

Be the change you wish to see. Be peace.

# BECAUSE

Because one person can change the world.

## The Dead Have Nothing to Lose by Telling the Truth

*On the 50th Anniversary of the Adoption of  
the Universal Declaration of Human Rights*

He sees the leaves fly free.  
She sees the wild horse and the sparrow.  
Free to labor, to consort with their kind, to choose or be chosen.  
He sees them fed and feeding, mindful of the season.  
She hears the continents shifting, he smells the air of change.  
He tastes the wind-borne soot of rebirth.  
She feels the human cry in her bones.

What can they do to gain our attention?  
Shall he dance, shall he spin in the air, shall he vote with his feet,  
with his voice, with the shells of his burning ears?  
Shall she tell the world to hear the world's crying?  
Shall she number the bodies, the prisons, the pyres,  
shall he mark the graves, display the bloody shackles?  
How many pairs of disembodied heads will it take?  
How many detached hands and feet?  
How many hollow cheeks, empty stomachs, vacant eyes?  
How many skulls without memory?  
He has been there, she has seen it,  
they have lived and died a long time.  
He has something to say about who did what.  
She has something to say about the living.  
Let history honor the murmurs of conscience that are  
heard above ground.

Let praise flow to those who unclenched a fist.  
Who granted men and women the freedom of the sparrow.  
Who taught us to think twice.  
Who showed us that famine is not a fast.  
That exile is the last step.  
That the rights of the few must be written down by the many.  
She sees the leaves fly free.  
He sees the wild horse and the sparrow.  
Free to work, to consort with their kind, to choose or be chosen.  
She sees them fed and feeding, mindful of the season.  
He hears the continents shifting, she smells the air of change.  
She tastes the wind-borne soot of rebirth.  
He feels the human cry in his bones. — Marvin Bell



*First Lady Eleanor Roosevelt examines the  
Universal Declaration of Human Rights, 1949.*

“No matter how big a nation is, it is no stronger than its weakest people, and as long as you keep a person down, some part of you has to be down there to hold him down, so it means you cannot soar as you might otherwise.” *Marian Anderson*

“All violence consists in some people forcing others, under threat of suffering or death, to do what they do not want to do.” *Leo Tolstoy*

“The maxim that people should not have a right till they are ready to exercise it properly, is worthy of the fool in the old story who resolved not to go into the water till he had learned to swim.” *Macaulay*

“Whoever fights monsters should see to it that in the process he does not become a monster. And when you look into an abyss, the abyss also looks into you.” *Friedrich Nietzsche*

“All we ask, God, is to be safe from the rain, just warm enough in winter to watch the snow with a smile, have enough to eat so that our hunger will not turn us to angry beasts, and sanity enough to make justice that will not kill our love of life.” *Joseph Pinatauro*

“The sad truth is that most evil is done by people who never make up their minds to be good or evil.” *Hannah Arendt*

# Universal Declaration of Human Rights

Whereas recognition of the inherent dignity and of the equal and inalienable rights of all members of the human family is the foundation of freedom, justice and peace in the world,

Whereas disregard and contempt for human rights have resulted in barbarous acts which have outraged the conscience of mankind, and the advent of a world in which human beings shall enjoy freedom of speech and belief and freedom from fear and want has been proclaimed as the highest aspiration of the common people,

Whereas it is essential, if man is not to be compelled to have recourse, as a last resort, to rebellion against tyranny and oppression, that human rights should be protected by the rule of law,

Whereas it is essential to promote the development of friendly relations between nations,

Whereas the peoples of the United Nations have in the Charter reaffirmed their faith in fundamental human rights, in the dignity and worth of the human person and in the equal rights of men and

women and have determined to promote social progress and better standards of life in larger freedom,

Whereas Member States have pledged themselves to achieve, in cooperation with the United Nations, the promotion of universal respect for and observance of human rights and fundamental freedoms,

Whereas a common understanding of these rights and freedoms is of the greatest importance for the full realization of this pledge,

Now, therefore, The General Assembly, Proclaims this Universal Declaration of Human Rights as a common standard of achievement for all peoples and all nations, to the end that every individual and every organ of society, keeping this Declaration constantly in mind, shall strive by teaching and education to promote respect for these rights and freedoms and by progressive measures, national and international, to secure their universal and effective recognition and observance, both among the peoples of Member States themselves and among the peoples of territories under their jurisdiction.

## ARTICLES:

**1** When children are born, they are free and each should be treated in the same way. They have reason and conscience and should act towards one another in a friendly manner.

**2** Everyone can claim the following rights, despite: a different sex; a different skin colour; speaking a different language; thinking different things; believing in another religion; owning more or less; being born in another social group; coming from another country. It also makes no difference whether the country you live in is independent or not.

**3** You have the right to live, and to live in freedom and safety.

**4** Nobody has the right to treat you as his/her slave and you should not make anyone your slave.

**5** Nobody has the right to torture you.

**6** You should be legally protected in the same way everywhere, and like everyone else.

**7** The law is the same for everyone; it should be applied in the same way to all.

**8** You should be able to ask for legal help when the rights your country grants you are not respected.

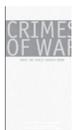
**9** Nobody has the right to put you in prison, to keep you there, or to send you away from your country unjustly, or without good reason.

**10** If you go on trial this should be done in public. The people who try you should not let themselves be influenced by others.

**11** You should be considered innocent until it can be proved that you are guilty. If you are accused of a crime, you should always have the right to defend yourself. Nobody has the right to condemn you and punish you for something you have not done.

**12** You have the right to ask to be protected if someone tries to harm your good name, enter your house, open your letters, or bother you or your family without a good reason.

**13** You should be considered innocent until it can be proved that you are guilty. If you are accused of a crime, you should always have the right to defend yourself. Nobody has the right to condemn you and punish you for something you have not done.



**Crimes of War: What the Public Should Know**  
by Roy Gutman & David Rieff  
W.W. Norton & Company (1999)

“...a riveting mixture of reporters’ accounts of war crimes in every continent, coupled with essays by lawyers on international humanitarian law.” -*The Guardian*

**14** If someone hurts you, you have the right to go to another country and ask it to protect you. You lose this right if you have killed someone and if you, yourself, do not respect what is written here.

**15** You have the right to belong to a country and nobody can prevent you, without a good reason, from belonging to a country if you wish.

**16** As soon as person is legally entitled, he or she has the right to marry and have a family. In doing this, neither the colour of your skin, the country you come from nor your region should be impediments. Men and women have the same rights when they are married and also when they are separated. Nobody should force a person to marry. The government of your country should protect your family and its members.

**17** You have the right to own things and nobody has the right to take these from you without a good reason.

**18** You have the right to profess your religion freely, to change it, and to practice it either on your own or with other people.

**19** You have the right to think what you want, to say what you like, and nobody should forbid you from doing so. You should be able to share your ideas also—with people from any other country.

**20** You have the right to organize peaceful meetings or to take part in meetings in a peaceful way. It is wrong to force someone to belong to a group.

**21** You have the right to take part in your country's political affairs either by belonging to the government yourself or by choosing politicians who have the same ideas as you. Governments should be voted for regularly and voting should be secret. You should get a vote and all votes should be equal. You also have the same right to join the public service as anyone else.

**22** The society in which you live should help you to develop and to make the most of all the advantages (culture, work, social welfare) which are offered to you and to all the men and women in your country.

**23** You have the right to work, to be free to choose your work, to get a salary which allows you to support your family. If a man and a woman do the same work, they should get the same pay. All people who work have the right to join together to defend their interests.

**24** Each work day should not be too long, since everyone has the right to rest and should be able to take regular paid holidays.

**25** You have the right to have whatever you need so that you and your family: do not fall ill; go hungry; have clothes and a house; and are helped if you are out of work, if you are ill, if you are old, if your wife or husband is dead, or if you do not earn a living for any other reason you cannot help. The mother who is going is going to have a baby, and her baby should get special help. All children have the same rights, whether or not the mother is married.

**26** You have the right to go to school and everyone should go to school. Primary schooling should be free. You should be able to learn a profession or continue your studies as far as you wish. At school, you should be able to develop all your talents and you should be taught to get on with others, whatever their race, religion or the country they come from. Your parents have the right to choose how and what you will be taught at school.

**27** You have the right to share in your community's arts and sciences, and any good they do. Your works as an artist, writer, or a scientist should be protected, and you should be able to benefit from them.

**28** So that your rights will be respected, there must be an 'order' which can protect them. This 'order' should be local and worldwide.

**29** You have duties towards the community within which your personality can only fully develop. The law should guarantee human rights. It should allow everyone to respect others and to be respected.

**30** In all parts of the world, no society, no human being, should take it upon her or himself to act in such a way as to destroy the rights which you have just been reading about.



Adopted by UN General Assembly  
Resolution 217A (III)  
of 10 December 1948



**Universal Declaration of Human Rights**  
by Ruth Rocha  
United Nations (1985)

This beautifully illustrated children's book helps us all to understand better the importance of human rights. Available on-line through the United Nations at <[www.un.org/Pubs/CyberSchoolBus/bookstor/Html/univ.htm](http://www.un.org/Pubs/CyberSchoolBus/bookstor/Html/univ.htm)>

# Hymn for Nations Internatural Law

(Words by Josephine Bacon - Music by Ludwig von Beethoven)

Peo - ple shout your coun - try's an - them,  
sing your land's un - dy - ing fame, light the  
won - drous tale of na - tions with your peo - ple's  
gold - en name; tell your peo - ple's no - ble  
sto - ry, raise on high your coun - try's sign. Join  
then in the fi - nal glo - ry, come and  
lift your flag with mine.

People, shout your country's anthem,  
sing your land's undying fame;  
Light the wondrous tale of nations  
with your people's golden name!  
Tell your people's noble story, raise on high your country's sign!  
Join then in the final glory, come and lift your flag with mine.

Hail the sun of peace, now rising gold the war clouds ever furled;  
Blend your banners, sisters, brothers,  
In the rainbow of the world!  
Red as blood and blue as heaven, Wise as age and proud as youth,  
Melt your colors, wonder woven, In the great white light of truth.

Build the road of peace before us, Build it wide & deep & long;  
Speed the slow, remind the eager,  
Help the weak & check the strong.  
None shall push aside another, None shall let another fall,  
Work beside me, sister, brother, All for one and one for all.

On December 10, 1948, the United Nations passed the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, destined to consolidate world peace through the contribution of the United Nations toward the liberation of individuals from the unjustified oppression and constraint to which they are too often subjected. The peaceCENTER invited **David Link**, the Dean of the Law School at Notre Dame University from 1975-1999 and now the Director of the International Centre for Healing and the Law in Kalamazoo, Michigan, to share some brief thoughts with us on human rights.

In this short space, we could examine the provisions of the world's human rights declarations and accords or even list the nations that have disregarded or reinterpreted the requirements of those documents, including documents to which those nations are signatories. However, that is not necessary. There is one theory on human rights that even the most powerful nations cannot escape.

Dr. Claudio F. Benedi, an international authority on human rights, developed a theory that is known as the Benedi Doctrine. It has two major underlying principles: Human rights are god-given and, therefore, nations have no authority to overrule or interpret those rights.

Nations or authorities which try to interpret, limit or suspend human rights are acting unlawfully, Benedi maintains, and have lost their basis for governance. Consequently, acting against any person's human rights is an abdication of authority.

Dr. Benedi divides human rights violations between institutional and human contraventions. That means that all rights belong to a person or to a societal group. Human rights never belong to any governing body.

At this point it is important to note that every right carries with it one or more corresponding responsibilities. Failure to discharge responsibilities may allow a government to limit certain rights; for example, criminal activity may allow a government to limit freedom of travel. On the other hand, any person who fulfills his or her responsibility has retained his or her corresponding human rights. No government authority has any power to take that right away, modify, limit or reinterpret it.

Certainly the detailed definitions contained in various international declarations and accords provide a convenient scorecard for accusing a person or nation of human rights violations. Unfortunately, some nations regard security or sovereignty as legitimate reasons to limit or reinterpret those international agreements. However, under the Benedi doctrine, **human rights are a matter of natural law, not of international law.**



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Since 1995, the all-volunteer and interfaith peaceCENTER continues to be a significant community catalyst for peace in San Antonio, Texas. Compassion and Justice are our strong guiding lights. Contemplative Practices, Experiential Education, and Nonviolent Actions are our working expressions throughout the community at large.

The peaceCENTER is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization  
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