stop and, in this eternal moment, face what it is that we love most, what we value most, and let all of who and what we are serve that. If we do that personally, we have the basis upon which we can do it together. We know that as we do that with other people, we allow our collective heart to come to one place, one place of love for what is truly lovely; and we have the assurance that what is born out of that will be beautiful and fulfilling, and will serve the impulse of the ages.

We are a body of people around the world, however disparate we seem to be. On behalf of every other person on the line here today, as well as on my own behalf, and most of all on behalf of this highest purpose that we serve, I want to reach out to each of you and say we are one body, not because we are special—although we are—but because we love and serve one thing. We serve the impulse of the ages, which is one impulse. And because we serve one thing, we are of one heart, or at least we have that opportunity. We are of one heart, and because we are of one heart, we are one body, here to create one beautiful world.

*David Karchere
dkarchere@emnet.org
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