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8. Article 12: The First Bill of Rights

The Bill of Rights of the *Earth Constitution* specifies as “inalienable” a list of eighteen rights, the first of which is “equal rights for all citizens of the Federation of Earth, with no discrimination on grounds of race, color, caste, nationality, sex, religion, political affiliation, property, or social status.” A major achievement of the Earth Federation, as well as genuine democracy, will be the effective realization of equality before the law for all the citizens of the Earth.

This seemingly self-evident requirement of any bill of rights is violated by every nation-state, since they all legislate rights only for their own citizens, effectively denying the rights of all other peoples on Earth. Either rights are inalienably held by all persons equally or they are a lie and a sham. To claim that “inalienable human rights” are only valid on a territorial basis is false. The nation-state system, like the United Nations that represents it, makes a mockery of the concept of inalienable rights.

The persons of the Earth Federation are not only guaranteed the usual democratic political rights of freedom of speech, press, assembly, association, habeas corpus, and due process of law, they are also guaranteed rights that are now routinely violated by all nations under the barbaric system of nation-states. Article 12 also guarantees

Freedom to travel without passport or visas or other forms of registration....Prohibition against military conscription.... Prohibition against physical or psychological duress or torture during any period of investigation, arrest, detention or imprisonment, and against cruel or unusual punishment.... Prohibition against private armies and paramilitary organizations as being threats to the common peace and safety....and the right to family planning and free public assistance to achieve family planning objectives.

The violation of the right of citizens of this Earth to travel is a disgrace of the modern system of nation-states. The visa system is a criminal attack on our dignity and freedom as human beings. The right to travel is at the very heart of democracy and the restriction of this right is one reason why under the nation-state system no reasonably authentic democracy exists anywhere in the world.

The supposed right of national governments to conscript young people into their criminal war-making system is another disgrace of the nation-state system. To require of young people public work for the nation as a civic duty is a wonderful idea. To make of them trained killers and destroyers of other peoples on Earth is the most corrupt of criminal acts. In democratic countries people supposedly have a vote, but their vote is meaningless to deal with the most pressing problems of humanity that are beyond the scope of any nation. People vote on secondary domestic issues while they are forced to fight in foreign wars that are beyond their democratic decision-making power.

Individual persons are disenfranchised under this system. Their vote cannot give them freedom from war, nor the freedom to travel. Democracy is a sham unless it is world democracy. The same is true of family planning knowledge and assistance. The current policies of many nations and the U.N. involve the violation of people’s right to family planning knowledge and resources. Given the population crisis that is rapidly diminishing the life-prospects of everyone on Earth, of the ecosystem of the Earth, and of future generations, these policies constitute a thoughtless attack on the future of our planet, its people, and future generations. The Bill of Rights in the *Earth Constitution* institutes a complete set of political rights for the first time in history. Many of these rights, such as the right to travel, are impossible under the nation-state system.

We have seen that the entire structure of the *Earth Constitution* is designed to protect and enforce these rights from every angle possible. The first paragraph of Article 12 reviews and repeats this fact:

It shall be mandatory for the World Parliament, the World Executive, and all organs and agencies of the World Government to honor, implement and enforce these rights, as well as for the national governments of all member nations in the Federation of Earth to do likewise. Individuals or groups suffering violation or neglect of such rights shall have full recourse through the World Ombudsmus, the Enforcement System and the World Courts for redress of grievances.

The *Earth Constitution* is premised on the interrelated concepts of human dignity and equality as asserted in a variety of ways throughout the document. The very first item in Article 12 guarantees “Equal rights for all citizens of the Federation of Earth, with no discrimination on grounds of race, color, caste, nationality, sex, religion, political affiliation, or social status.” Each of these differences among human beings have been used as tools of domination and humiliation of some human beings over others, as the work of such scholars as Evelin G. Lindner (2009) has made clear. By privileging some of these differences as mechanisms for the demeaning and disempowering of those not sharing the privileged characteristics, the history of cultures, nations, empires, and legal systems to date has been one sad history of domination and exploitation.

We saw in the Introduction that the *Earth Constitution* embodies the “third generation” of human rights (only hinted at by the U.N. Universal Declaration of Human Rights): the rights to a world of peace, environmental integrity, and reasonable universal prosperity for all persons. Here we see that the *Earth Constitution* also affirms *universal human dignity and equality* in ways that lay the foundations of a truly new world. One of the “differences” that has always led to systems of domination, militarized national security states, and hierarchies of humiliation and dehumanization of others is the system of sovereign nation-states in which *other nations and peoples are demeaned* or dehumanized as “enemies” in the service of the power and domination of elites within the “homeland.” With the ratification of the *Earth Constitution*, we witness major advance in human liberation. In a discussion concerning universal human rights and their premise of human dignity, Lindner writes:

This liberation offers a number of “sub”-liberations. One such subliberation is the opportunity to free ourselves from the need to pit in-groups against “enemy” out-groups, which in turn liberates us from malign out-group biases. We also have the opportunity to become liberated from collectivist and ranked social models in which a few masters turn underlings into tools in the service of the security dilemma, robbing everybody of their humanity. We stand at a time in history in which we can free everyone on the globe, and we can all retrieve our humanity. In a world of one single human family, no longer do we need to dehumanize young men to become killers of “enemies.” This does not mean that the world will become a rose garden—like in all villages, we will need police in the global village to apply the template of respectful social control. (2009: 75)

This transformation can only come to fruition through ratifying the *Earth Constitution*. As Lindner asserts, human conflict will not end, nor will human beings suddenly become angels: we still need police. However, as we have seen, the World Police, the Ombudsmus, and the Department of Conflict Resolution will be trained in ending mechanisms of humiliation and in protecting human rights with dignity equally for all. We have seen these goals built into the very foundations of the *Earth Constitution* as specified in Article 1: “To protect universal human rights, including life, liberty, security, democracy, and equal opportunities in life. To obtain for all people on earth the conditions required for equitable economic and social development and for diminishing social differences.” They are elaborated in unambiguous fullness in these all-important Articles: 12 and 13.