

Should we Lose Faith in Man?

The spreading wave of violence and terrorism, culminating in the threat of a nuclear war, has led many people to lose faith in man and predict the forthcoming extermination of the human race.

«Many People», however, does not mean everybody. Those who take a look into the history of humanity will easily remark that it has been a succession of triumphant exploits and serious regressions. From our long history, extending over millions of years, we may draw two conclusions: first, the slow march of civilization, especially in the early history of man. Second, the steady progress of human idealism and the participation of so many nations in building the human heritage. Rationalism, freedom, culture of beauty and harmony, were chiefly contributed by the ancient Greeks. A keen sense of justice and a strong emphasis on self-discipline formed the main contribution of monotheistic religions: Judaism, Christianity and Islam. This idea is expounded by the contemporary Egyptian author, Kamel Hussain, who in his book, «Qariat'un Zalimat» (The City of Wrong), affirms that a sense of discrimination between right and wrong is the first trait that makes a man human.

Terrorists may resort to the justification of their mischiefs by saying that they are a form of vengeance for past, unpunished, wrongs. But when terrorism takes the form of blind aggression against the innocent, nothing can justify it. It is then a reversion to wild and irresponsible behavior, resulting in wholesale destruction, despotic rule and general extermination.

We believe in civilized man because the gap between him and those who are still at the primitive stage or behind their time, is so wide that it would seem unthinkable for the former to revert to the low condition into which the latter may sink.

We believe in civilized man because, in spite of the blunders he may commit, he remains the salt of the earth and the hope of suffering humanity.

The forces of evil may be very powerful in our time, but they do not monopolize the scene. No matter how strong their influence may grow, it will only serve as an incentive for greater efforts to rise and outbalance it.