ROERICH PACT

PEACE BANNER

THE RED CROSS OF CULTURE
THREE PRINCIPAL ARTICLES OF THE ROERICH PACT FOR THE PROTECTION OF ARTISTIC AND SCIENTIFIC INSTITUTIONS AND HISTORIC MONUMENTS.

ARTICLE I. The historic monuments, museums, scientific, artistic, educational and cultural institutions shall be considered as neutral and as such respected and protected by belligerents. The same respect and protection shall be due to the personnel of the institutions mentioned above. The same respect and protection shall be accorded to the historic monuments, museums, scientific, artistic, educational and cultural institutions in time of peace as well as in war.

ARTICLE II. The neutrality of, protection and respect due to, the monuments and institutions mentioned in the preceding article, shall be recognized in the entire expanse of the territories subject to the sovereignty of each of the signatory and acceding States, without any discrimination as to the State allegiance of said monuments and institutions. The respective Governments agree to adopt the measures of internal legislation necessary to insure said protection and respect.

ARTICLE III. In order to identify the monuments and institutions mentioned in Article I, use may be made of a distinctive flag (red circle with a triple red sphere in the circle on a white background).

"This treaty possesses a spiritual significance far deeper than the text of the instrument itself." — Franklin D. Roosevelt.
ROERICH PACT PEACE BANNER
ADDRESS OF
THE HONORABLE HENRY A. WALLACE,
United States Secretary of Agriculture

At the ceremony of the signing of the Roerich Pact at Washington, D. C.

This day at the beginning of the Holy Week before Easter in the year 1935, representatives of the American Nations have signed the Roerich Peace Pact providing for the protection in times of war and peace of those cultural treasures which the enlightened spirits of all lands recognize as worthy of preservation no matter how tense and bitter the strife in the physical and economic world. I have felt it a great pleasure and honor to be associated today with these gentlemen from many different nations in signing this historic document which in my opinion will take its place beside the Red Cross Treaties as a symbol of those forces which bind the nations together. I look forward to the day when travellers over the world will look for the banner of the Encircled Triple Crimson Sphere, knowing when they see it that here is something which has in it significance running across the national boundary lines, something of peculiar beauty, a national monument, a heritage out of the past, or something of unusual importance in the scientific or educational world.

Speaking a few days ago at the annual meeting of the Red Cross, I had occasion to pay tribute to the sympathetic heart and practical genius of Henri Dunant, a Swiss, who, as a result of the suffering which he saw at the battle of Solferino in Italy in 1859, promoted the movement which finally became the International Red Cross. Today it is appropriate that we should give recognition to the genius of Nicholas Roerich in whose mind this Pact and Banner first originated. Thirty-two years ago on an archaeological trip through the ancient monasteries of Russia, he became impressed with the dangers of the vandalism in peace or the barbarism in war which might destroy many irreplaceable human treasures. At that time he presented a report to the Society of Architects of Russia urging on them the desirability of starting a movement of this sort. Again in 1915 after the destruction which characterized the first year of the World War, he brought the matter to the attention of the Czar and Grand Duke of Russia. But at that time unfortunately the heat of war was upon the nations and nothing practical could be done. Again after the World War, travelling in Central Asia, Professor Roerich discovered that many priceless objects out of the past were being destroyed not only by barbaric tribesmen, but by Western travellers. Therefore, in 1929 on his return from Asia he formulated what essentially is the present Pact, which won the support of international jurists and cultural leaders both of Europe and the United States. It is not surprising that the first two meetings on this Pact were held in Belgium. The third convention was held in November 1933 in Washington with official delegates from thirty-five nations. Following this meeting, the Montevideo Conference passed a resolution recommending its adoption by the American States. Pursuant to this resolution the Governing Board of the Pan American Union prepared the Pact which is today being officially launched as an International Agreement.

Interesting as the history of the Pact has been, it is even more important to consider its present uses and its future. Humanity today is terribly heartsick. As a result of the disintegrating forces let loose by the World War and the differential economic effects of increasing mechanization, there has been a rising tension and uneasiness between the classes and between the nations. Efforts have been made again and again to solve this disturbing situation by disarmament conferences, peace treaties, economic conversations, and currency stabilization agreements. Thus far all of these have proved singularly disappointing. With the international situation as it is today, no great nation feels that it can altogether renounce war as a possible instrument of national policy. Those who attempt to bring about the renunciation of war without working more
precisely on the nature of the binding ties of human hearts across the nations are probably engaged in vain undertakings.

Many of the logically fine objectives in the way of lowering economic and currency barriers can perhaps be attained in any complete and binding fashion only after the human beings of the world have come more nearly to recognize their cultural unity. Concerning beauty, true science and the cultural treasures of the past there can be no discord among the different peoples of the world. A Rembrandt is appreciated whether it is found in the United States, in the Netherlands or in Germany.

No one knows today how far it is possible for the different nations of the world to go in forming international currency pacts, the lowering of trade barriers or disarmament agreements. Methods of this sort tend too often to be sophisticated and futile. While undoubtedly efforts in these directions should continue, it would seem desirable also to hold up before the world, in times like these, the ideal of the Unity of Human Heart regardless of nation in the worship of beauty, of culture, of religion, of science and of education. There are thousands of people in each of the nations of the world animated by those finer, broader human aspirations, and many of them will welcome the mechanism of the Roerich Pact as a means of making more manifest on earth those intangible forces which they have long recognized as the true guides of international good feeling.

Throughout all history mankind has sought an ever deeper and broader unity of purpose. During the past 300 years much has been said about the rights of the individual. As persons and as nations, the individuals have striven mightily. In so doing they have brought themselves to the brink of chaos, and it is now necessary to think a little more about duties, and a little less perhaps about rights; a little more perhaps about discipline, and a little less perhaps about complete freedom; a little more about the ties which bind us all together and much less about the hatreds and irritations which thrust us as individuals, or classes, or nations, apart from one another. The symbolism of the three spheres contained in the larger circle to my mind conveys the thought of the most complete realization of the possibilities of the individual person or the particular class or the specific nation within the limitations of the larger whole. This is a philosophic doctrine of the most profound significance. In law and government we can speculate endlessly and with profit about the relationship between liberty and duty, and the development of a constructive outcome to the apparent conflict between individualistic democracy and the strong enforcement of constructive justice. Always the individualistic units must strive to their utmost to realize their full potentialities, but always those efforts must be within the due bounds of a cultural decency which recognizes the fundamental unity of all humanity. Those who would emphasize a particular individual or class or nation beyond those due bounds violate what I believe to be a sacred law and inevitably must pay the penalty.

I believe the Roerich Pact is in conformity with the deepest, most sacred laws of the universe, and that it has become an international reality at an especially propitious time. Launched in the year 1935 at the beginning of the Holy Week before Easter, it can, and I believe, will serve as the germinal essence of what eventually will be a New Deal among the nations. And in so saying, I am not talking about a New Deal characterized by emergency agencies, but about the spiritual New Deal which places that which is fine in humanity above that which is low and sordid and mean and hateful and grabbing.
A BRIEF LIST OF THE ENDORSERS OF THE ROERICH PACT PEACE BANNER ILLUSTRATING THE VARIETY OF ITS ADHERENTS.

Leaders of Nations and Statesmen:

H. M. King Leopold of Belgium
Hon. Franklin D. Roosevelt, President of the U. S. A.
Late Huebert Lyautey, Grand Marshal of France
Late Pres. Masaryk of Czechoslovakia
Hon. Cordell Hull, U. S. Secretary of State
Hon. Henry A. Wallace, U. S. Secretary of Agriculture and others.

Leaders in Religion:

H. H. Pope Pius XI
Charles L. Mead, Resident Bishop Methodist Episcopal Church, Kansas City
Most Rev, James H. Ryan, S. T. D., Bishop of Modra, Rector Catholic University of America
Lama Lobzang Ming-Yur Dorje
Louis J. Moss, Pres. the United Synagogue of America, N. Y.
Evangeline Booth, Commander-in-Chief, Salvation Army, and others.

Representatives of Fine Arts:

Leopold Stokowski, Conductor, Philadelphia Symphony Orchestra
The American Institute of Architects, Washington, D. C.
Societe des Beaux-Arts, Basle
Pro Arte, Society of Artists & Friends of Fine Arts, Brazil
State Art Gallery, Dresden, Germany
National Academy of Design, New York and others.

Representatives of the World of Science:

Academie Francaise
Prof. A. Einstein
Institut d’Egypte, Cairo
Sociedad Cientifica Argentina, Buenos Aires
American Museum of Natural History, New York
R. Universita di Napoli, Naples, Italy
Royal University, Oslo, Norway and others.

BANNER OF PEACE

Out of many thousand letters received supporting the Banner of Peace, the letters herewith published have been chosen with a view of demonstrating the wide variety of interests of those who have found the Pact a solution to one of the great problems of civilization.

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Secretary of the Cabinet,
Cabinet du Roi.

The King has received the letter which you addressed to him on the 22nd of August, regarding the Roerich project.

His Majesty has taken notice of your communication with a hearty satisfaction and I have the honor to transmit to you, at his request his sincere thanks.

Please accept the expressions of my high esteem,
Brussels, Belgium, Sept. 8, 1930.

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Empire of Japan,
Tokio.

July 24, 1930

I am directed to state in reply that the article written by Professor de Roerich has been read with keenest interest by the Prime Minister who has a whole-hearted sympathy with the views therein contained.

Mr. Hamaguchi (Prime Minister) is of the opinion that a project like the one propounded by Professor de Roerich will, when realized, make a signal contribution towards promoting the culture of mankind.

S. Hashimoto,
Secretary to Prime Minister.
I sympathize with the purpose of your effort. The thing to do is to work for universal peace. Anything short of that means the destruction of civilization in the next conflict.

F. H. La Guardia,
U. S. Representative from New York.

The Hokkaido Imperial University,
Sapporo, Japan. June 20, 1930.

I assure you I have read Professor de Roerich's article on the Banner of Peace with great pleasure. Had we come to such an undertaking before the World War, we should not have incurred those disastrous damages on the priceless institutions as Louvain, Rheims, etc., etc. It is a matter of surprise that faithful servants of truth, art and science had not thought of such a plan much earlier.

Shosuke Sato, President.

Muzeum Narodowe,
Krakow, Poland. May 17, 1930.

I can only express my sincerest admiration for this admirable project and wish that it may come as soon as possible to its realization. If I can be of any use to you in this matter—please count on my support.

Felix Kopera.
Director.

The Australian Museum,
Sydney. 15th July, 1930.

I am in cordial agreement with the proposal that a special international flag should be adopted and respected by all countries as a cultural flag for the protection of cultural centres and art treasures during war time.

C. Anderson,
Director.

Minister of Foreign Affairs,
Teheran, Persia. August 17, 1930.

I have the honor to inform you that your letter of May 16, 1930 covering the article “Banner of Peace” has been duly submitted to His Imperial Majesty and by command of my August Sovereign I have the honor to let you know that this noble project meets with approval of His Imperial Majesty and His Majesty’s Government are ready to lend it their sympathetic support.

M. A. Foraughi.

United States Naval Academy,
Office of the Superintendent. April 15, 1930.

Any emblem, which will protect artistic and scientific treasures, should be accepted by all civilized nations.

S. S. Robinson,
Rear Admiral, U. S. Navy, Superintendent.
Assemblée Nationale
de la République Tchécoslovaque,
Prague. 9/XI/1930

Your action has my full sympathy and I consider the
realization of the Roerich Pact and the Banner of Peace as a
duty of all the cultural world.

Dr. Fd. Tobolkaj,
Librarian.

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République Turque,
Musees d’Antiquites
de Stamboul. Stamboul, May 27, 1930.

...I referred to the Ministry of Education your letter of
May 1, with enclosed article. In the answer just received the
Ministry of Education accepts the proposal with great pleasure
and agrees to support the project.

Halil Ethem.

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Ministry of Education,
Nanking. June 20, 1930.

I am particularly pleased to acknowledge your letter dated
May 21 from New York in which you informed me of a
project to protect art treasures by the use of an international
flag similar to the one used by the Red Cross Society. An
international pact which you have in mind for this purpose is
of immeasurable humanitarian value since art treasures in a
strict sense are universal property and belong to no one nation
or nations. I regret only that it had not been thought of
earlier.

M. Chiang.

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LETTERS
FROM
SHANGHAI RESIDENTS

Every agency which is helping to influence the minds of
men in the direction of peace is of great value. History shows
us that it takes a long time to create public opinion in regard
to moral ideals and we are apt to become discouraged at the
meager result of our efforts.

I think your movement is one that must produce good
results. It will help to teach the world that culture has no
national boundaries and belongs to the whole world, and that
it is to the interest of mankind to preserve its cultural inheri­
tance and to protect the outward symbols of it wherever they
may be found.

F. L. Hawks Pott,
President, St. John’s University.

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The protection and preservation of objects which are
symbols or emblems of civilization and culture is a natural and
instinctive human duty. The plan of Professor Nicholas
Roerich providing a uniform insignia for designating such
objects and inviting all countries to accord it due respect has
met with widespread approval. I am fully in sympathy with
every effort in this direction.

H. B. Campbell,
Vice-President,
Pan-Pacific Association of Shanghai.

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All artists must fully endorse the ideals of the Roerich
Pact and I do not think I can add anything to what has
already been said by so many Statesmen, Artists, Scientists,
etc.
I sincerely hope that the day will come when the Banner of Three Crimson Dots in a circle will be a recognized Banner throughout the world. That world, I am sure, will be a better world to live in.

E. M. Gran,  
Architect

Educational centres as the temples of culture do certainly require protection in times of war, and therefore I consider the Roerich Pact to be a deeply humanitarian and also a very timely institution. The educationists will greet the project of creating a Banner, similar to the Red Cross, for the protection of educational institutions, laboratories, libraries, and other cultural centres of science and arts.

V. N. Shishkin,  
Directeur,  
Centre Technique Supérieur de la Concession Francaise.

I should like to add my word of praise for this project to protect the artistic and scientific treasures. I am particularly pleased that this has received the endorsement of the International Commission of Intellectual Cooperation of the League of nations.

Dr. Bernard E. Read,  
Henry Lester Institute

It is our opinion that the Roerich Pact and Banner of Peace as advocated are urgently desirable to be made prevalent.

J. Usang Ly,  
President, Chiao-Tung University

The Roerich Pact Committee of Shanghai welcome all letters expressing opinions as to the Roerich Pact Peace Banner.

CULTURE AND PEACE

Culture and Peace — the most sacred goal of Humanity! In the days of great confusion, both material and spiritual, the disturbed spirit strives to these radiant strongholds. But we should not unite only abstractly in the name of these regenerating conceptions. According to our abilities, each in his own field, should bring them into actual surrounding life, as the most necessary and undeferrable.

The human heart wants a real peace. It strives to labour — creatively and actively. It wants to love and to expand in the realization of Sublime Beauty. In the highest perception of Beauty and Knowledge all conventional divisions disappear. The heart speaks its own language; it wants to rejoice at that which is common for all, uplifts all, and leads to the radiant Future.

The Pact for the protection of cultural treasures is needed not only as an official regulation, but as an educating law, which from the first school days will imbue the young generation with the noble idea of safe-guarding the true values of the entire humanity. The Pact has already been signed by 22 countries. No doubt this large number will gradually be joined by all other countries as well. Our Pact has justly been named the Red Cross of Culture. Truly it stands in closest relation to the great Red Cross, which at the time of its inception was received rather sceptically, but now has become an undisputably humanistic foundation of life.
Art will unify all humanity. Art is one — indivisible. Art is the manifestation of the Coming Synthesis. Art is for all. Every one will enjoy true art. The gates of the “Sacred Source” must be wide open for everybody, and the light of Art will influence numerous hearts with a new love.

But above all confusions the Angels sing of Peace and Goodwill. No guns, no explosives can silence these choirs of heaven. And despite all the earthly pseudo-wisdom, idealism as the Teaching of Good will still remain the quickest reaching and most renovating principle in life.

When we consider the effects of our Pact, of course, we have in view not only the time of war, but also all barbaric acts by which the symbols of culture are endangered, no less than in the havoc of war. If we unceasingly instill into the minds of our children, our grandchildren and all who surround us, the impulse to strive toward constructive creation, we will already have inscribed an essential page in the history of cultural achievements.

Somebody has mentioned that the Banner could hardly be a protection against the long range guns. But the Red Cross is not visible at long distances, yet no one would deny the great humanitarian expedience of the institution of the Red Cross. Of course, we must not forget that at the inception of the Red Cross, there were many soulless critics who argued against this highly humanitarian idea, but such ignorant condemnation is characteristic of each innovation. Let us not forget, that Edison’s great invention of the phonograph was regarded as charlatanry by some academicians.

If humanity recognized the Red Cross as a protection to the physically wounded and ill, then it will also recognize the Banner of Peace as the symbol of peaceful prosperity and health of spirit.

Really it is imperative to take immediate measures to preserve the noble heritage of our past for a glorious posterity. This can only come if all countries pledge themselves to protect the creations of culture, which after all, belong to no one nation but to the world. In this way we may create the next vital step for a universal culture and peace.

When we affirmed our motto: “Peace through Culture” we did not have in view any hazy abstraction, but expressed the conviction that this is the only real working principle of peace. If Culture is the accumulation of all highest achievements, then truly such a beautiful pavement can lead to the stronghold of Peace.

Nicholas Roerich.
THE BANNER OF PEACE IN SHANGHAI

Perhaps it is too optimistic to expect that the Peace Banner be given recognition in the Far East at this moment, yet we did see how at the very climax of local hostilities, while the buildings in the city were vibrating from the blasts of shells and bombs, while anti-aircraft and machine-guns rattled incessantly and war-planes droned in a threatening manner, a great deed of mercy was achieved. We refer to the creation of a neutral zone in Nantao by Pere Jaquinot, a Jesuit, which subsequently became known throughout the world as the “Jaquinot Zone”. This Zone gave shelter to thousands of desperate homeless refugees, thanks to the timely initiative of Father Jaquinot and the willing cooperation on the part of the military authorities.

The effects of the Roerich Pact Peace Banner, the Red Cross of Culture, can be judged by the official governmental adoption of the Banner as much as by the individual adherence to its inspiring motto “Peace through Culture”.

A lasting peace can become a reality if people will aspire to the ideal of Culture, as then Culture will remove the psychological causes of strife.

Our Banner of three rubies in a rosy garland is a vivid symbol of the supreme union of Art, Religion, and Science by means of which Beauty, Bliss and Truth are perceived by man, and culture realized on earth.

“Culture is reverence of Light. Culture is love of humanity. Culture is fragrance, the unity of life and beauty. Culture is the synthesis of uplifting and sensitive attainments. Culture is salvation. Culture is the motivating power. Culture is the Heart.”

Such is the definition of Culture by Roerich, the Teacher of Culture. Culture is certainly the ennoblement of thought. And will not the ennoblement of thought be followed by the ennoblement of purpose, for is not thought the root of all action?

Pax per Cultura! Peace through Culture!

A. P. B. Tomashevski,
Representative —
Roerich Pact Peace Banner, Shanghai.