

# **FIRST, WE ARE CITIZENS OF THE WORLD** **NEXT OF OUR MOTHERLAND**

## **Patriotism Vs. Universalism**

### **Thrust of the Story:**

*The story is an allegory of our world. The monument to be built stands for the entire mankind. Each stone represents one of the countries of the world. Each stone is unique because each country has a unique history, culture and traditions. If the monument has to be representative of the world, each country has to contribute with its "uniqueness".*

*The monument has to display unity in plurality. Yet, in order for the building to be a reality each stone, each nation, should have in its heart the good of the world in first place. Each nation should be willing to sacrifice its pride and greed to be more than the others to give consistency and firmness to the entire world structure. In the long run all will benefit.*

### **Leading Thoughts**

- ✓ *The world, humanity comes first, country next.*
- ✓ *Citizens of the world should be patriotic – they should love and be loyal to their countries - yet they remain citizens of the world*
- ✓ *To love one's country means love the people of the country.*
- ✓ *Patriotism is not for gains or profits, but for service.*

## **A MONUMENT TO UNIVERSAL UNITY AND FRATERNITY**

### **The Story**

It was decided by the UNESCO to erect a memorial monument as a reminder to all of the "Unity and Fraternity" of mankind. The organizers sent envoys to all the countries of the world to collect specimen stones in order to build that memorial. The stones to be collected had to be unique representations of their countries of origin. All of them had to be fitted into one single monumental structure..

As the work proceeded, the artist mason, with great care took one stone at a time, looked at it, and considered in what way he could use it best in the context of the entire monument.: He spoke to each specimen with grew respect and affection.

To one he said "Oh, you are strong and sturdy! You will make solid foundations. I know, that once buried in the ground, no one will ever see you anymore, nor praise you. No one will admire your fabric and texture and yet, you will give consistency to the whole monument." And the stone said "Yes, master, I am ready. Bury me in the foundations. I am proud to be part and parcel of this monument."

And to another stone the Mason said "You are so colorful and shining. Forgive me for the pain I'll cause you. I have to chip you and cut you to size." And the stone replied: "Never mind the pain. Yes, cut me, I am willing; chisel me, I only want to be useful to build our memorial and be a part thereof".

Then, the Master Mason holding another stone in his hands exclaimed: "Oh, you are so pleasant to the touch, I like you so much, yet I have to place you upside down."

And to another stone he said: "Vow! How attractive you are! But bear with me, I have to cut you into small bits that your beauty may be scattered all over our monument"

And to yet another: "You are luminous and splendid. I'll polish you even more that you may shine for ever like the crown of the monument."

And all the stones kept replying to the Master: "Yes! Yes! Do as you think best. It's enough pride and joy for to be part of the entire monument!"

At last, the monument was finished. It was, indeed, a glorious sight to see. Beautiful, inspiring beyond words! A fitting Memorial symbolizing "**The Unity and Fraternity of all the Peoples of the World**".

### **POINTS FOR REFLECTION AND DISCUSSION**

1. What does the monument of the story intend to represent? Explain.
2. What do the different stones stand for?
3. Why each stone is "unique"?
4. Why to complete such monument representative stones of all countries are required?
5. Whose interests each stone - each country of the world - should have primarily in its heart? Why?
6. Should the love and loyalty to one's country overpower the love we ought to have for the peoples of the world? Why?
7. If the love we have for our country is greater than the love we have for mankind, who will ultimately suffer? Why?
8. What is meant by "Patriotism"? Is it good? How far? What are its dangers?
9. What's the difference between "patriotism" and "fanaticism" for one's country's culture, traditions, history or religion?
10. Is it common for politicians to create and exploit a false and blind "patriotism" among the masses? Why? How?
11. What are the consequences of that for the world?
12. Should I love my country "above all" or "best of all"? Why? Explain.

### **Do you agree or disagree with the following statements?**

Discuss. Agree or disagree? and why.

- I should love my country most of all countries.
- My country is the best of all countries.
- I love my country first, the world next.

- I love the world first, my country next.
- Love for my country means love for its peoples
- Patriotism means to love and serve the people of my country.
- To serve my country for personal gains is naked greed masquerading as patriotism
- Pseudo-patriotism is one of the most blinding passions.
- Patriotism is not for profits but for service.
- Politicians who take advantage of their country are not only parasites but traitors.
- We are first, born citizens of the world, secondly citizens of a country.
- In today's world, it's well nigh impossible to be a politician and an honest patriot.

### **THOUGHTS FOR AN INPUT**

- Each citizen should love his country as he loves himself. To love one's country does not mean to despise others or hate them.
- All nations of the earth should live like a family, each retaining its identity, yet respecting and admiring others. It should be "A Family of Nations"
- By an attitude of give and take, the countries of the world would be able build a prosperous and happy world.
- Patriotism is good - is a virtue - yet, when overdone it becomes "fanaticism" for one's country, culture, customs or religion.
- Fanatic patriotism is destructive; it breeds strife, dissensions and wars.
- I should love my country most, yet I should not consider it the best of all. It's like loving one's mother. I should love my mother most, yet I should not think she is the best of all possible mothers to the point of despising other people's mothers.
- Patriotism is sort of a relative judgment. "My country is the "best for me" as my mother is the best for me too.
- Collective pride and greed under the cover of "patriotism" is one of the most destructive passions the world has ever seen.
- Demagogies and pseudo patriotisms has been baneful to the world.
- True patriotism means love for the people of our country - our brother and sister citizens - not a glorification of our 'past exploits, of our old history or of an illustrious cultural heritage'.
- All those things are dead entities; it is our brothers and sisters - rich and poor – and alive today who make our country. If they were not living persons today, our country wouldn't exist.
- Any country minus its inhabitants would be just a desert, a desolate waste. Nothing lovable!
- If anyone says that he loves his country and exploits his countrymen is a liar.
- People in positions of power – consciously or unconsciously – try to use their influence to favor their own class and their interests not to the greater good of their countrymen.