

Esoteric Politics Part II

An online talk given by Stanton Stevens for the Theosophical Library October 11, 2020.

Thank you very much, Mark. I really appreciate this opportunity to speak. I'm always eager to share what I find in my research, and this gives me the opportunity to do the research and not be just trying to learn for myself, but to hopefully help others with what I find. This talk is part two of my talks on politics. I gave a talk in March 2017, and I just reread the transcript of that talk, which is available at my website. I'm posting a link to the talk on the website here in the chat. I covered a lot of material there, and I'm going to try to summarize some of it here, but to really do it justice, you would need to read the transcript or watch the talk, and I hope you will.

Before we dive in, there's a little exercise I like to do at the beginning of every talk, and that is to take a moment to be conscious of our consciousness. That's to be self-aware, to be aware of the conscious self perceiving reality. It's something that is uniquely human. At least, animals can't do this. It's one of the things that makes us human, the fact that we can be conscious of our consciousness. So, take a moment just to look inside and look at who's looking. I find it to be a fascinating exercise. It helps me. For some people, it can be quite a big event to actually take note of their consciousness, and really, consciousness is at the heart of all of what the esoteric teachings are telling us. The meaning of life, for instance, is the evolution of consciousness, that each of us is participating in life and physical existence, emotional, mental existence, in order to grow and develop our consciousness, to build up a broader sense of what's real, more perception of who we are, what we're part of, and to have the breakthroughs, the epiphanies that expand our consciousness greatly. That's one of the goals for all of us. If that can be the primary focus for people, it's quite an improvement over money or status or something like that being the goal of life. The goal of increasing the quality and expansion of our consciousness is a much higher one, and that goal is a long continuum that we've been working on for many millions of years, according to esoterics, and it takes us to realms of consciousness that we can't even imagine now.

Part of the direction of that continuum is a recognition of unity, and that's going to be another theme of what I'm talking about. I find it in all the esoteric teachings is that when we start to really wake up in consciousness, we realize that we are part of something. It's not just us against everything else; it's each of us as a part of a greater whole, whether it's our human kingdom or all life itself. The direction of progress in the evolution of consciousness is recognition of that unity. We'll talk a little bit more about that later too, about what happens when we've made that progress as far as we can in the human kingdom.

I posted the link, I think I told you, in the chat, not only to my talk, but I'm just going to paste it again. There is my email address because it's very important to me that I am accurately relaying what I've found. If you think I'm mischaracterizing the esoteric teachings or what Henry Laurency says, let me know. I'm very keen on truth, on accuracy. The Theosophical motto, as many of you are aware, is that there is no religion higher than truth, and certainly, there cannot be any political philosophy that is higher than truth, either. So, we'll talk about that a little bit.

To summarize a few of the topics from my previous talk, we'll talk about the state. Laurency has lots to say about it. It's certainly something on our minds these days as we look at what government is, what it could be. I think it's very important to look at what it could be. Let's try to imagine what a really well-run, appropriate, enlightened government might be like. If we don't put some effort into trying to visualize and imagine together what we'd like to have, well, we're not going to have it. We're going to have to actually work on it by using our imaginations and our creative abilities. We've got to create a good government, and we've got to also imagine what it'd be like to have really good leaders. What would they be like? What would it be like to have beings, human beings, of great dedication to public service, of wisdom and capacity and ability to really look at the problems of the day and guide and inspire? What would that be like? You know, it's getting to be something that is all too rare in governments around the world.

Speaking of the kinds of governments that there are, it's worthwhile to talk a little bit about what there are, what there have been. Theocracy is probably one of the earliest forms of government. It's a pretty tough one because it, like theology, is based on fictions that no one dares to question, whether there is truth in it or not. The fictions are immutable in theocracy, and in, well, the number one statement in a theocracy is that these leaders were picked by God, therefore they can't be questioned. There's quite a problem with that kind of leadership.

Dictatorship is a common form of government in the world today. This is what Laurency says about that: "There are more rational ways in which to achieve unity than through dictatorship, which constantly, in fear of non-existent dangers, brutally watches over its own security, and which, moreover, does what a small, temporary power clique arbitrarily sees fit. Freedom is easily lost, and it is very hard to regain." Dictators don't give up their power easily, and as Laurency mentions, they are very keen to find anyone who will challenge them.

In my reading, someone mentioned an interesting aspect of dictatorship, and this may apply to communist regimes as well, that the populace is expected to have relentless, unending enthusiasm. That has got to be tough. I mean, day after day, "Oh, isn't the leader great? Isn't the program wonderful that we're, aren't we fortunate to be members of this fine system?"

and to be enthusiastic or be reported by the spies that are everywhere. It's an unpleasant part of dictatorship I hadn't thought about.

Monarchy, less of that than there has been, probably because the main disadvantage of monarchy is that leaders are usually indifferent to the needs of their subjects. Quite a problem, but I've been reading Bertrand Russell's fine book, "Power." This is really quite a well-written book. I mean, such an intelligent person analyzing in 1937, when power really was a huge question for all of humanity, he was analyzing the history of power. He's going back through Roman times and Greek times. It's fascinating. Anyway, one of his observations about monarchy was that it had a particular advantage, and one was that it offered the formula for the transition of power. The people knew how that was going to happen and who it would go to. Now, it didn't always happen. There are plenty of jealous younger brothers or cousins or somebody trying to usurp the throne, but at least there were some rules, and there wasn't chaos every time the leadership changed. Not that I'm advocating it by any means.

Laurency also mentions, talks about socialism/communism, with his definition that the government basically owns all and is in charge of everything. And that the huge disadvantages of that are that all initiative and incentive are removed for the individual. You know, an Elon Musk or a Steve Jobs cannot thrive under a system like that. There is no room for people to really be free to develop their ideas and their new ways of thinking, and I mean, it's obviously a problem. Laurency says it's the most expensive; it's the most burdensome system of all of them, that a huge population of government employees is the most burdensome of them all. And then he says this about it: "The free social system will in the end prove to be the incomparably superior one. State capitalism will never be able to compete with private capitalism in efficacy and productivity. The state is suited not to run business nor to be a distributor or manager but just to be an efficient auditor. One of its foremost tasks is to ensure that no class interest may have an opportunity of encroaching on the other ones." And that's quite a statement, that if the government is auditing everything effectively, it makes sure things are fair. It makes sure that no one is, no majority or minority is exercising power over another group that it shouldn't. That's it. I'll actually talk a little bit more about that in a moment in terms of individual rights.

But let's talk about democracy first. Of course, this famous quote attributed to Winston Churchill where he says democracy is the worst of all systems except for any others that have been tried. He actually was quoting someone else when he said that. I did a little homework and found out, but it's still a great quote. Bertrand Russell tends to agree. He says, and this is following up on something else he was saying, "This is not to say that there is a better form of government than democracy. It is only to say that there are issues as to which men will fight, and when they arise, no form of government can prevent civil war. One of the most important purposes of government should be to prevent issues from becoming so acute as

to lead to civil war. And from this point of view, democracy, where it is habitual, is probably preferable to any other known form of government." The difficulty of democracy as a form of government is that it demands a readiness for compromise. Now, obviously, that is a serious difficulty. We've seen just how bad that can be.

He makes another observation: "In a democracy, a majority can only turn against the government by first admitting to themselves that they were mistaken in formerly thinking well of their chosen leaders, which is difficult and unpleasant." So, that assumes that leadership is elected by a majority, and for a majority to have to change its mind is difficult and unpleasant. That's a good point for the stability of democracy.

Another quote from Bertrand Russell: "Democracy is successful insofar as the government is obliged to respect public opinion." And this is a very important point. Government can do anything it wants as long as the public permits it to. It's not restricted by laws. It can make itself or break itself. It's really public opinion that decides whether it's okay to do what they did.

I think the briefest and most elegant description of democracy was by Abraham Lincoln when he said it was of the people, by the people, for the people. Government as a creation is meant to be of service to everyone. Service is a key word there. Of course, any of these systems could function very well with ideal people. It's really the greatest limitation of all. When you have people that are tremendously apathetic, for instance, you can end up lurching into a dictatorship. It really does take people who have some dedication to participating in government to make it work.

A problem with democracy, Laury points out: "Democracy proclaims that all men are equal, are at the same stage of development, are equally competent to comprehend and understand reality. This belief in equality is the greatest of all human errors. Those who are the most ignorant of life and the least understanding thereby believe they're able to judge everything. That folly could be called the ineradicable part of the ideology of democracy." There again is a demand for perfect people if we want a perfect system of government.

He mentioned briefly another form of government, oligarchy, which could be where we're headed without some changes in our current direction. This is where a group of powerful, wealthy individuals is controlling everything. Obviously not conducive to individual freedom or rights of individuals. To summarize those rights: the right to think and form one's own views and do as one pleases as long as it does not infringe on the equal right of others, that's the basic right of freedom.

Entire systems of ethics and government behavior can all be derived from that statement. If we don't infringe on the equal right of others to do and believe and say what they wish, then we're honoring freedom itself. If we do violate that, in esoteric terms, we end up violating the law of cause and effect, and we've set up the events that could eventually play out in our own lives as restriction of our own freedom to speak and say and do what we want to do. If we've forced our views on others, forced limitations on others, I mean, the persecution in this country of homosexuals or marijuana smokers or people that really are not affecting other people is a violation of the law of freedom and will have its repercussions.

But governments, well, governments are supposed to be protecting the rights of the individual from more powerful interests and even from the government itself. Ultimately, people need to be protected from the government, and it's up to the government to do it. That's kind of a tough thing to guarantee, but certainly, powerful interest groups or religious groups or those who would like to dictate to others what's right and wrong, how to do what they do, it's up to the government to protect us all from that. And the government needs a legal system. Laurency says, I'm talking about individual rights: "The state (society, the community, the people) has no greater right than the individual. State, collective, religion, morality, science, etc., are no authorities of superior right. The state exists in order to defend the right of the individual. The state has no right to outlaw anything, no ideal right to outlaw anything but the violations of the equal right of all. The individual has no duty to sacrifice himself for the community when so commanded. The state has no right to have a disposal of the individual," such as Vladimir Putin's disposal of members of the press who disagree with him.

"The individual has no duty to sacrifice himself for the community when so commanded. The individual has a right to decide for himself what he will regard as useful or conducive to happiness." We certainly need to include this in our imagining of the ideal government, a government that sincerely tries to protect the rights of the individual. It's not really happening as well as it should right now. We've got corporations that dump billions of dollars into political campaigns and get their rights to pollute or to advertise their addictive product. Or with the skills of propaganda, convince people to take the little blue pill or whatever it is. That's, we're not protected very well from corporate power or the power of private capital.

Love of power in general is a problem in all governments, dealing with people who would like to exercise their power for their own selfish aims or for profit only without respect for the rights of the individuals. Right now, we're seeing more of that than ever, when these corporations dump billions of dollars into contributions to political candidates. These are businesses. They don't put money in places for no reason. They don't invest money expecting nothing in return. They know full well that they will get what they're paying for when they buy a congressman or a senator or manufacture them. This is one of the newer trends from

the Koch brothers, picking out individuals and bolstering them up in the press and with propaganda to the point where they can create a senator out of them.

This is going on right now. Really, this is the era of propaganda wars where propaganda machines churn out points of view, manufacture opinions for us to have, and distribute them with social media. And here's what Laurency says about the press, which is one of the outlets for these opinions these days, unfortunately: "Abuse of the freedom of the press and the exploitation of the undiscerning and gullible might be considered one of the still unsolved problems of democracy. The spreading of false statements, distortion of facts, misrepresentation of the opinions of dissidents, casting of suspicion on the motives of others, vilification of undesirable persons, refusal to comply with just demands for correction should be prohibited, also for the press. Here's an important task for an ombudsman of the freedom of the press, one invested with extensive powers as well as duties, to start prosecutions. The demands for correction raised by individual citizens could thereby be dispensed with."

That's a very practical suggestion he makes, that an ombudsman that is not on any particular side but can clearly see that some widely publicized statement is outright slander or an outright lie, could do something about it, be invested with the powers to do something about it. You know, the things that we're not happy with, that we see out there, it all depends on public opinion. The tremendous abuse of power in Machiavellian times, killing one's enemies when they were troublesome, was not condemned. It was considered a legitimate way to get what you want. Public opinion these days simply doesn't go for that, but I have to wonder, will public opinion stand up to the tremendous efforts these days to disenfranchise people and distort the voting process that is key to democracy itself? Without an accurate and defended voting process, democracy is in some serious danger. It will be up to us to say no, we don't want that. Saying no is very important these days. Alice Bailey says the focused, determined, enlightened public opinion is the most potent force in the world, as rarely used as it is. I think we'd be surprised at what we could accomplish.

Here's Bertrand Russell again with that thought on that: "Liberals hold, for example, that when public buildings are destroyed by incendiaries, an attempt should be made by the police and the law courts to discover the actual culprits. But the modern-minded man, and I think we're dealing with modern-minded men these days, but the modern-minded man holds, like Nero, that the guilt should be attributed by means of manufactured evidence to whatever party he personally dislikes." Isn't that what we see every day?

So, here we are with an election looming, a very tense time in American history, with people more divided than I've seen in my lifetime. The federal and state governments alike, many state governments have been deadlocked and in a standstill due to this split. The federal government accomplishes very little these days when one party can block the other from

doing anything. This split is engineered, too, by certain people who want to get power out of it. Russia has thrown its weight into it, and its propaganda factories are trying to divide Americans and skew them against each other with its postings on social media. And when this paralysis gets bad enough, we run into what Laurency referred to earlier, was that dictatorships seem to come into place when paralysis takes place, when people are scared, when chaos has been engineered, for instance. That is another thing that gets engineered by those who want power because people will then turn to a strongman. And that's certainly a dynamic right now. If people are scared enough, they might turn to one individual to save them, and that's how dictatorships are formed out of democracies. Plato says that that's a natural progression. The problem with democracies is the demagogues can manipulate the lower qualities of human beings, their fear, their anger, their nationalism that puts a country ahead of all of humanity, and the demagogues can then seize power and convert a democracy to a dictatorship.

So, at this time, we are actually in a state a bit like ancient Greece, according to Russell. I see his point that in ancient Greece, democracy involved all the people gathering, listening to the potential leaders speak, and voting for the leader. This is direct democracy. For the first 200 years of American history, or maybe not quite that much, a representative had to be sent to Washington, DC, to represent the people, due to the distances involved. We are a representative government in that way. But now that we have this new ability to connect, each of us, and see our presidential candidates or whoever they may be, we are a lot closer to the old Greek model, where the individuals hear what the person has to say and interact. And oddly enough, we've got this representative system built into our system by which we elect the president with the Electoral College when really, it could be more of a direct experience these days. As it is, it is really outdated. I mean, we've had two presidents elected that were the second runner-up in the popular vote. That seems to be quite a problem.

And, you know, we talk about demagogues. Unfortunately, Americans surprise me in seeming to be very poor judges of character when, in a short period of time, one can judge someone's character from their speeches and from seeing them directly on TV. And Americans are even worse at fact-checking. They distribute nonsense and slander without hesitation. So, you know, we may end up with the results with the reason to learn to fact-check better.

I should have said right at the beginning of the talk, my opinions are not those of the Theosophical Society. The Theosophical Society is not a political organization and does not endorse candidates, and I won't either. What I say is my own opinion, and I'm trying to present the opinions of other wise thinkers out there. But I will throw in something, that I did have a dream about Donald Trump, make of it what you will. It's not endorsement per se or anything else. This is what I dreamed, so I'll just tell you the story. This was a few years

ago. He and I were talking. The two of us were walking along over a grassy field, like maybe a big park or football field or something like that. There was no one else around, just the two of us talking. And he said something that I just thought was so ridiculous and wrong, and I happen to have in my hand a very large open-faced hamburger. I don't know how that came to be what was in my hand in the dream, but there was a big open-face hamburger. And to express my reaction to what Mr. Trump had just said, I smooshed it in his face, just smushed that hamburger, and felt like that was an appropriate response in the dream. Well, he was obviously upset about that but not quite in the way I expected. He was upset that his Secret Service agents didn't immediately run out and throw me to the ground. No, they didn't come. They didn't come. And then he threw himself on the ground and rolled around like he was hurt, saying, "I'll make them come." Ah, but no, the Secret Service agents never came. I remember being very puzzled in the dream as to what should I do next with this guy. So, there you have it. That's my dream of Donald Trump, for what it's worth.

So, let's talk a little bit about the esoteric side. I think I've summarized a lot of points from my last talk. There's a lot more. I really encourage you to at least read the transcript. It's full of much better material than I can cover in a few minutes. But this part, getting into the esoteric side, I didn't do so much in that talk. And this is something most of you are familiar with, I know, but I'll go over it. We're in a transition era right now. Every approximately 2,400 years, we transition from one astrological sign to another. And it's always a time in human history of big upheavals because we build our institutions out of the energies of whatever astrological sign is in place. For instance, we've just moved out of the Piscean age. We're in the process of the tail end of the Piscean age, and we're in the beginnings of the Aquarian age. They're very different energies. The Piscean age is very individually focused. It's devotion. Devotion is a key energy. Idealism, and that's a great quality, idealism. Humanity has actually picked up a lot of that quality from going through the Piscean age. It may be from people's incarnations in monasteries and other things to help them focus on higher ideals. People's willingness to sacrifice their lives for their causes is an aspect of idealism. Fanaticism, this is an aspect of this same energy. The sixth ray is also associated with Pisces, the seventh ray with Aquarius. That's another way to look at the differences in the eras. The sixth ray is also about idealism, devotion.

So, when this cusp of the ages happens, the old structures, old forms of society, of government, you know, all the institutions basically need to be rebuilt, and the old ones either crumble or are destroyed. Sometimes waves of barbarians incarnate to accomplish the destruction of the old way. That's an unpleasant way for it to happen, but that is one of the ways it happens. We're not really expected, according to Laurency, to stabilize in our new institutions and new ways of looking at things until about 500 years from now. So, even the newer ideas, newer ways of doing things that come up now are probably transition methods

that themselves will give way to what becomes a much more established, solid foundation. And in a thousand years or so, we can expect possibly a golden years part of the astrological age. Human progress never stops, no matter how many problems we might have out there. We pick up new qualities. The history of humanity's efforts is a million years old. It's much more history than our historians have at their disposal. Looking at the esoteric records, all the forms of government and all the great mistakes that humanity can make have been made in terms of politics and trusting the wrong people, etc. Hopefully, on some deep level, we're going to learn, pull something from those lessons. Our next goal as humans is what Laurency calls the cultural level. This is a very big thing. We move from the civilizational level to the cultural. Civilization is where we've agreed to not be barbarians, that we'll follow some rules for the safety of our families and our children, that probably it would be better if we obeyed and had a few rules. Barbarians won't respect any rules, but a civilization is based on some kind of order. Yet the people are still, well, hatred is still very much an active force at the civilizational level. People are very much dominated by their lower emotions, by anger and jealousy and hatred and fear. It has been the job of religions during the Piscean age to help lift humanity into higher emotional levels of admiration and appreciation of aesthetic beauty, of compassion. Basically, understanding the virtue of cooperation and unity, being, putting oneself aside to some degree, some self-sacrifice. These are all aspects of higher emotionality and, of course, the soul level as well, reflecting in that emotionality.

This will do more for us than we expect. You know, it's not just that we'll suddenly be much nicer to each other and get a lot more done because we won't fight over things so much or be so afraid. It's that humanity is manipulated continually through its lower emotions. This is how demagogues get power. They make us afraid. They point over there to that threat. They appeal to our nationalistic pride, telling us what we should be angry about. We're coached in all the ways we should feel, and people's lower emotions respond to that. And when we no longer respond that way, when humanity as a whole responds only to the higher emotional, then those evil people who often work together to control and exploit humanity will lose their power. Their power is all through humanity's lower emotional nature. This evil is very organized in the world, actually. It's intelligent, and it works to hold humanity back. Our progress, human progress, is the enemy for these people. They will lose their power. They would prefer to see us revert to a feudal state where local lords and rulers have absolute power over their subjects. Well, they can't hold humanity down forever. We will achieve that higher level, but we're going to have to struggle. We're going to have to do some serious work to get there. We'll all have to take on the responsibility that the religions have been trying to do with some success. I mean, I don't want to say religion has not succeeded in lifting some people to higher emotional levels, but if it succeeded to the degree that it should have, we wouldn't have had the world wars.

So, this cultural level, we're not there yet. We're living in the midst of some very difficult times with a lot of ugliness going on, the countries in this world that are run by ruthless dictators where there are no human rights to speak of, where lies are what's basically available to everyone, and that's all they have to work with. This country has not become one of those countries.

I think it's important to note that we are not the accidental victims of the times we're in. We chose to incarnate in times like this. We picked this particular era for any number of reasons. There could be quite a few. We chose to incarnate in a world where we knew that we would look around us and see barbaric, stupid, heartless actions on a global scale, as well as ignorance and breakdown of some very good things. So, just to speculate on why, among the possibilities, a person can incarnate because they have a love for humanity, and they want to help during this time to help us all through the suffering, through the chaos, to help hold on to and guide to new ideals. Another reason to come now is because we may have some responsibility for the way that things are now. We've incarnated many times before. Perhaps we advocated some points of view or participated in the goals of a ruthless dictator willingly, and we've taken on some karma. We're here to work on that. Another thing is we may come because, at this time, because it offers many opportunities for us to progress personally, spiritually, to sort out right and wrong within ourselves based on how we interact and what our choices are. Another reason could be what Laurency says is reincarnating clans, that we incarnate many times again and again with the same sets of people, and that maybe we've come in with our clan this time because we love these people, and we want to try to protect them in this time of chaos, want to be with them.

So, I've said, as I said in the past, this karma, the human rights can be deduced from the law of karma. If we deprive someone of their opportunities or their safety or their lives, we plant the seeds of events that will balance that account, and we participate in our national karma too. If our country has done some horrible things, whether we choose to be aware of them or not, which is the case in America here, many people choose to ignore what our country has done that earning us some karma, we still share in that. Our country also has some very good karma. I don't want to dismiss that. We, through our freedom here, we've created beautiful expressions of music and art and genius in terms of inventions and technology. And hopefully, the effect of the internet technology we've invented, the net effect is good. I think the jury's still out.

There are many reasons to be hopeful in these times, and I think that, as I talk to people, I find a lot of people very distressed. So, I want to mention some of these things, and some of these reasons are not at all apparent. You certainly won't read about them in the newspaper. One of the reasons to be hopeful, and maybe it is a long-term reason, but it will take place, that is, that beyond human, the human kingdom, and I have a talk on this called "Beyond

Human: The Next Kingdom in Nature,” are those who have gone through everything that is necessary in the human kingdom to have learned from it, learned the wisdom of compassion, and learned that to act solely for the separated self, the personality, is a dead end. They have learned that they are part of everything else and to serve the whole is a much higher calling than to serve oneself. The beings who've really learned that have mastered all the skills and virtues and qualities that one can in the human kingdom. They graduate, you might say, from the human kingdom. Their realizations and breakthroughs in consciousness take them to one incredible breakthrough that actually makes them no longer quite human anymore. Here in the human kingdom, we know ourselves to be separate, and we think of ourselves that way, and that's what we learn from here. We develop personalities that way, but when we've done all we can as personalities, the big consciousness breakthrough that we have is to join the collective consciousness of the fifth kingdom. Basically, that's the beginning of a series of ever larger collectives of consciousness that we join. We can't do that until we can be trusted completely not to act from an individual ego standpoint, from the fears and desires of an individual ego. That's certainly not welcome into that collective of consciousness of the fifth kingdom.

So, when we have completely overcome human ego, then we are welcomed into the fifth kingdom, and we are trusted. To be part of that collective is to know everything it knows, that all the beings in it know. With that comes tremendous power in this world and others. Those beings, they've mastered compassion, and they look at us in our suffering and our confusion and our doubt, and they have tremendous compassion. And they've offered information to us. That's information that a lot of it that I'm relaying now, through Theosophy, through Alice Bailey, through Henry Laurency, we are given information that are the true facts of reality given to us by those who can ascertain them. Human beings really are not in the position to get those facts. Those beings, in the millions of years of human history, have occasionally been our leaders because they are the ideal leaders for humanity, a perfected being who's got great power to ascertain truth and use their wisdom to see the best thing for everybody and see the past as an open book, exactly what's happened. That's part of their abilities, who cannot be deceived by humans or by a philosophy or by those evil beings who we mentioned earlier want to enslave humanity. That's ideal leaders, and eventually, we'll welcome them back. Humanity needs to be ready for that, and it's not so easy to be ready and welcome them back. It probably won't happen until we reach the cultural level, when most of humanity is at an attractive emotional vibration versus repellent like now. And this may be a while yet. There was great hope that after World War II, when people had suffered so much, they were forced to reevaluate their value systems. Everyone had an opportunity to put human unity and cooperation and the higher virtues as their primary values. And I think many did, but those who've learned from that tremendous suffering have now pretty much passed from this world. And we have people making some

of the same mistakes, trusting in authoritarian leaders to guide them. Let's hope we don't have to repeat that awful cycle again.

The fifth kingdom that offered us this information, it does take sides on things, and it took sides in World War II. I've got a fascinating book here that is out of print, "Between War and Peace" by Alice Bailey. It was written in 1942 in the thick of World War II when it wasn't even clear at all which side was going to win. And she contrasts what Roosevelt says then and Churchill said then with what Hitler said and Mussolini said. It's night and day. It's so clear that these totalitarian leaders respected no human beings' rights, that all were to serve and worship them, that humanity was headed into a nightmare that, fortunately, we were able to stop. Laurency says without the energetic intervention of the United States, the Axis powers would have won. Just shows what a great leader Roosevelt was, Churchill as well, because he had to get past the pacifism of the US, it was a real challenge. And it's also an unusual thing: when the bad guys, the real bad guys, go for all the marbles, they usually win. It was unexpected, actually, that humanity would step up and take action and do the right thing, but we did.

And, well, here's a quote from Bailey: "The spiritual hierarchy of the planet, (that's this next kingdom, the fifth kingdom), is throwing its weight, the weight of its strength, against the Axis powers just in so far as the spiritually minded peoples of this world can collaborate, for there can be no coercion of man's free will." This is always the way they have to operate. They cannot impose their will, though certainly they know what's best. They can see that, but it has to be us choosing. They cannot violate our free will.

It's an interesting thing, Laurency says about organized evil on the planet and in the esoteric books called the Black Lodge, that this is a foe beyond humanity, that it's really the planetary hierarchy, the fifth kingdom, that will solve the problem of organized evil.

I'm talking about horrible, organized evil, etc., but I want to talk more about things that can give us some hope. The fact that there is this spiritual leadership that will eventually triumph is an important thing. And Laurency points out that based on the leadership that we have, humanity reacts to it and appears to be at a particular level. The better the leadership is, the higher humanity acts, the better it reacts. And right now, we've got too many examples of really poor, selfish leadership, and humanity is reacting to that. We see too much of that. But much better leadership, and we'll see a much better side to humanity as a whole. And like I said before, history shows that humanity cannot be kept down. The human spirit will always rise up, always triumph over whatever is trying to keep it down.

All systems work well with ideal people. We need to keep working to raise the general level of emotional intelligence. I don't think we can hope for as much with mental intelligence. It

takes longer to build that up, but humanity can operate at a higher emotional level sooner. You know, the pandemic is another huge factor unsettling people right now, and I want to say a couple of things about it because I, of course, researched it in Laurency and Alice Bailey. It's interesting. I don't know how much it contributes to politics, although you could say we've probably lost more than a hundred thousand lives unnecessarily in this country due to lack of leadership in that respect. Other countries have handled it a lot better. It's a disgrace, really, that those who are supposed to lead in a crisis didn't do it.

So, what Laurency says about pandemics is that, here's a quote: "Diseases, epidemics, vermin, and insect pests are parasitic phenomena. As long as human beings parasitize on others, and they do so to an extent they apparently do not suspect, they'll be victims of parasitism themselves." You know, there's some hope in that, that we will overcome it when we stop parasitizing each other. That's when we get to the cultural level; we'll stop doing that. He says also that "If the atoms and the microorganisms flying about in the air are activated by human repulsive vibrations of hate, they can find expression in the manner called epidemics, and that in a great number of varieties. New kinds of disease will always arise as long as the conscious expressions of mankind are repulsive." Another interesting point, "New kinds of diseases," he says, "will always arise as long as the consciousness expressions of mankind are repulsive." Again, we've got to get to that cultural level.

So, let's talk a little bit about the steps that we can take. First, we have to realize it's a natural cycle. Breaking down the existing system prepares the way for others, so be on the lookout for better systems and to participate in that. You know, we don't want to have an unrealistic expectation it's going to get better suddenly quickly, but it is a natural cycle. And preserving what is good right now might be all that we can do, but that's a reasonable effort, preserve the good things so they're not swept away by the chaos of the times. Community unity is a good thing to work toward. You know, the rift between conservatives and liberals is only going to be accentuated by the times that we're in because when things, when times become unstable and change rapidly, those that want to cling to the old ways and say, well, this, the golden days need to come back, the past is how it needs to be again, are end up left far behind as things change around them. And those who can see the new possibilities are not yet able to articulate them or put them into practical form until we get further into the cycle of change. And so, the rift only widens for a while. But to not get involved is to have the problem that Plato mentions. Plato says, "The punishment which the wise suffer who refuse to take part in government is to live under the government of worse men."

And here's an interesting point about politics that Laurency makes: "Political parties demonstrate the importance of solidarity, but solidarity within a certain party, within a certain social class, always leads to disunion within the community. The whole has been divided and disintegrates more and more. It is forgotten that class interests are justified only

if and as long as they are subservient to the whole." And then he says, "To remove everything which divides and to come to an agreement, everything which one can agree about, and this in all fields, is the first step towards a goal of unity. It is the first condition of the welding of all individuals of all parties into that inseparable unity which the will to unity can realize." And I was just thinking about how parties fighting each other is such a problem and how what a good idea would be to create a common platform. I know it sounds impossible, but a platform that both parties agree to seems to me to be a step of nonpartisanship that would be really welcome. Can we all agree to protect our children? You know, can we all agree on the four freedoms that Roosevelt proposed, these beautiful statements? Can that be part of a common platform that whatever party it is agrees to support? And then when we find ourselves in disagreement, we just fall back on what we do agree on. The four freedoms, Roosevelt laid these out so simply: freedom of the press, freedom of religion, freedom from want, and freedom from fear.

Can we agree that that would be good? Let's see if we can build off that. Let me read what Alice Bailey had to say: "She would start by reminding the general public of one important fact. This is that the focused, determined, enlightened public opinion is the most potent force in the world. I've read that quote before. It has no equal but has been little used. The gullibility of the average citizen, his willingness to accept what is told him if it is said loudly enough with sufficient plausible force is well known. The well-turned phrases of the trained politician intent on his selfish purposes, the arguments of the silver-tongued demagogue as he exploits some pet theory at the expense of the public, and the rantings of the man with a cause, a theory, or an ax to grind all find an easy audience. Mass psychology and mob determinations have been exploited down the ages, for the unthinking and the emotional are easily swayed in any direction, and hitherto this has been turned to their own advantage by those who did not have the best interest of humanity at heart. It has been used for selfish and evil ends far more than for good." That's from this book: "Between War and Peace." She lays out in the midst of the darkest time of the war, she focused on the reconstruction, that it couldn't just be everybody was giving a sigh of relief and saying the war is over. Okay, we can relax. The world was a wreck after that, after the war, and needed to be rebuilt, and she had a lot of ideas about what we could do to support that. I think a lot of those ideas apply right now.

The chaos that's settled in has actually done a lot of damage, may have more yet to do. We do need to reconstruct. So, the first thing she says is, "Crush out hate because it's non-constructive and hindering. But the love demanded of us is neither emotional nor sentimental. It is intensely practical, and expresses itself in service and cooperative activity. It seeks to aid all movements that benefit humanity are in and are in line with the new incoming era." This is about individual responsibility. She says replace emotion, for instance,

the emotion of fear and anger that came out of the war, with practical love expressed in selfless service, reorganize our lives so that we have time for this needed service, and developing oneself and evoking in others the spirit of goodwill. This will to good is of immediate effectiveness because it governs a person's relationship to their family and their household, their business or social associates, their casual acquaintances, and all with whom they may come in contact. The spirit of goodwill goes a long way. You know, I think there's actually a lot of that around. For all of the antagonism I see out there, I meet with goodwill every time I go to the store, every time I interact with the public out there. There is goodwill, and it's a pity that it's not the foundational force right now.

She also had some more practical suggestions that I think apply now, when she was looking ahead to the reconstruction. I think this would be a benefit to anyone who is really concerned about improving the world. One, study and reflect upon the proposals made by world leaders and thinkers as to the coming world rehabilitation. This gets back into the original idea of let's imagine, let's try to create something new. If we think about it, can we, others are thinking about it, obviously. Let's try to find the guidance and those who are thinking about it and who's got a really good idea. She suggests gathering people together to discuss and study the new systems that are coming because they are coming, inevitably, or cooperate with those who are already doing so. "Look upon this meeting together as a definite contribution to the molding of public opinion and as a method of building up that reservoir of thought power which can be of use to those whose task it is to rebuild." She suggests, "Extend your interest to many countries and try to understand the diverse problems of these countries." If you know anybody in some remote country, try to connect with them, try to establish a linkage, easier than ever across the miles, so that we're interconnected all over the planet. She says to, "meditate, reflect, and connect the central will to good, divine will to good," you know, what's underneath the plan behind everything. Find two other people to work with you. Discuss all this. Maybe gather people together, discuss and study the coming situation. "Find out and study the methods, techniques, and objectives of the various groups and organizations which are interested in world reconstruction. You may not agree with all of them or what their plans are and mode of working, but all are needed." This is not a time to draw lines when you've got people with good intentions. "Find and keep a record also of men and women of goodwill in your environment. Be spiritually aggressive in this matter and go out and discover them. When you have found them, then be interested in what they're doing and also endeavor to have them cooperate with you in your lines of activity." That's a good suggestion.

Consider the needs of the children in this chaotic world. Plan for helping them with loving goodwill. I've read in another place that the ultimate overhaul of the legal system of rights in all countries is going to be based on our love for our children. The children's rights will be a

point upon which parties of all kinds should be able to agree and work together to establish basic rights.

So, whatever fear you might have as you look at the changes in the world, don't believe for a minute that it's over. It won't be over until love and unity have triumphed, and they will. It can be delayed, that's what we can help with. We can try to bring it about more quickly, prevent as much destruction of what good there is. We can plant the seeds that will maybe ripen in some distant lifetime, some future time. I mean, we live in the times that we have suited ourselves for. We came to this time for our very specific reasons, as we mentioned. If we are planting the seeds of the new and imagining this new, better world with its enlightened leaders and publicly serving government, that could be the time we incarnate into. Certainly, we would deserve it if we helped to create it. If we participate in a renewal of the rule of ignorance, well, we're likely to reincarnate into the results of that sort of thinking. So, let's plant the seeds for a much better future for all of us. I know I have a great deal of hope, and the very fact that there are people here listening to me talk about all these things gives me hope.

So, thank you.