

Sir Sarvepalli Radhakrishnan, World Citizen

If we claim to be civilized, if we love justice, if we cherish mercy, if we are not ashamed to own the reality of the inward light, we must affirm that we are first and foremost Citizens of the World

S. Radhakrishnan
Philosopher and President of India
From 1962 to 1967

“The present crisis in human affairs is due to a profound crisis in human consciousness, a lapse from the organic wholeness of life”.

Today, there is a crisis of perception, a widespread sense of unease concerning old forms of thinking. The issue at stake is not so much that the old view is wrong, but rather that the scope of the old view is not adequate. Thus, as we move into the Age of Aquarius, there is a profound renewal of perception concerning Gaia, our planetary home, concerning the full nature of the person, and concerning the way the world society is organized. Perceptions concerning the planet, the person, and the world community are interrelated.

As Radhakrishnan pointed out, the next stage of human evolution is in the human psyche *“in his mind and spirit, in the emergencies of a larger understanding and awareness, in the development of a new integration of character adequate to the new age. When he gains a philosophic consciousness and an intensity of understanding, a profound apprehension of the meaning of the whole, there will result a more adequate social order which will influence not only individuals but peoples and nations. We have to fight for this order first in our souls, then in the world outside.”*

Radhakrishnan repeatedly stressed the close interdependence between the need to recover the vision of the Higher Self in each person and the need to move beyond a narrow, nationalistic view of the world.

If we are to help the present society to grow organically into a world order, we must make it depend on the universal and enduring values which are implanted in the human heart that each individual is sacred, that we are born for love and not hate... We have learned to live peacefully in larger and larger units. The concept of a community has grown from a narrow tribal basis to the Nation State. There is no stopping short of a world community.”

Before becoming President of India, Sarvepalli Radhakrishnan first served as Vice-President in the early 1950s when India played a major role as mediator in bringing the Korean War to an end and generally helped to reduce Soviet-American Cold War tensions.

His words at that time of great tensions also hold true for our period of transition;

“Out of the anguish of our times is being born a new unity of all mankind in which the free spirit of man can find peace and safety. It is in our power to end the fears which afflict humanity, and save the world from the disaster that impends. Only we should be men of a universal cast of mind, capable of interpreting peoples to one another and developing faith that is the only antidote to fear. The threat to our civilization can be met only on the deeper levels of consciousness. If we fail to overcome the discord between power and spirit, we will be destroyed by the forces which we had the knowledge to create but not the wisdom to control.”

The task he held out to his fellow world citizens is clear. *“We must recreate and re-enact a vision of the world based on the elements of reverence, order, and human dignity, without which no society can be held together...To do this, we need a recovery of spiritual awareness, a new and transforming contact with the inner springs of life, a sense of value”*

All persons must take charge of events on a world-wide scale and become wakeful, responsible and truly creative beings.

Rene Wadlow

